Interdisziplinäre Zeitschrift für
Südasienforschung

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Konzept

Die *Interdisziplinäre Zeitschrift für Südasienforschung* (IZSAF) ist eine elektronische, peer-reviewed Zeitschrift, die vor allem Nachwuchswissenschaftlerinnen und Nachwuchswissenschaftlern, deren Forschungsarbeit einen Bezug zu Südasien aufweist, eine Plattform zur Veröffentlichung ihrer Forschungsergebnisse bzw. zur Vorstellung geplanter Forschungsvorhaben in deutscher und englischer Sprache bietet. IZSAF ist offen für neue Formate und publiziert auch Fotoessays, um Themen der Südasienforschung auf visuelle Weise zu präsentieren.

The *Interdisziplinäre Zeitschrift für Südasienforschung* (IZSAF) is an electronic peer-reviewed journal that seeks to provide a platform for young researchers with a research focus on South Asia to publish their findings. The intention of IZSAF is to bring together young scholars from a variety of disciplines and to enter into interdisciplinary discussion regarding issues surrounding the study of South Asia. IZSAF is open to new formats and also publishes photo essays to present topics in South Asia studies visually.

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Editorial

Liebe Leserinnen und Leser,

mit der aktuellen Herbstnummer 2016 geht die *Interdisziplinäre Zeitschrift für Südasienforschung* (IZSAF) an die Öffentlichkeit. Sie wird inhaltlich von Nachwuchswissenschaftlerinnen und –wissenschaftlern verantwortet und versteht sich vornehmlich, aber nicht ausschließlich, als Publikationsplattform VON und FÜR den wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchs.

Erfreulich ist zum einen das Augenmerk auf diese Zielgruppe, der die IZSAF den Zugang zum wissenschaftlichen Publizieren erleichtern will. So besteht auch die Redaktion aus einem fachlich breit aufgestellten jungen Team: Mit Christopher Bahl (London), Tobias Berger (Wien), Christoph Bergmann (Heidelberg), Carmen Brandt (Halle), Simon Cubelic (Heidelberg), Maria Framke (Rostock), Sarah Holz (Berlin), Natalie Lang (Göttingen), Johannes Rosenbaum (Bamberg), Fritzi-Marie Titzmann (Leipzig) und Anna-Lena Wolf (Bern) versammelt das junge Herausgeberteam text- und medienwissenschaftliche, historische und sozial- und kulturwissenschaftliche Expertise. Dass niedrigschwelligere Zugänglichkeit nichts mit Verwässerung von Qualitätsstandards zu tun hat, versteht sich von selbst und wird zudem durch ein doppeltes anonymes Begutachtungsverfahren gewährleistet.

Zum zweiten ist auch die interdisziplinäre Ausrichtung der IZSAF zu begrüßen. Die wissenschaftliche Beschäftigung mit der südasiatischen Region im deutschsprachigen Raum und darüber hinaus ist mittlerweile ein recht umfangreiches Feld, das weit über die Indologie oder die vorrangig textwissenschaftlich ausgerichtete Südasienwissenschaft hinausreicht. Auch in Disziplinen wie der Ethnologie, Geographie, Geschichte, Medien-, Politik-, Religions- oder Wirtschaftswissenschaft usw. wird in den letzten Jahrzehnten vermehrt über Südasien gearbeitet. Bislang aber fehlte eine Zeitschrift, die diese vielfältigen Ausrichtungen explizit ins Blickfeld nimmt und unter der Klammer Südasien zusammenzuführen sucht. Hier will die IZSAF Abhilfe schaffen.

Die IZSAF wird zweimal jährlich erscheinen und ist offen für deutsch- und englischsprachige Beiträge (Artikel, Essays, Fotoessays und Rezensionsaufsätze). In Sachen Layout und Betreuung der online-Präsentation wird die IZSAF von Nicole Merkel-Hilf von der Bibliothek des Südasien-Instituts Heidelberg unterstützt. Ich wünsche allen Beteiligten viel Glück bei diesem neuen und vielversprechenden Projekt!

Hans Harder, Heidelberg

What Was Mughal Cuisine?

Defining and Analysing a Culinary Culture

Divya Narayanan

Abstract: This article aims at interrogating the problem of defining and analysing a culinary culture, with special reference to what may loosely be termed as 'Mughal cuisine'. The essay begins with a discussion of the issues inherent to defining the boundaries of 'Mughal cuisine' in terms of what constitutes 'Mughal' and what may be classified as a 'cuisine'. This is followed by a discussion of various anthropological approaches to analysing cuisine, with particular emphasis on structuralism and its critiques. The article then goes on to draw on works by Elisabeth Rozin and Richard Dawkins to formulate a 'flavour meme' concept as an alternative analytical paradigm. However, it is emphasised that this is not necessarily intended as a universal model to be applied without regard to historical and cultural context. The conclusion advocates that cuisine, as a phenomenon, be analysed as a transcultural process rather than as a structure.

Mughal[1] cuisine is a term often used in Indian restaurants around the world to denote a rich, creamy array of dishes ostensibly tracing their origins to the imperial kitchens of the Mughal Empire. That most of this is part of popular myth creation and perpetuation need not detain us long. Many of the key ingredients used in these dishes today, particularly, tomatoes, potatoes and chillies, were practically unknown in most of the subcontinent prior to the eighteenth century (Narayanan 2015: 116-132). This is not to argue that the food eaten in Indian homes and restaurants today has nothing to do with the culinary creations served to Mughal emperors, but to emphasise, rather, that much has changed since then. Cuisine – as this article will show – is dynamic and ever evolving. My article will also argue that

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[1] Note on Transliteration: For Persian words, I have generally followed the system used in Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*. Two exceptions are made: the first in the case of conventionally accepted or standardised spellings of certain terms, names of persons and places. For instance, I have preferred Mughal instead of *muġẖul*. Secondly, the transliteration of words and names in titles of published books and articles in English have been retained as in the original.

culinary traditions and influences flow freely across socio-economic bound-aries and are also almost always intermeshed in transcultural interactions. More specifically, this article will propose process-oriented alternatives to a structuralist analysis of cuisine.

This article consists of three parts. The first part will briefly interrogate the term 'Mughal cuisine' with reference to the history of the term 'Mugh-al' and anthropological definitions of 'cuisine'. It will also provide a brief account of the sources that form the basis of the material analysed in this piece. The second part moves on to a discussion of various approaches adopted by anthropologists and historians in analysing culinary cultures. My aim here is to particularly point out the deficiencies of a strict structural approach, as well as to suggest an alternative analytical paradigm. This will then be illustrated with reference to empirical evidence primarily derived from Indo-Persian cookbooks produced approximately between the six-teenth and eighteenth centuries. The conclusion will draw some historical and theoretical conclusions based on the preceding discussion with regard to both what 'Mughal cuisine' was or was not, as well as providing pointers as to how this and other culinary cultures may be understood and analysed.

TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES

Defining a Culinary Culture

It is important to note at the outset, that the term 'Mughal' is not men-tioned in Persian sources of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and was not the preferred self-designation of the Timurid dynasty itself.[2] Never-

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[2] Mughal or *muġẖul* is the arabised Persian word for Mongol. It was purely in this sense that this word was used in Persian writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Neither the Mughal emperors themselves, nor their panegyrists or even their rivals referred to the dynasty as 'Mughal'. The Mughals preferred to associate themselves with the lineage of Timur, although they indirectly also drew on the prestige of Gengīz Ḵẖān through the oft-used appellation *Gūrgān*, meaning, 'son-in-law', which was the title adopted by Timur as the husband to a princess in the line of the great Ḵẖān (Balabanlilar 2012: 9, 14). The title 'Mughal' or names similar to it, however, was widely used by contemporary Europeans when writing about the dynasty that dominated much of the Indian subcontinent in the seventeenth century. Thus, for instance the travelogue of French doctor François Bernier is entitled *Voyages de François Bernier contenant la description des Etats du Grand Mogol, de l'Indoustan, du royaume de Kachemire* (1699) and the account of the Italian Niccolao Ma-

theless, since it has gained general currency and acceptance in modern historiography, I shall use the term to loosely denote the dynasty, its elite as well as the empire and cultural artifacts associated with it. This is in line with the generally accepted use of the term.

However, when we are concerned with defining a culinary culture, the term does pose some problems. It is not at all certain what such a term might denote in social or political terms. Does it refer only to the Mughal emperors, or also to the *manṣabdārs* (rank-holders in the Mughal admin-istration)? Perhaps it may be used to refer only to the *umarāʾ* or the very highly ranked *manṣabdārs*? In any case, none of these definitions indicates any kind of fixed socio-cultural identity, since the Mughal elite was very diverse. It included members belonging to various social and ethnic origins as well as religious persuasions, such as those who associated themselves with identities such as Īrānī (Persian), Tūrānī (Turkic), Shaiḵẖzāda (Indian Muslim), Hindu Rajput and Hindu Khatri, to name a few, as well as products of mixed marriages. What would a singularly defined 'cuisine' associated with such diversity possibly entail? In other words, the term must be under-stood as an umbrella term of convenience, and not as constituting a specific historical cultural entity.

Another, perhaps slightly more socioculturally appropriate term that I will use in this essay is 'Indo-Persian'. The Mughal elite, though diverse, shared a pluralistic Persianate cultural heritage. Where I am not referring to the elite of the Mughal Empire in political terms, but rather as a cultural entity, I shall prefer using the term 'Indo-Persian'. I am aware that this is a very slippery distinction, and that ultimately all labels are problematic. However, for the purposes of this article such a deployment of terminology may help ward off some amount of epistemological confusion. If one were to be pedantic, it would perhaps be more accurate and less anachronistic to

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nucci is entitled *Storia do Mogor* (completed circa 1700). It was probably only later, in around the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that the term 'Mughal' came to be popular on the Indian subcontinent and was eventually adopted by the Mughal emperors and their chroniclers as well. I am unable to find a precise date or reference for the earliest usage(s) of the term 'Mughal' in Indo-Persian texts, so this is a tentative assessment based on my read-ing of early modern sources.

speak of the *cuisine represented by the corpus of Indo-Persian texts* dating to the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, rather than to speak of 'Mughal cuisine' or even 'Indo-Persian' cuisine. If I do not always stick to this lengthy appellation, it is only for the sake of brevity and convenience.

And then there is the question of what a *cuisine* is. When do a set of culinary creations qualify for this label?

The extant anthropological literature on the subject does not speak in one voice with respect to defining the concept of 'cuisine'. However, there is agreement on differentiating it from mere food preparation or cooking practices, since cuisine predicates a collective cultural understanding of taste. For Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, cuisine is 'the code that structures the practice of food and allows us to discuss and to represent taste' (Ferguson 2004: 18). Ferguson goes on to draw out certain conditions that a set of culinary practices must fulfil in order to qualify as a cuisine:

> A more or less coherent repertory of culinary preparations, usually structured by the products at hand, becomes a true cuisine only when its status as a repertory becomes apparent. That is, culinary preparations become a cuisine when, and only when, the preparations are articulated and formalized, and enter the public domain. (Ferguson 2004: 19)

According to this conceptualisation, a cuisine comes into being when a set of individuated culinary practices becomes the subject of a collective discourse. This necessarily entails the formalisation of shared understandings of taste.

Other definitions of cuisine are more specific, and prescribe more stringent criteria for the label of 'cuisine' to apply. Thus, Michael Freeman enlists three factors as being essential to the development of cuisine: 'the availability of ingredients, many sophisticated consumers, and cooks and diners free from conventions of region and ritual' (Freeman 1977: 145). In addition, he characterises cuisine as being a product of attitudes that give primacy to the pleasure of consuming food, rather than to any ritualistic significance (Ibid.). This appears to be a very narrow definition that focuses exclusively on elite consumption. For Sidney Mintz, Freeman's definition

actually describes *haute* cuisine. Mintz's own understanding of cuisine sees it as tied to a region, with access to a particular set of ingredients that are determined by the geography, climate and history of the territory. Since *haute* cuisine is not bound by such constraints in the sourcing of ingredients, Mintz asserts that it must fall into a separate category (Mintz 1996: 99, 101).

In trying to collate the common and most applicable elements of these definitions of 'cuisine', two important features may be selected. Firstly, as Ferguson's definition points out, cuisine formalises shared understandings of taste within the public domain. Secondly, as against Mintz's absolute differentiation of cuisine from *haute* cuisine, a more fluid distinction should be adopted: one that sees *haute* cuisine as a subset of cuisine, and in constant interaction with its culinary environment.

The culinary artefacts discussed in this article consist mostly of recipes from Indo-Persian cookbooks dating to the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, occasionally corroborated by other contemporary sources. It would therefore be appropriate to take a closer look at the texts that form part of this corpus, and to assess their use as sources for the reconstruction of a culinary culture.

Indo-Persian Cuisine and Cookbooks

Indo-Persian cookbooks were evidently copied many times, and there are surviving manuscripts with minor variations. This corpus of literature was alliterative in nature, often produced in different places under various titles. These would have presumably adorned the libraries of Mughal notables, as did many other texts on themes such as hunting, grammar, poetry, logic, geomancy, mathematics and perfumery. This corpus thus aligns closely with a culinary tradition that would, at the very least, have been familiar to high *manṣabdārs* and notables of the Mughal Empire, and with which they could identify.

There are some issues with regard to using Indo-Persian culinary manuals as sources. Often, only the names of the scribes and date of transliteration is known, and not the name of the author or the date of composition. We also have little information on how these texts were used. Were they actually regularly used as guides in the kitchen or were they merely articles

of prestige and representatives of normative style? From my reading of these texts, I would argue that Indo-Persian cookbooks were probably a bit of both. Most cookbooks offer a fairly detailed description of recipes, along with quantities of ingredients to be used, which suggests that they may not have been for ornamental use alone. However, explicit associations with the kitchens of kings and significant notables indicate that the books carried prestige value as well. One indication of both the utilitarian value as well as esteem conveyed by Indo-Persian cookbooks is indicated by the justification given by the translator of an English cookbook into Persian. The Persian text is entitled *Nuskha-i Niʿmat Khān* on the subscript and is dated 1801.[3] This manuscript details some typical European dishes: recipes for tomato soup, vegetable soup, mock turtle soup and hare soup; entrées such as beef fillet, various kinds of stew, steak and mutton chop, mashed potatoes, and maca-roni; as well as desserts such as apple dumplings, tartlets, and Shrewsbury cake.[4] This culinary manual appears to have been translated for an Indian audience, with the object of acquainting them with European foods. The text explains the motive behind the preparation of this translation thus: 'so that the book and the recipes contained in it may become commonplace in the assemblies and gatherings of the highest notables'.[5] This would suggest both a utilitarian purpose, as well as the motive of fulfilling curiosity or a taste for the 'exotic' among the notable or gentlemanly class.

Texts may be assigned approximate dates on the basis of internal evi-dence, such as style, names of persons mentioned, weights and measures, and ingredients recorded. With all these limitations, Indo-Persian texts still remain a valuable resource for the study of Mughal culinary history, and their contents may often be corroborated from a study of other sources such as medical treatises, histories and travelogues.[6] I will not provide a

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[3] "Nuskha-i Niʿmat Khān", MS BL OR 2028. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to trace the English original.

[4] Ibid, *passim*. See also the list of contents on ff. 1r-13r.

[5] Ibid, f. 14v.

[6] The same or similar dishes recorded in Indo-Persian cookbooks are also mentioned in other contemporary sources, for example in the Abū-l Faẓl ʿAllāmī, *Āʾīn-i Akbarī*: 55-58; Ānand Rām 'Mukhliṣ', *Safarnāma-i Mukhliṣ*: *passim*; Nūr al-Dīn Muḥammad Jahāngīr. *Jahāngīrnāma: Tūzuk-i Jahāngīrī*: *passim*; "Ilājāt-i Dārāshukohī", MSS BNF Supplément Persan 342B,: *passim*; Jamshid Bilimoria, (trans.), *Rukaʿat-i Alamgiri or Letters of Aurangzeb*, 12.

detailed catalogue of Indo-Persian cookbooks here. However, a short introduction to the corpus is in order, before I go into an analysis of recipes derived from these texts.

The earliest Indo-Persian cookbook that has come down to us is the *Niʿmatnāma*, which was prepared under the aegis of the sultans of Mandu at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century. Norah Titley has translated its only available copy, which is in the possession of the British Library (Titley 2005).[7] The edition has been enhanced with a translator's introduction, colour plates, and a facsimile of the entire manuscript (MS). The *Niʿmatnāma* MS consists of two parts, and as Titley notes, appears to have been started under the patronage of G̱ẖiyāṣ Shāh and completed under Nāṣir Shāh (Titley 2005: xii).[8] The text is illustrated with miniature paintings in Persian style, also incorporating Indian elements. All the miniatures depict Sultan G̱ẖiyāṣ Shāh at the centre of their narrative. This text differs in terms of the recipes it describes from the corpus of Indo-Persian cookbooks that came to be produced from the seventeenth century onwards. Although many of its recipes, such as *saṃbūsas* (savoury stuffed and fried pasties), *khichṛī* (a dish of rice and lentils), *palīv* (*pulāʾo*, or a dish with rice, meat and other ingredients), *sīk̲h̲* (skewered meat or fish), *yak̲h̲nī* (spiced meat broth) and *kabāb* (skewered or roast meat), it also contains many other recipes that derive from its west and central Indian geographical location, including *kaṛhī* (a yoghurt or sour milk based dish combined with chickpea flour), *pīccha* (a dish prepared by adding ingredients to the surplus water that is left in the pot after cooking rice or other grains) and *khaṇḍawī* (swollen parched grain).

A number of cookbooks have come down to us from the period between the seventeenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. Here, I will introduce a few of these to give a flavour of their style and contents. One significant text from this period is the *Nusk̲h̲a-i Shāhjahānī* or the *Nān u Namak*.[9] It begins

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[7] The facsimile MS has multiple foliation notations in English and Persian. My citations follow the same English foliation system used by Titley.

[8] The second part begins on facsimile MSS f. 162v. It is titled *Kitāb-i Niʿmatnāma-i Nāṣirshāhī* with the following sub-inscription: *wa ʿIṭrnāma wa tarkīb-i k̲h̲wushbūʾī-hā wa tarkīb-i chūwa* (and *ʿIṭrnāma* or text of perfumes and the methods of perfuming).

[9] There are many copies of this text available. The British Library copy (MS IO Islamic 2798) is entitled "Nān u Namak". The colophon of the Madras copy bears the title "Nusk̲h̲a-i

with a simple statement to the effect that it records the recipes of dishes prepared in Emperor Shahjahan's (r. 1627-1658) kitchen.[10] However, no author or date of composition is recorded. It contains ten chapters, on *nān-hā* (breads), *āsh-hā* (pottages), *qalīyas* and *dopiyāzas* (dressed meat dishes), *bhartas* (also *bhurta*; mashes), *zerbiryāns* (a kind of layered rice-based dish), *pulā'o*[11], *kabābs*, *harīsas* (savoury porridge), *shishrangas* and *k͟hāgīnas* (omelette), and *khichṛī*. The last chapter covers *murabbā* (jams), *achār* (pickles), *pūrī* (fried bread), *shīrīnī* (sweets), *ḥalwā* (warm pudding) and finally some basic recipes for yoghurt, the preparation of *panīr* (Indian curd cheese) and for the colouring of butter and dough.[12] The description of recipes begins on the first page without any further preface.[13] The text ostensibly draws its importance from a declared association with the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan (r. 1627-1658), claiming to draw on the culinary repertoire of his kitchen. There is no mention of professional cooks or those involved in compiling the text.

Another significant cookbook – variously known as *K͟hulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt* or *Alwān-i Niʿmat* or *K͟hwān-i Alwān-i Niʿmat*[14] probably derives from the reign of Aurangzeb (r. 1656-1707) or somewhat later, since it re-

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Shāhjahānī", and a published edition under the same title has been edited by Saiyid Muḥammed Faẓlullah Ṣāḥib. According to the editor, the Madras MS is catalogued D.No.526 and is dated 1263 AH. Another MS from Aligarh Muslim University (MS 98) is entitled "Al-wān-i Niʿmat". The Salar Jung Museum and Library in Hyderabad also holds a copy of this text ("Dastūr-i Puk͟htan-i Aṭiʿma", T̤abāk͟hī 4, Acc. No. 1430). The citations here are taken from the published Madras text.

[10] *dastūr-i puk͟htan-i aṭʿima ke dar sarkār-i pādishāh shāhjahān maʿahu wazn be ʿamal āmad* (*Nusk͟ha-i Shāhjahānī*, p. 1).

[11] Spellings and pronunciations of this word can vary. Steingass transliterates this at various points as *palāv, pilav, pilāv or pulāv* (Steingass 1892: 254, 999, 1063, 1169, 1529). Some MSS indicate the *hamza* or *pesh*. Others do not. One MS even uses *pūlāv / pūlā'o* (P-W-L-Ā-W) [MS SJML T̤abāk͟hī 3, Acc. No. 1429, p. 1]. For the sake of uniformity, I have usually preferred John Platt's transliteration *pulā'o* for use in the context of Indian cookbooks (Platts 1884: 267).

[12] *Nusk͟ha-i Shāhjahānī*. See list of contents on p. 1.

[13] Ibid.

[14] MS NMI "Alwān i-Niʿmat", S.No. 145, Acc. No. 96.479. This National Museum of India (NMI) manuscript is titled "Alwān-i Niʿmat" in the catalogue and the colophon. I will cite from the National Museum's MS in this article, but I will henceforth use the title "K͟hulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", which occurs in the preface of the text. Other manuscripts (MSS) of this text include MS BL Add. 17959 (under the title "K͟hwān-i Alwān-i Niʿmat") and "K͟hulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS APGOML Mutafarriqāt no. 210.

fers to ʿĀlamgīrī weights.[15] In any case, it can date to no later than 1765, which is the colophon date on the British Library MS.[16] The text itself bears the title *Ḵẖulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt*, which I will use here.[17] It is divided into 40 *bābs* (chapters) with each *bāb* devoted to a particular category of dishes.[18] The first chapter is on various varieties of breads (*nān* and *kulcha*) and subsequent chapters deal with *qalīyas* and *dopiyāzas*, *bhartas*, *kabābs*, *khichṛī*, *zerbiryāns*, *achār* and various sweetmeats.[19]

There is some uncertainty regarding a cookbook called the *Ḵẖwān-i Niʿmat*, which is attributed to Niʿmat Ḵẖān ʿĀlī, a notable of Aurangzeb's reign (1658-1707). Various archives around the world house cookbook manuscripts entitled *Ḵẖwān-i Niʿmat*, all of which vary quite widely in terms of content.[20] Yet, they are attributed in the catalogues – sometimes speculatively – to Niʿmat Ḵẖān ʿĀlī, in the absence of any other author identification. The evidence indicates that these are misattributions based on mistaken identity, due to a confusion regarding the title 'Ḵẖwān-i Niʿmat'. The

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[15] "Ḵẖulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS NMI S.No. 145, Acc. No. 96.479, f.55v. As Habib notes, Aurangzeb did not introduce a new *man*. It remained valued at 40 *dāms* (copper coins) to a *ser*, as assigned by Shāhjahān. However, on account of the issuance of newer, lighter *dāms*, the rate of exchange between the *dām* and the *ser* changed to 43 *dāms*, and later to 44 *dāms* to a *ser*. These new weights were designated as 'ʿĀlamgīrī' weights, despite no intended change in their value (Habib 1999: 421-423). Unfortunately, the exact dates for these changes are not known, and therefore the text cannot be dated with any greater precision on the basis of this evidence.

[16] MS BL Add. 17959.

[17] See "Ḵẖulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS NMI S.No. 145, Acc. No. 96.479, f.2r.

[18] Ibid, preface on ff. 1v-5v, list of contents on ff. 5v-6r.

[19] Ibid, ff. 5v-6r and rest of MS. The full list of contents includes chapters on the following categories of dishes: breads (*nān-hā*), *qalīya* and *dopiyāza*, varieties of greens (*sāg*), *bharta*, pulses and lentils (*dāl*) *zerbiryān*, varieties of *khaṇḍawī* (savoury cakes made with pulse or gram flour) and other Indian sauce-based dishes (*sālan-hā-i hindī*), *khichṛī*, *sholā* (dish usually with rice and meat, pulses and various vegetables)*, kulthī* (a kind of sweet, sticky rice dish), *thūlī* (a thick sweet dish with flour and milk), *ṭāhirī* (another kind of rice and meat dish), *ḥalīm* (savoury porridge) and *kashk* (gruel with wheat and meat), *āsh*, *bara* (or *baṛa*: sort of fried cakes or dumplings), *jug̱ẖrāt wa sikharn* (yoghurt based dishes), *shīrbirinj* (sweet dish made with rice and milk), *firnī* (sweet dish made with thickened milk and rice or rice flour) *fālūda* (a kind of flummery cut into small pieces and dunked in sherbet) and *panbhatta* (made with rice that is fried and soaked in water and then added to a sherbet), *saṃbosa*, *pūrī*, *gulgula* (sweet dumplings made with a thick batter) and *khajūr* (also a kind of sweet dumpling), *malīda* (sweet powdery mixture made of dough), *shīrīnī*, *murabbā*, *achār* as well as a chapter on shelling coriander and pepper, sweetening bitter butter or oil, and other basic recipes.

[20] See for instance, MS BL Add. 16871, ff.295-344; MS BL IO Islamic 2362.

only manuscript containing an in-text attribution that I am aware of is in the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin.[21] This manuscript bears no date or colophon inscription to indicate provenance. The text is introduced with the following line: 'compiled recipes of foods which Niʿmat Ḫān ʿĀlī wrote titled *Ḫwān-i Niʿmat*'.[22] This is an indirect attribution of purported original authorship. Such an attribution is inconsistent with the typical style of first-person identification by an eminent author. After this simple line of introduction, the text goes on to describe a number of recipes commonly found in Indo-Persian cookbooks of this period. These include many of the usual recipes for various varieties of breads, *qalīyas*, *dopiyāzas*, *bhartas*, *kabābs*, rice dishes such as *ṭāhirīs*, *pulāʾos*, *zerbiryāns*, and *khichṛīs*, as well as *ḫāgīnas*, *achārs*, and *ḥalwās*.[23]

There were also cookbooks that were specialised in their content. A copy of one such cookbook, titled *Alwān-i Niʿmat* and transcribed in 1275 AH (c.1858/59) is dedicated to recipes of sweetmeats.[24] These include varieties of sweet breads such as *nān ḫaṭāʾī* (crisp bread, like a biscuit), sweet *pūrīs*, sweet *samosas* (or *saṃbosas*), *laḍḍū* and *ḥalwā*. The cookbook introduces each recipe with a line of praise:[25] for instance *saṃbosa-i yak tuhī dam dāda* (*samosa* with a pocket cooked on *dam*[26])[27] is declared as being 'among the famous and well-known sweets'[28]; *pūrī dam dāda bādāmī* (almond *pūrīs* cooked on *dam*) is said to be 'among the delicious and excellent sweetmeats'[29] and *nān ḫaṭāʾī bādāmī* (almond *nān ḫaṭāʾī*)[30] is noted for being 'among the rare and delicious recipes'[31]. In this manner, the cookbook not only expresses appreciation of taste with regard to the recipes it contains, but also advertises itself for carrying them.

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[21] "Ḫwān-i Niʿmat" of Niʿmat Ḫān ʿĀlī, MS SBB Or. Oct. 98.

[22] '*nuskha-hā-i jamī ̒ aṭ̒ima ke Niʿmat Ḫān ʿĀlī tālīf namūda musammī be Ḫwān-i Niʿmat karda*' (ibid, f.1v.)

[23] Ibid, *passim*.

[24] "Alwān-i Niʿmat", MS APGOML Mutaffariqāt no. 208.

[25] "Alwān-i Niʿmat", MS APGOML Mutaffariqāt no. 208, *passim*.

[26] '*Dam dādan*' usually refers to a style of slow cooking in a sealed container.

[27] Single pocket baked *samosas*.

[28] '*ke az jumla-i shīrīnī-hā-i mashhūra wa ʿām bāshad*'

[29] '*az shīrīnī-hā-i ḫwushmaza u ḫūb u ʿumda ast*'

[30] Almond crisp bread.

[31] '*ke az nuskha-hā-i nau-i kamyāb u ḫwushmaza ast*'

The diversity of the Mughal domains and elite meant that the recipes in Indo-Persian cookbooks drew on multiple sources, including Iranian, Central Asian and local influences from various parts of the Indian subcontinent. These cookbooks thus include recipes for dishes as various in their origins as *khichṛī* and *qalīya* (dressed meat with a sauce made with fried onions as its base). Nevertheless, there was a considerable degree of standardisation of recipes visible across the corpus of Indo-Persian cookbooks, in terms of the categories of recipes described, the ingredients used and the cooking methods prescribed. Thus, while it may be somewhat anachronistic and sociologically problematic to speak of a singular 'Mughal cuisine', something approaching this concept did probably exist, at least within the corpus of Indo-Persian cookbooks. This was a well-developed and consciously articulated *haute cuisine*, which drew on ingredients and techniques from various parts of the world, and yet was also driven by local influence and context.

ANALYSING CUISINE

Theoretical Approaches

How do we understand and analyse cuisine and its role as a cultural marker? This has been the subject of much anthropological debate over the decades. The first significant contribution to evolving theoretical bases for the analysis of cuisine came from Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009). Lévi-Strauss analysed cuisine as being composed of distinct units arranged in accordance with specific 'grammatical' structures. His analysis of cuisine used linguistics as a model and a metaphor. In his comparative analysis of English and French cuisine contained in the major tome, *Structural Anthropology,* Lévi-Strauss analysed cuisine as being composed of distinct building unites of taste called 'gusteme', which were a direct linguistic counterpart of the term 'phoneme' (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 86). Similarly, in an influential article entitled 'the culinary triangle', Lévi-Strauss replaced units of taste with measures of rawness/cooking, but the inherent conceptual understanding of cuisine as an amalgam of discrete and measurable components remained the same (Lévi-Strauss 2008: 36-43).

While differing in their methods and approaches, basic elements of Lévi-Strauss's structural approach were adopted by Roland Barthes and Mary Douglas. These scholars – as well as others who followed the structural analysis approach – studied cuisine through the lens of metaphors and terms of analyses such as 'structure', 'code', 'grammar' and 'system'. The symbolisms of food, of meals and of recipes were seen as encoded in fixed and structured ways, minimising the fluidity and complexities of food cultures and cuisine. This is apparent, for instance, when Barthes argues:

> No doubt, food is, anthropologically speaking (though very much in the abstract), the first need; but ever since man has ceased living off wild berries, this need has been highly structured. Substances, techniques of preparation, habits, all become part of a system of differences in signification; and as soon as this happens, we have communication by way of food. For the fact that there is communication is proven, not by the more or less vague consciousness that its users may have of it, but by the ease with which all the facts concerning food form a structure analogous to other systems of communication. […] (i)n other words, it would be a matter of separating the significant from the insignificant and then of reconstructing the differential system of signification by constructing, if I may be permitted to use such a metaphor, *a veritable grammar of foods.* (Barthes 2008: 21, 22)

If Barthes saw the 'psychosociology' of food as reducible to a grammatical structure of symbolisms, Douglas saw food signifiers as elemental aspects of a structured understanding of food culture (Douglas 1972: 61-81). She too uses the metaphor of language and grammar to frame her analysis of social meanings embedded in food practices, arguing that food categories 'encode social events' (Ibid. 1972: 61).

Within the context of South Asian studies, Francis Zimmerman's monograph *The Jungle and the Aroma of Meats* also analysed idealised versions of Indian meals in structuralist terms. In a chapter entitled "Logic and Cuisine", Zimmerman argues that in every Indian meal, rice or bread is at the centre and vegetables and meat in the form of curries and fricassees occupy peripheral positions. This 'logic', Zimmermann goes on to assert, also

guides the cataloguing of cereals and seasonings (*vyañjana*) – composed of meats, fruits and vegetables – in Ayurvedic texts (Zimmermann 1987: 125-126). In Zimmermann's analysis, culinary practice was guided by the 'gourmet logician's gaze', which was mirrored in scholarly treatises on medicine. As he states: 'cuisine proceeds in the same manner as logic, through combinations (mixtures, sauces) and transformations (the various modes of cooking)' (Zimmermann 1987: 128). Moreover, in Zimmermann's account, 'Indian cuisine' appears to have an almost timeless element to it, wherein contemporary culinary culture accords with the logic of ancient texts. It is true that staples occupy an important position in most Indian diets – something not unusual in settled agricultural societies. However, this does not translate into any logical grammar of meals as posited by Zimmermann. Firstly, there can be no singular account of 'Indian cuisine'. Secondly, as my analysis in this chapter will show, even in the fairly limited culinary context of Indo-Persian cookbooks, it is impossible to tease out any fixed logic of meal components.

Ravindra S. Khare's studies on what he calls 'Hindu gastronomy' were also influenced by structuralism. These were based on his ethnographic investigations among Kānyakubja Brahmins and some other caste groups in the Lucknow-Rae Bareli region in various phases of fieldwork between 1958 and 1972 (Khare 1976b: 12-17). The empirical results and analysis of these findings were presented in two monographs: *Hindu Hearth and Home* and *Culture and Reality*, both published in 1976 (Khare 1976a; 1976b). Khare's basic argument was that despite variations within and across caste groups, 'Hindu gastronomy' followed a distinct grammar and logic based on rules of purity and commensality. His analysis of this is presented in the language of symbolic logic, broadly following the structuralist paradigm (Khare 1976a; 1976b). However, it must be noted that Khare's analysis is much more sophisticated and nuanced than many other works influenced by structuralism. He carefully documents variability in practice and notes significant processes of change that were, he argues, not merely cosmetic (Khare 1976b: 243-263, 268-269). Nevertheless, Khare's construction of a category such as 'Hindu gastronomy' based on his investigations among a few select caste groups in one small Northern Indian region is highly problematic. Also, his analysis of the changes in food behaviours observed among his in-

formants is not integrated into his theoretical formulations. It is as if they stand outside it, like acknowledged imposters.

From the 1980s onwards, there emerged a number of critiques of the structuralist approach. Jack Goody in his *Cooking, Cuisine and Class* pointed out that Lévi-Strauss' analytical categories were arbitrary and did not emerge out of the cultures he was studying (Goody 1982: 17-29). They also conflated socio-economic categories within these cultures. Mennell and Ferguson, both sociologists by training, have adopted a historical approach to analysing cuisine as being more appreciative of the fluid and processual nature of culinary cultures. Mennell's work, for instance, analyses the differential historical trajectories of culinary cultures in England and France from the medieval period to the present (Mennell 1985), while Ferguson traces the origins and evolution of modern French gastronomy in the context of post-revolutionary France (Ferguson 2004).

Structuralism made fundamental contributions to the study of food and the analysis of cuisines, particularly in drawing attention to the role of food as a marker of social distinction and as a cultural symbol. However, structuralism in its classical form suffered from a few fundamental flaws: it failed to account for processes of change in food behaviours over time, it usually glossed over complexities and diversities in food practices within cultures, and it effectively reduced food to the status of a symbolic social mediator, rather than analysing both its material functions as well as its role as a signifier.

My analysis of the recipes recorded in Indo-Persian cookbooks similarly militates against a simplistic structuralist analysis of cuisine. A purely structuralist deconstruction neither aids a better understanding of how culinary cultures evolve, nor the manner in which one 'cuisine' may be compared with or differentiated from another. I shall illustrate this with a brief analysis of selected recipes from Indo-Persian cookbooks, as well as a comparative analysis with Persian cookbooks originating in Ṣafawid and Qājār Iran. I will also propose an alternative analytical method.

Analysing Cuisine: The Lives of Recipes

Recipes frequently encountered in Indo-Persian cookbooks are classified as per certain typical categories, which include breads (*nān-hā*), rice dishes such as *khichṛī*, *pulāʾos* and *zerbiryāns*, kebabs (*kabāb*), dressed meat dishes (*qalīyas* and *dopiyāzas*), savoury porridge (*ḥalīm wa harīsa*) as well as sweets and puddings (*shirīnī-hā wa ḥalwājāt*). For the purposes of this article, I have chosen to focus on four specific indications of fluidity, which illustrate the unsuitability of strict structuralism: (1) the incidence of dishes of 'commonplace' origin, (2) a comparative analysis of Mughal and Ṣafawid culinary preparations, (3) the issue of the categorisation of meals, courses and dishes, and (4) the problem of 'authenticity'. Methodologically, it is sufficient to show evidence of several ways in which the evidence does not match with the predictions of structural analysis, in order to render it invalid and unsuitable as an analytical framework. This will accordingly be the focus of this section.

The intention in this section is not to construct a detailed or comprehensive catalogue of recipes. That would only amount to several pages of dry description. The aim here is, rather, to outline a sample that would serve as an empirical basis for further theoretical analysis. An alternative analytical paradigm that I propose here is based on the concept of 'flavour principles' posited by Elisabeth Rozin (Rozin 2000: 134-142). Rozin argues that every cuisine engenders certain spice and technique combinations that produce tastes based on distinct understandings of flavour. Through various combinations and recombinations of these – according to familiar patterns – new recipes may be evolved. It is these flavour patterns that enable the evolution of cuisine, by allowing for the creation of new combinations within a familiar spectrum of tastes (Ibid. 2000: 135). I would interpret the evidence from my sources as suggesting that these 'flavour principles' are dynamic and evolve through the very process by which they allow for the formulation of recipes. Rozin's concept of 'flavour principles' may be tied up with the concept of memes proposed by the evolutionary biologist, Richard Dawkins. According to Dawkins, *memes* may be regarded as the cultural analogy of genes. Like genes, they are 'selfish replicators' that spread in the primordial soup of human memory and imagination through means of communication such as speech and writing. Memes, like genes, are in a

constant state of evolution, gradually metamorphosing as they spread. Examples of memes could be musical tunes, religious or political ideas, clothing fashions, architectural designs and surgical techniques (Dawkins 2006: 3708-3923).

The concept of memes has since been adapted by sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists and linguists (among others) to explain a wide variety of social institutions and cultural phenomena, such as ideals of happiness (Gilbert 2006: 212-220), the spread of ideas in translation theory (Chesterman 2016), the persistence of capitalism (Kaufman 2012) and the spread of motifs, ideas and images in digital culture (Shifman 2014). Some have pointed out the imperfections inherent in the analogic character of the meme concept (Ibid. 2014: 11-12), but its usefulness as an analytical tool has nevertheless been acknowledged by its widespread and diverse application. Another criticism concerns the undermining of human agency, but as has been persuasively argued by scholars such Limor Shifman, this is not necessarily inherent to the meme concept (Ibid. 2014: 12). Indeed, as the works cited in the footnotes of this section show, the meme concept – through its evolution – has been adapted in diverse and more nuanced ways.

Recipes arguably also spread in mimetic ways following the evolution of certain flavour principles. Once a cooking technique, spice mixture, combination of ingredients or serving style (akin to Rozin's 'flavour principles') is successful because of biological (primordial taste) or socio-cultural (acquired taste) factors, it gets passed through verbal or written channels of communication. Here, the agency of human transmitters is vital. Thus, a loose adaptation of Dawkin's concept of memes may be used to explain the manner in which Rozin's 'flavour principles' evolve dynamically. We may also refer to these as 'flavour memes'. Every time a flavour meme is passed on, it 'ensures' (the use of anthropomorphic language here is purely metaphorical) its own survival and replication, but it also evolves somewhat. This may be because every cook is different, or because new ingredients, cooking styles and techniques become available. The interpretation of the meme concept adopted here thus gives importance to human agency, while acknowledging that the overall effect of recipes being transmitted or codified involves more than a mathematical summation of the conscious actions of individual agents. Thus, when recipes are passed on and modified, this

process of evolution appears to acquire a life of its own that often goes beyond the individual intentions of the creators and communicators of recipes.

As against Zimmerman's positing of a timeless logical grammar underlying every Indian meal, my argument thus stresses the vibrant nature of culinary practice. But before developing and applying the Rozin-Dawkins analytical paradigm further, it is necessary to examine the predictions made by structuralism and the extent to which these are supported by evidence drawn from the corpus of Indo-Persian cookbooks.

A structuralist approach would predict that food dishes and recipes would serve as markers of social distinction and that elite food habits and preferences would therefore be clearly distinguishable from those of the 'common masses'. An examination of early modern culinary manuals as well as other contemporary sources clearly speaks against this assumption.

For instance, we find many 'commonplace' recipes in Indo-Persian cookbooks that were clearly composed within an elite context and for an elite audience. This includes, for instance, *khichṛī*. This dish was a common staple all over North India. It is mentioned in the verses attributed to the weaver-poet Kabīr (fl. circa 1500), although the dating and provenance of the compositions is not always precisely determinable (Das 1991: 12, verse no. 240; Callewaert 2005: 137-152). At the same time, this dish is also mentioned in the travelogue of an eighteenth century notable in Shahjahanabad, Ānand Rām Muk̲h̲liṣ[32], as well in the memoirs of Emperor Jahangir[33].

Recipes for *khichṛī* are also ubiquitous in Indo-Persian cookbooks, and here the recipes range from simple combinations of rice and lentils to complex preparations including vegetables, meats and spices. The oldest Indo-Persian cookbook that we have (the *Niʿmatnāma*, Malwa, end 15th and early 16th century) contains several recipes for *khichṛī* (Titley 2005: *passim*). Most of the *khichṛī* recipes in Persian cookbooks include the use of meat. However, all Persian cookbooks also include some variations that are vegetarian. The *khichṛī-i Gujarātī* or Gujarati *khichṛī* is one such commonly described recipe. The *K̲h̲ulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt* starts the recipe with fried garlic, into which onion rings, cinnamon, and other spices are added

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[32] Ānand Rām Muk̲h̲liṣ, *Safarnāma-i Muk̲h̲liṣ*, 57.
[33] Jahāngīr, *Jahāngīrnāma: Tūzuk-i Jahāngīrī*, 239.

and again fried. Then cumin is added, following which the whole mixture is removed from the heat. The *dāl mūng* (mungbean pulses) is then fried in that ghee, and the ghee is drained. Rice is added to the *dāl* (pulses or lentils) and mixed well. The spice mixture mentioned earlier is added to this, along with hot water and ginger. Ghee is added and the dish is sealed and slow-cooked to finish.[34] The *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī* and many other cookbooks also carry the same recipe.[35] The recipe is of medium level complexity, in terms of cooking techniques employed and number of ingredients prescribed. The use of many spices, however, marks it out as a dish for an elite kitchen. A relatively simpler recipe for a *khichṛī* made with *arhar dāl* (split pigeon pea), is also described in the *Khulāṣat*. In this recipe, the *dāl* is cooked in water till soft and the water has been absorbed. Half the ghee is then added to the *dāl*, and the rice is fried in the rest. Then, the *dāl* and spices are added to the rice, along with water. It is then put on *dam* (or pressure, i.e., slow cooked in a sealed container) in the final stage before being ready to serve.[36] Other recipes are more complicated and call for the use of meat. The ingredients listed for *khichṛī Dāwud Khānī* are oil or ghee (*raughan*), *mūng*, meat, pureed spinach, a hen's egg, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom, onions, ginger, salt, coriander, garlic and saffron.[37] The preparation process described is extremely complicated. According to the recipe, part of the meat is used to prepare a *yakhnī* (meat broth) with spices. The rest is minced, and following a lengthy process, is prepared as a *dopiyāza*. Later, this is combined with the other ingredients over several steps and cooked in a sealed pot (*dam dahad*). The dish is garnished in the end with boiled and halved eggs.[38]

Such nuance and range of cooking methods as well as exchange of recipes and techniques is inconsistent with structural analysis. Structuralism involves a clear definition of social categories and concomitant cultural traits. As we have seen from the *khichṛī* example, problematic distinctions such as 'elite' and 'popular' do not lend themselves as suitable to the analy-

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[34] "Khulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS NMI S.No.145, Acc. No. 96.479, f. 47v.
[35] *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī*, 107.
[36] "Khulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS NMI S.No.145, Acc. No. 96.479, f. 47r.
[37] Ibid, f. 45v.
[38] Ibid, ff. 45v-46r.

sis of culinary cultures. The other issue is the definition of cultural boundaries. Such distinctions form the core, for example, of Lévi-Strauss's comparison between English and French food, which created artificial national boundaries between culinary cultures.

On the other hand, the 'flavour meme' analytical paradigm allows for the flow of spice combinations and cooking techniques across social and cultural groups. The combination of rice (or other grains) and lentils or pulses could be seen both as a flavour principle as well as powerful meme that spread across so-called social boundaries. This basic meme combined with other spice combinations or flavour principles that were derived from various cultures. For instance, the combination of spinach and eggs in the *khichṛī Dāwud K̲h̲ānī* probably derived from the Iranian *nargīsī* prototype, which involved just such a pairing.

The phenomenon of flavour principles flowing across cultures and social groups becomes more starkly apparent when Indo-Persian culinary traditions are examined. The variety of culinary traditions drawn upon in Indo-Persian cookbooks is often brought out by the names of the recipes themselves, which often derived from ostensible cooking styles. Examples include *qalīya Shīrāzī* (Shiraz style *qalīya* or sauce based dish)*, zerbiryān-i Rūmī* (Ottoman style *zerbiryān*), *Shīrāzī pulāʾo* (*pulāʾo*, Shiraz style), *ḥalwā-i Rūmī* (Ottoman style *ḥalwā*)[39], and *ḥalwā-i Firangī* (European style *ḥalwā*) and *bharta-i Gujarātī*.[40] Thus, the various regions and cultures that the Mughals ruled over, or with whom they had trading and cultural contacts evidently influenced the collection of recipes reproduced in Indo-Persian cookbooks. In this milieu, it would be difficult to separate, say, Mughal cuisine associated with the great Rajput families of northwestern India, or 'Gujarati' cuisine. In fact, these categories themselves appear to subsume many 'sub-cultures' and influences.

The issue of boundary construction in a structuralist comparison of cuisines may also be illustrated through an actual exercise in comparison. Here, selected recipes in Indo-Persian and Iranian cookbooks are compared with respect to ingredients and cooking methods in order to highlight pat-

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[39] *Ḥalwā* is spelt in some places in the printed text of the *Nusk̲h̲a-i Shāhjahānī* as ḥalwa, but I have retained the standard spelling here.

[40] "K̲h̲ulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", f. 29r

terns of commonality and differential culinary evolution. The two seventeenth century Ṣafawid Iranian texts chosen for this purpose are *Kārnāma dar bāb-i Ṭabākẖī wa ṣanʿat-i ān* (or *Manual on Dishes and their Preparation*) of Ḥājī Muḥammad ʿAlī Bāwarchī Baghdādī and *Mādat al-Ḥaiwat* (or *The Substance of Life*).[41]

Some of the recipes frequently detailed in Indo-Persian cookbooks find their counterparts in these Iranian texts. The basic concepts of recipes such as *qalīya*, *dopiyāza*, *pulāʾo* (or *pilāv*), *kabāb*, *ḥalīm* and *harīsa* are shared. Also shared are certain essential pieces of kitchen equipment such as *tanūr* (tandoor or oven), *deg* (cauldron or cooking pot) and *sīkẖ* (skewer). But beyond that, there are many differences in detail. In particular, the recipes in Indo-Persian cooking manuals employ a wide variety of Indian ingredients, including spices, fish and vegetables peculiar to the subcontinent. These differences may be made clearer through a comparison of Iranian and Indian recipes for a few dishes. For instance, the *Mādat al-Ḥaiwat* details the method for preparing a basic *qalīya* as follows: the meat is chopped into tiny pieces and cleaned; onion rings and plenty of finely chopped herbs are added to this meat. When the meat is half cooked, several sticks of cinnamon, some whole pepper, ginger, ground pepper, cloves and green cardamom and finally, salt is added.[42] In the version of the *qalīya* detailed in most Indo-Persian cookbooks, onions are first fried; the meat is chopped into large pieces (*pārcha-i kalān*) and then fried and tempered in spices with this mixture.[43] The *Kārnāma* uses a similar basic *qalīya* recipe as the *Mādat al-Ḥaiwat* for the several *qalīya* variations that it details.[44] *Qalīya Nargisī* is an example of a dish that appears both in Indo-Persian and Iranian cookbooks. In the Indian version, the meat is cut into large pieces, and fried with onions and ghee. Salt, ginger and whole coriander are added. To this mixture, beets, carrots and *dāl* (pulses) are added and cooked till soft. The beets and carrots are then separated from the meat, and the *shorbā* (soup) is passed along with the *dāl* through a cloth, then combined with the meat and tempered with cloves and ghee. Cooked rice is passed through a

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[41] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*.
[42] Ibid, 235.
[43] For instance, see *Nuskẖa i Shāhjahānī*, 11-32, for descriptions of *qalīya* and *dopiyāza* recipes.
[44] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 123-155.

piece of cloth and the rice water is held. Spices, saffron, dry fruits and crushed spices are then added. This mixture is then removed from the pot, a *dopiyāza* is made out of the *sāg* (greens) and it is then cooked on a *māhī tāba* (or *tawa*[45] – iron skillet). An egg is added and the dish is cooked further. Finally, crushed spices are added on top. [46] In the Iranian version recorded in the *Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, the basic *qalīya* recipe described earlier is used. According to this recipe, after cooking the *qalīya*, spinach should be added, and several eggs should be cracked open over the spinach. Ground spices are then to be added, and *kirmānī* cumin along with salt is sprinkled on top of the eggs.[47] The *Kārnāma* also uses a similar recipe, namely it prescribes the preparation of a basic meat *qalīya*, with the addition of spinach and eggs.[48] The use of spinach (or other leafy greens) and eggs are the primary characteristics common to both the Iranian and Indian versions of this recipe. However, the Indian version also includes *dāl* and root vegetables (namely carrots, beets and turnips) and is also prepared and spiced differently. If we compare *pulāʾo* recipes as well, a similar picture emerges. Most of the *pulāʾo* recipes in Indo-Persian cookbooks are quite distinct from their Iranian counterparts, despite sharing fundamental elements. In particular, Indian *pulāʾos* were spiced very differently, and used different herbs and spices as compared to their Iranian counterparts. However, there are also a few specific recipes that are found both in Ṣafawid era cookbooks as well as in their Indo-Persian counterparts. For instance, the *nargisī pilāv*[49] recipe, which is found in the *Kārnāma*, also has a variation in many Indo-Persian cookbooks, including the *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī*. Both recipes share the basic element of incorporating spinach and eggs as key ingredients.[50] Another such recipe is the *muzaʿfar pulāʾo* (or *pilāv*). The recipes in the *Kārnāma* and

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[45] Spelt in many cookbook MSS as *māhī tāba*, but spelt in the printed text of the *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī* as *māhī tawa*. See *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī*, 14.

[46] Ibid,14.

[47] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 235.

[48] Ibid, 152-153.

[49] Spellings and pronunciations of this word can vary. Steingass transliterates this at various points as *palāv, pilav* (this transliteration possibly an error)*, pilāv or pulāv* (Steingass 1892: 254, 999, 1063, 1169, 1529). Some MSS indicate the *hamza* or *pesh*. Others do not. One MS even uses *pūlāv / pūlāʾo* (P-W-L-A-W) [MS SJML Ṭabākhī 3, Acc. No. 1429, p. 1]. For the Iranian version of the dish, however, I prefer *pilāv*.

[50] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 114-115; *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī*, 40.

the *Nuskẖa-i Shāhjahānī* are similar in using a stuffed chicken as a key element in the recipe, but other aspects of preparation and spicing differ between the Indian version and the Iranian one.[51] Thus, even when recipe names and basic concepts are shared, the actual preparation and spicing process differ in various respects.

The foregoing analysis illustrates the impossibility of constructing a structuralist comparison of early modern 'Mughal' and 'Ṣafawid or 'Iranian' and 'Indian' cuisine. First, there is a question of what 'Mughal' or 'Ṣafawid' denoted, since these so-called 'elite' cuisines cannot be separated from their broader culinary contexts. At the same time, while there were several differences between the ingredients and cooking methods prescribed in Indo-Persian and early modern Iranian cookbooks, there was also much continuity and many shared influences. This recalls the manner in which, for instance, Lévi-Strauss ignored the fact that the English nobility had long favoured French *haute* cuisine (Mennell 1985: 8). The work of Cecilia Leong-Salobir on the colonial cuisines of India and Malaya illustrates the manner in which the colonial context produced a hybrid cuisine born out of recipes brought by 'native' cooks into Anglo-Indian and Malayan kitchens (Leong-Salobir 2011). The fact that, for instance, the Indian *qalīya nargīsī* shared its basic character with its Ṣafawid counterpart, while still retaining a unique character poses problems for a structuralist analysis.

This phenomenon of porous culinary traditions and practices, would, however, pose no problems for a 'flavour meme' analytical paradigm. Contact with various influences lead to the evolution of new flavour principles in a gradual fashion. Thus, the Iranian culinary influences did not replace Indian culinary practices or even supplement them. Rather, they blended with the culinary traditions of the Indian subcontinent. This is evident when we consider the *khichṛī*, *pulāʾo* and *qalīya*. In the case of the *khichṛī*, a recipe concept deriving from the Indian subcontinent was often embellished with various other flavour combinations, while in the case of the *pulāʾo* and *qalīya*, recipe concepts probably of Iranian or Central Asian origin or inspiration, but which integrated many Indian elements. The cultures of origin I identify here (Indian, Iranian, Central Asian) are only immediate ones. In

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[51] *Kārnāma u Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 128-129; *Nuskẖa-i Shāhjahānī*, 42-43.

reality, as cuisine is in a constant state of evolution, blending various influences, no fixed cultures of origin may be assigned.

There is a third aspect of the cuisine described in Indo-Persian cookbooks that does not fit into the typical structuralist framework. Structuralism as envisioned by anthropologists such as Lévi-Strauss, Barthes and Douglas usually involved clearly defined meals, courses and categories of dishes. This may have been influenced by their understanding of a limited range of European or western traditions in the twentieth century, but certainly does not represent universal phenomena. The evidence of Indo-Persian cookbooks is indicative of a more fluid concept of meals and courses. For one, dry and wet, heavy and light as well as sweet and savoury dishes are often intermingled in Indo-Persian cookbooks. Contemporary Indian and Persian sources are also not consistent in describing fixed meal times or courses. However, I would refrain from reading too much into this aspect, since it may also be interpreted as an artefact of the kind of source material that has come down to us: the evidence is scattered, and histories, chronicles, memoirs and travelogues often describe atypical situations.

Structuralist analysis has never sought to explain the evolution of recipes and culinary cultures. At best, structuralist anthropology has focussed on accounting for the manner in which the basic structure of food practices survives despite 'cosmetic' or 'superficial' changes. A significant issue with this approach is the *a priori* assumption that there does indeed exist a 'pure' structure, or an 'authentic' culture. The problematic nature of this assumption may be illustrated with the example of the *biryānī*. In the context of the present, this is a spiced rice dish with many variations. A probable 'ancestor' can be traced to cookbooks produced in early modern Iran. For instance, The *Kārnāma dar bāb-i Ṭabākẖī wa ṣanʿat-i ān* has a set of recipes called *biryān* that combine meat or fowl with rice, often layered over each other.[52] The *Mādat al-Ḥaiwat* has a few recipes under a single heading *biryān pilāv* that also describe similar preparations.[53] Indo-Persian cookbooks contain similar recipes under the broad category of *zerbiryān*. These recipes involved an elaborate *dumpukẖt* process, which implied slow

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[52] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 159-161.
[53] *Kārnāma wa Mādat al-Ḥaiwat*, 214-215.

cooking in a pot sealed with batter. The Indian *zerbiryāns* were cooked in a *degcha* (cooking pot), rather than in a *tanūr*.[54] From its earliest described recipes to the astounding variety of *biryānīs* popular today, it is impossible to designate a single 'original' or 'authentic' preparation. Culinary change should thus be viewed in evolutionary terms rather than as a basic structure only superficially inflected by 'external' influences.

Moreover, even a structured categorisation of dishes is problematic. There are many rice dishes described in Indo-Persian cookbooks including *khichṛī*, *pulāʾo*, *zerbiryān*, *ṭāhirī* and *qabūlī*. However, in terms of ingredients and cooking techniques, it is difficult to draw a particular distinction or a set of criteria that can consistently be applied to differentiate between them. *Pulāʾo, zerbiryān* and *ṭāhirī* had in common the use of rice, meat and spices. The *zerbiryān* involved a unique *dumpukht* process, but similar, slightly less elaborate *dum* (pressure cooking) methods were used for various other preparations. *Pulāʾos* were typically more elaborate than other rice dishes, but this could also vary. Similarly, both *dopiyāza* and *qalīya* preparations represented ways of dressing meat with a base of fried onions, the only difference being that *qalīyas* were usually a little 'wetter'.

CONCLUSION: ANALYSING CUISINE AS A PROCESS

Scepticism of the structuralist approach led many food anthropologists to abandon a theoretical approach altogether. Generalising analysis was seen as typical of the structuralist approach, with all its documented shortcomings. For this reason, a mainly historical and comparative approach that eschewed grand explanatory models was favoured even by scholars trained in anthropology and sociology such as Mennell and Ferguson.

However, I would argue that the shortcomings of structuralism are no reason to abandon an analytical approach altogether. This, however, has to be flexible enough to accommodate diverse cultural and historical situations. But more importantly, it must have the capacity to explain change, i.e. it should be process-oriented.

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[54] See for instance, *Nuskha-i Shāhjahānī*, 35-37.

Certain flavour principles may be suggested on the basis of my analysis of Indo-Persian culinary manuals. It is notable that certain spice combinations occur repeatedly in these cookbooks. The spices most commonly used are *dārchīnī* (cinnamon), *zīra* (cumin), *qaranful* (cloves), *ilāychī* (cardamom), *filfil* (black pepper), *adarak* (ginger), *kishnīz* (coriander), and *zard chūb* (turmeric). These are almost always combined with onions. In fact, fried onions form the basis of most savoury dishes. While all the spices mentioned above are not used in every dish, the majority of them appear repeatedly in combination. These spice combinations, found frequently across the spectrum of Indo-Persian cookbooks, give the dishes described a more intensive flavour than their mildly spiced Iranian counterparts. Moreover, there is evidence that strong elements of the sweet taste were often incorporated into savoury recipes. This was done through making a *chāshnīdār* or 'syrupy' variation of the dish, which involved adding a mixture of sugar syrup and lemon to the dish. Thus, there were *chāshnīdār* variations of various *qalīya* and *dopiyāza* recipes. I have argued that an adaptation of Rozin's 'flavour principles' formulation combined with a modification of Dawkins' meme concept may be fruitfully employed as an analytical metaphor to capture some of the dynamicity of culinary evolution. However, this may not be the only useful or applicable analytical paradigm that should necessarily be applied to all contexts. I advocate a flexible approach, and above all, one that does not carry metaphors to their absurd conclusions.

On the basis of the anthropological definitions of cuisine discussed in this paper, as well as drawing on recent anthropological and sociological writings on the analysis of cuisine, a few conclusions may be drawn on the definition and analysis of 'Mughal cuisine'. There are problems with the term 'Mughal cuisine' itself, as has been discussed above. Nevertheless, I do use the word 'Mughal' because of its widespread acceptance in the academic literature and because it does, to some degree, evoke the cultural pluralism of the Mughal elite. Secondly, to the extent that a culinary culture can be reconstructed from Indo-Persian sources – and to a significant but not entirely precise degree it can – this culture may be characterised as constituting both a '*cuisine'* and an '*haute* cuisine'. The 'cuisine' of Indo-Persian cookbooks was characterised by a recognisable set of recipes, ingredients and cooking techniques that were fluid and forever evolving in

response to local and 'foreign' influences. Despite being an '*haute* cuisine' that included the use of some expensive ingredients imported over long distances, it also incorporated much that drew or purported to draw on the bazaar and the food of the 'common folk'. For instance, the *Ḵẖulāṣat* has a recipe for *qīma kabāb ṭaraḥ-i bāzār* (bazaar style mincemeat kebabs).[55] The same recipe is also found in the *Nusḵẖa-i Shāhjahānī*.[56] Whether or not this recipe was 'authentic' is not the point: rather, it illustrates how the food world of these cookbooks was not separated from that of the bazaar, and that recipes, recipe titles and culinary influences flowed both ways. The *Niˁmatnāma* also records recipes with similar titles suggestive of popular or rustic origins: *māhī rūstāˀī ganwārī* (rustic rural fish) and *rūstāˀī sabzī* (rural style vegetables).[57]

In this article, I have suggested some approaches for the analysis of the cuisine represented in Indo-Persian texts, which comes closest to what is often characterised as 'Mughal cuisine'. Some aspects of these propositions may have wider or even universal applicability. However, there may also be other explanatory formulations that may be adopted in various situations: these must be sensitive to historical and cultural contexts, while also being amenable to transcultural application. The limited purpose of this particular paper is to argue in favour of a nuanced, yet analytical and transcultural, but most importantly *process-oriented* approach to the study of cuisines and food cultures.

Divya Narayanan completed her PhD in South Asian history from the University of Heidelberg, Germany in 2015. She is currently Associate Member at the Heidelberg Centre for the Environment, University of Heidelberg. Her primary research interests are Mughal India, food studies and environmental history. She can be reached at divnar@gmail.com.

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[55] "Ḵẖulāṣat-i Mākūlāt u Mashrūbāt", MS NMI S.No.145, Acc. No. 96.479, ff. 21r-v.

[56] *Nusḵẖa-i Shāhjahānī*, p. 88.

[57] Titley, *The Niˁmatnāma Manuscript*, facsimile MS ff. 20v, 29r, translation, pp. 12, 16.

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Azadi – (T)räume der Freiheit und Orte des Widerstands im Kaschmirtal

Frederic Maria Link[1]

Abstract: Der vorliegende Artikel beschäftigt sich mit lokalen Formen des Widerstands im indisch verwalteten Jammu und Kashmir. Ein sehr populärer Slogan auf Demonstrationen und Kundgebungen ist: *„Hum kya chahte? Azadi!"* (Was wollen wir? Freiheit!). *Azadi* ist dabei nicht nur eine politische Parole. Vielmehr wird es hier als ein komplexes Konzept verstanden, das ein breites Spektrum von politischen und besonders räumlichen Vorstellungen und Forderungen beinhaltet. Relevant sind die Prozesse der Schaffung und der Aneignung des Raums, der hier als ein soziales Produkt verstanden wird, in dem soziale Praktiken und Prozesse stattfinden und der durch diese hergestellt wird. *Azadi* ermöglicht zum einen das Entwerfen von *(T)räumen der Freiheit* – also von utopischen Orten, die sowohl der Sinnstiftung als auch der Mobilisierung der Massen dienen. Diese Orte umfassen verschiedene Utopien, die jeweils auf verschiedenen Ideologien – seien sie national, sozialistisch oder religiös geprägt – aufbauen und dementsprechende Ziele verfolgen. Neben diesen sprachlich geäußerten Vorstellungen und einer versuchten Aneignung von Raum auf ideeller Ebene manifestieren sich Überzeugungen von *Azadi* auch in physisch-materiellen Räumen und machen aus diesen *Orte des Widerstands*. Dabei dienen Graffiti, Märtyrerfriedhöfe und Demonstrationen als Strategien zur Raumaneignung und Raumproduktion. Diese Strategien sind an die Gegebenheiten des überwachten und besetzten Raums in Kaschmir angepasst. Orte des Widerstands und utopische Orte beeinflussen sich wechselseitig. Beide sind das Produkt diskursiver Praktiken und dienen gleichzeitig als Ausgangspunkt zur kontinuierlichen Transformation derselben.

EINLEITUNG

Seit dem Ende der britischen Kolonialherrschaft 1947 und der anschließenden Teilung des indischen Subkontinents stehen sich die Nachfolgestaaten Indien und Pakistan feindselig gegenüber. Zentral hierbei ist der Streit um

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das ehemalige Fürstentum Jammu und Kaschmir,[2] um das wenige Monate nach der Unabhängigkeit der erste Krieg zwischen den jungen Staaten Indien und Pakistan geführt und in dessen Verlauf Kaschmir de facto geteilt[3] wird. Seitdem erheben beide Parteien Ansprüche auf das ungeteilte Kaschmir und werfen der jeweils anderen Seite eine illegale Besatzung vor. Der Kampf um Kaschmir prägt bis heute beide Staaten und ist aufs engste mit ihrer jeweiligen Selbstwahrnehmung als Nation verknüpft. Pakistan, das als Land der Muslime des indischen Subkontinents gegründet wurde, verweist auf die muslimische Bevölkerungsmehrheit Kaschmirs. Auf der indischen Seite kann man von zwei *geopolitcal imaginations* (Chaturvedi 2000) sprechen. Die Vertreter einer religiös-kulturellen nationalen Identität Indiens, insbesondere die Hindu-Rechte, betonen die vedisch-hinduistische Vergangenheit Kaschmirs und begründen so die Verbindung zu Indien. Vertreter einer säkularen Identität Indiens sehen Kaschmir als Beweis und Symbol einer *unity in diversity* und das in doppelter Hinsicht: Zum einem ist es das einzige Bundesland mit einer muslimischen Bevölkerungsmehrheit und dient deshalb als Symbol bzw. Beweis für den säkularen Charakter der Indischen Union. Zum anderen exemplifiziert Kaschmir mit seinen vielfältigen kulturellen und religiösen Einflüssen das Konzept selbst (Commuri 2010).

Dieser kurze Überblick macht deutlich, dass Raum bei der Auseinandersetzung um Kaschmir eine zentrale Rolle spielt. Raum wird dabei aus einer humangeographischen Perspektive als ein soziales Produkt verstanden, in dem soziale Praxis und Prozesse stattfinden und der durch diese erzeugt wird (vgl. Lefebvre 1994). Dabei steht der Raum in keiner einseitigen Beziehung zu den Subjekten, die ihm mittels diskursiver Praktiken bestimmte Attribute zuweisen und die mit dieser Bedeutungsaufladung bestimmte Zwecke verfolgen. Wie der Raum von Subjekten und diskursiven Praktiken der Raumnutzung konstituiert wird, konstituiert er seinerseits diejenigen, die sich in ihm aufhalten (vgl. Strüver 2009). In dieser Hinsicht entsteht zwischen dem Raum und dem Sozialen eine Wechselwirkung, bei der beide

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[2] Der Streit betrifft das ehemalige Fürstentum Jammu und Kaschmir, von dem Kaschmir bzw. das Kaschmirtal nur einen Teil ausmacht. Sowohl in der Literatur als auch im alltäglichen Sprachgebrauch werden Jammu und Kaschmir sowie Kaschmir größtenteils synonym verwendet. Die vorliegende Arbeit bezieht sich mit den Interviews und der teilnehmenden Beobachtung streng genommen auf das Kaschmirtal, doch ist eine klare Abgrenzung von den anderen Teilen Jammu und Kaschmirs konzeptionell nicht hilfreich.
[3] Entlang einer Demarkationslinie, ab 1972 dann Line of Control (LoC).

Teil eines kontinuierlichen Prozesses sind, der erneut von diskursiven Praktiken des Sozialen bestimmt wird. Dies wird von Glasze und Mattissek „als immer nur temporär fixiert, als von Widersprüchen durchzogen und sich in den jeweiligen materiellen und räumlichen Erscheinungsformen permanent wandelnd" (Glasze & Mattissek 2009: 43) beschrieben.

Eine Erscheinungsform des Raums ist das Territorium. Dieses ist stets das Resultat von Territorialisierungsprozessen, bei denen, mit dem Ziel der Kontrolle über Menschen, Objekte, Praktiken etc., die Herstellung von (exakten) Grenzen um einen geographischen Raum zentral ist (Sack 1983: 55f). Handelt es sich um ein staatliches Territorium, ist die territoriale Souveränität, bei der der Staat die exklusive Kontrolle über einen klar abgegrenzten Raum hat, entscheidend (Agnew 2001: 824). Die Kontrolle über das staatliche Territorium erfolgt sowohl auf physischer als auch auf symbolischer Ebene (Paasi 2003: 111). Sowohl die Raumform des Territoriums als auch Orte (*Places*) sind Ausprägungen unterschiedlicher Strategien zur Raumproduktion und Raumaneignung bei denen sowohl ideelle als auch physisch-materielle Räume eine Rolle spielen. Die Raumform Ort wird als konkreter physisch-materieller Raumausschnitt betrachtet, (beziehungsweise auch als Idee eines solchen), dem Menschen unterschiedliche Bedeutungen – in Form von Gefühlen und Ideen – zuschreiben. Im hier betrachteten Kontext sind die Ortszuschreibungen einzelner Subjekte nur gesellschaftlich relevant, insofern „die den *Places* [Orten] zugeschriebenen Bedeutungen von mehreren Menschen mehr oder weniger geteilt werden und diese Bedeutungen als Argumente fungieren oder zur politischen Mobilisierung verwendet werden" (Belina 2013: 109).

Das oben genannte Beispiel Indien macht deutlich, dass auch ein Territorium, das einem (National)staat zugehörig ist, als Ort verstanden werden kann. Dabei werden in der ersten *geopolitical imagination* Religion und Territorium verbunden und in der zweiten Kultur und Territorium kombiniert. Da „the territorial principle is drawn from a belief in ancient heritage, encapsulated in the notion of 'sacred geography,' and figures in both imaginations, it has acquired political hegemony over time" (Varshney 1993: 238). Dabei wird das Territorium der Indischen Union, dargestellt auf der Karte, zum *geo-body* der Nation. Dieser abstrakte „Körper" wird durch die Anthropomorphisierung zur *Bharat Mata* (Mutter Indien) patriotisch aufge-

laden (vgl. Ramaswamy 2003: 151ff). Diese hegemoniale Fokussierung auf das Territoriale führt zur einer „cartographic anxiety" (Krishna 1994: 508), deren Folgen sich in Kaschmir besonders deutlich zeigten: Die Angst vor einem Verlust von Territorium ist zentral und der Schutz der Grenzen hat oberste Priorität. Die Grenzen müssen zum einem gegenüber anderen Staaten, im Falle Kaschmirs gegen Pakistan und China, verteidigt[4] werden. Zum anderen richtet sich die kartographische Angst aber auch nach innen, im Falle Kaschmirs gegen die Separations-/Selbstbestimmungsbewegung die von großen Teilen der lokalen Bevölkerung unterstützt wird. Dabei geht der indische Staat sowohl gegen die bewaffneten Aufständischen als auch gegen friedliche Massendemonstrationen – in erster Linie militärisch – vor und macht Kaschmir dadurch in Bezug auf die zivile Bevölkerung zum Gebiet mit der höchsten Soldatendichte weltweit (Kak 2013: x).

Ein sehr populärer Slogan, der auf den Massendemonstrationen in Kaschmir gerufen wird, ist: „*Hum* kya chahte? Azadi!" (Was wollen wir? Freiheit!). Azadi ist nach der Analyse nicht nur eine politische Parole, sondern ein komplexes Konzept, das ein breites Spektrum von politischen und besonders räumlichen Vorstellungen und Forderungen beinhaltet. Im Folgenden soll herausgearbeitet werden, welche Raumvorstellungen diesen inhärent sind, welche Strategien der Raumaneignung dabei angewandt werden und welche „neuen" Orte dadurch „gemacht" werden.

Methode

Im Rahmen einer zweimonatigen Feldforschung (August bis Oktober 2013) in Delhi und Srinagar wurden eine teilnehmende Beobachtung sowie Leidfadeninterviews durchgeführt. Die Auswahl der Interviewpartner erfolgte nach bestimmten Kriterien, wie Herkunft und politischer Einstellung, und ist somit nicht repräsentativ für die ganze Bevölkerung des indischen Teils von Jammu und Kaschmir; so sollten die Befragten aus dem indischen Bundesstaat Jammu und Kaschmir stammen und politisch aktiv sein, d.h. an Demonstrationen, Kundgebungen oder Treffen teilnehmen und/oder *Azadi*

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[4] Mit beiden Ländern verfügt Indien über umstrittene Grenzen, u.a. auch in Kaschmir und führte bereits Grenzkriege (vgl. Stang 2002: 62ff).

schriftlich oder mündlich propagieren. Bis auf eine Ausnahme[5] handelt es sich bei allen Befragten um sunnitische Muslime aus dem Kaschmirtal.

Des Weiteren handelte es sich bei den meisten Befragten sowohl in Delhi als auch in Srinagar um Studenten, Aktivisten und Journalisten. Die Gründe dafür lagen einerseits im Vorhandensein von Englischkenntnissen und andererseits im unkomplizierten Zugang zu den Interviewpartnern. Bei den Interviews und Gruppendiskussionen wurde dieser akademische und aktivistische Hintergrund besonders deutlich, wenn Aussagen oder Fachbegriffe mit Autoren belegt wurden oder einige Autoren und ihre Konzepte bzw. Theorien kritisiert wurden. Zudem wollten die Befragten oft wissen, welche Bücher der Autor gelesen hatte und wie er zu den jeweiligen Konzepten steht. Neben den Interviews kam es mit fast allen Befragten zu mehreren informellen Begegnungen, sei es auf Demonstrationen, kulturellen Veranstaltungen oder auf der Straße.

Zur Auswertung wurden die Interviews in drei Schritten nach Flick (1995: 160ff) kodiert. Erstens wurden Einzelfallanalysen durchgeführt, in denen besonders nach Textstellen gesucht wurde, die zur Beantwortung der Hauptfrage dienten. Daraus entstand ein „verdichteter Text" (Pfaffenbach 2007: 166), der vom Forscher kommentiert und weiter interpretiert wurde. Zweitens wurden aus der Analyse jedes Einzelfalls Kategorien entwickelt, die die Komplexität des Materials reduzierten. Drittens wurden alle Interviews verglichen und nach Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden durchsucht. Das Ergebnis dieses Verfahrens zielt im Gegenteil zu Flicks Modell nicht auf eine Theorieentwicklung, sondern dient zusammen mit einer hermeneutischen Variante der Diskursanalyse der weiteren Interpretation der Problematik, bei der die Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen des Forschers vor Ort mitberücksichtigt werden.

Das in dieser Studie verwendete geographische Diskursanalysekonzept behandelt die Wahrnehmung und Konstruktion von Räumen aus der Perspektive einzelner Subjekte, ohne außer Acht zu lassen, dass dies, aus einer foucaultschen Perspektive, als ein Produkt hegemonialer Diskurse verstanden wird. Zum einen ist die Rolle des Subjekts bei der Produktion von Räumen und Diskursen von großer Bedeutung, was als hermeneutischer Ansatz

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[5] Einer der Befragten, Ethisan (24), kommt aus der Poonch Region, ist sunnitischer Muslim, aber spricht kein Kaschmiri, sondern Hindi/Urdu. Er bezeichnet sich als Kaschmiri.

verstanden werden kann. Zum anderen muss der foucaultsche Ansatz in Betracht gezogen werden, bei dem nicht nur „Diskurse durch individualisierte Subjekte und deren Handeln aktiviert werden", sondern „Diskurse in jeweils spezifischer Weise verkörperte Subjekte [konstituieren und regieren]" (Strüver 2009: 69f). Selbst wenn das Subjekt mittels „Selbsttechniken" (vgl. Foucault 1993) wie der Individualisierung des Körpers, der Selbstinszenierung oder des Umgangs mit Medien, die Selbst-Konstitution und autonomes Handeln versucht, merkt es nicht, „dass es eigentlich ein Produkt von Herrschaftsverhältnissen, von Macht-, Wissens- und Körpertechniken ist" (Strüver 2009: 77).

In der vorliegenden Analyse werden Diskurse nicht auf die sprachliche Ebene reduziert, sondern werden die diskursiven Beziehungen des Sprachlichen zum Nicht-Sprachlichen mit eingeschlossen. Dabei werden Graffiti, ein Märtyrerfriedhof und Demonstrationen in die Untersuchung mit einbezogen, weil Hall zufolge die Rolle von Bedeutung nicht nur bei sprachlichen, sondern auch bei nicht-sprachlichen Praktiken zu beachten sei. Denn „since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect." (Hall 1992: 291). Um eine angemessene Analyse durchzuführen, werden zum einen die Individuen und ihre Aussagen ernst genommen und in einen Kontext gesetzt. Zum anderen werden Praktiken und räumliche Manifestationen auf ihre diskursiven Eigenschaften untersucht.

Hum kya chahte? Azadi![6] *Analyse und Interpretation*

Was heißt *Azadi*?

> Abdullah und ich kommen an der *Jamia Masjid*, einer großen Moschee in der Altstadt Srinagars, vorbei. Ein offensichtlich verwirrter Mann läuft auf uns zu. Seine Kleidung ist schmutzig und er macht einen verwahrlosten Eindruck. In seiner Hand ist eine Spielzeugpistole aus Plastik. Er schreit Slogans durcheinander, von denen wir nur „*Azadi*" verstehen und schießt mit seiner Pistole auf imaginäre Ziele in der Luft. Einige Passanten kommen angerannt, da sie dachten, der Verwirrte wol-

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[6] Was wollen wir? Freiheit!

> le etwas von uns. Als sie jedoch hören, dass er nur Slogans ruft und mit der Plastikpistole spielt, sagen sie lachend, dass selbst die Verrückten hier frei sein wollen und Abdullah meint „the desire for freedom and self-determination is so deep here, even the mad people have it" (Feldtagebuch Srinagar, 19.09.2013).

Ist der Wunsch nach *Azadi* bei den Bewohnern Jammu und Kaschmirs so tief, das ihn sogar die vermeintlich Verrückten haben, wie Abdullah (ca. 55 Jahre alt)[7], ein Fremdenführer, meint? Gibt es durch die Erfahrung der jahrelangen Unterdrückung ein, wie Ala (33), ein Aktivist aus Srinagar, sich ausdrückt, „genetic makeover", das *Azadi* in die DNA eines jeden Kaschmiris gepflanzt hat? Oder ist es der Wunsch nach Freiheit und Selbstbestimmung, der die Menschen dort verrückt, oder wie Fatima (ca. 25), eine Jurastudentin, meint, „obsessed with *Azadi*" werden lässt?

Der Mann mit der Spielzeugpistole könnte auch sinnbildlich für die allgemeine Verwirrung, die überall beklagte „confusion" in Jammu und Kaschmir stehen. Sein Slogan könnte das Vorspiel der wenige Stunden später an selber Stelle stattfindenden Demonstration sein, bei der jugendliche Kaschmiris *Azadi* fordern. So wie er sein Spiel mit seiner Plastikpistole aufführt, imaginäre Ziele anvisiert und dabei lacht, werden später die Jugendlichen versuchen, die Soldaten mit Steinen zu bewerfen, ihren Gummigeschossen elegant auszuweichen und sie dabei zu verhöhnen. Beide Choreografien erscheinen dem Außenstehenden befremdlich, wobei sie mit routinierter Selbstverständlichkeit sowohl vorgeführt als auch von den Passanten beobachtet werden.

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[7] Die Namen aller Informanten wurden geändert.
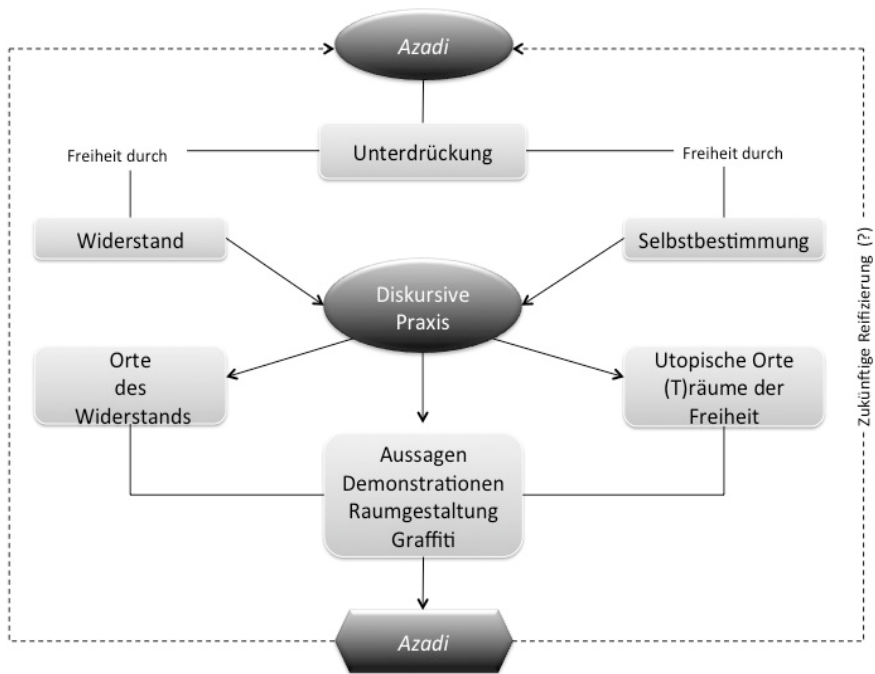
Abb. 1: Azadi (T)räume der Freiheit und Orte des Widerstands.
Eigene Darstellung.

Azadi beschreibt und steht zum einen für die (T)räume der Freiheit, die im konkreten Fall als utopischer Ort vorgestellt werden, und zum anderen für einen (alternativen) Gegen-Ort. Beide dienen sowohl der Sinnstiftung als auch der Mobilisierung der Massen. Die (T)räume der Freiheit sind die individuellen Vorstellungen von *Azadi*.[8] Sie bündeln sich in Entwürfen und Wunschträumen von einer besseren Zukunft oder vielmehr einer Utopie. Da diese Utopie im konkreten Fall ortsspezifisch ist, nämlich *Azadi* in und für Jammu und Kaschmir, kann man von einem utopischen Ort sprechen. Der utopische Ort ist im eigentlichen Sinne in den Plural zu setzen. Diese Orte umfassen verschiedene Utopien, die jeweils auf verschiedenen Ideologien – seien sie national, sozialistisch oder religiös geprägt – aufbauen und dementsprechende Ziele verfolgen. Sie erscheinen auf den ersten Blick diffus.

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[8] Diese Vorstellungen sind Prozessen unterworfen und verändern sich mit der Zeit. Dabei spielen geopolitische Leitbilder eine erhebliche Rolle. Für geopolitische Leitbilder im Allgemeinen siehe Reuber (2012: 157ff).

Klarer wirkt dagegen der Gegen-Ort. Er richtet sich gegen die Aussage, dass Jammu und Kaschmir ein integraler Teil der Indischen Union ist und gegen die indische Militärpräsenz. Der Gegen-Ort ist nicht nur ein Ort der Zukunft, sondern er existiert bereits für viele Bewohner von Jammu und Kaschmir, nämlich als Ort des Widerstands. *Azadi* umfasst demnach Aspekte der Selbstbestimmung und des Widerstands. Das Fordern von *Azadi* hat somit zwei Stoßrichtungen; seine Bedeutungszuschreibungen konstituieren zwei Orte, wie in Abbildung 1 zusammengefasst wird: zum einen die utopischen Orte der Freiheit und zum anderen einen Gegen-Ort bzw. Orte des Widerstands in der Gegenwart.

AZADI ALS (T)RÄUME DER FREIHEIT UND UTOPISCHE ORTE

Die Argumente und Begründungen für *Azadi* in seiner Funktion als Ruf nach Autonomie, die während der Interviews genannt wurden, sind vielfältig und komplex. Für die Herausarbeitung der utopischen Orte spielen aber genau diese Legitimationen für die Forderung nach Freiheit eine zentrale Rolle, da sie einen wichtigen Hinweis auf die Konstituierung der utopischen Orte geben. Die Begründungen für *Azadi* lassen sich in die folgenden Kategorien einteilen: national-staatlich und religiös-islamisch. Eine dritte Kategorie ist das *kashmiriyat*, das aber Aspekte der beiden davor genannten Begründungen enthält. Des Weiteren tauchen auch sozialistische und andere revolutionäre Motivationen auf, die aber letztlich wieder zu den zwei erstgenannten führen. Die kategoriale Einteilung ist nicht trennscharf und als heuristische Annahme zu verstehen.

Nation

Wie bereits erwähnt ist Selbstbestimmung ein zentraler Punkt bei der Forderung nach *Azadi*. Während der Interviews beriefen sich die meisten der Befragten immer wieder auf dieses Recht als Mitglieder einer Nation. Auch in der Literatur wird das Kaschmirproblem häufig entlang der Linien von Gruppenidentitäten, die eine Nation konstituieren, erklärt (vgl. Thomas 2001: 196ff). Die Frage nach Inklusion und Exklusion, also wer gehört zur Nation und wer nicht, ist dabei zentral. Dabei ist der Begriff schwer zu fassen, und selbst „the criteria used for this purpose – language, ethnicity or

whatever – are themselves fuzzy, shifting and ambiguous, and as useless for purposes of the traveller's orientation as cloud-shapes are compared to landmarks. This, of course, makes them unusually convenient for propagandist and programmatic, as distinct from descriptive purposes" (Hobsbawm 2000: 6).

Ob nun für Propagandazwecke oder nicht, viele der Befragten berufen sich auf den Begriff der Nation, wenngleich sie ihn mit verschiedenen Kriterien versehen und diese jeweils unterschiedlich gewichten. Die Gruppenidentitäten, die sich auf die genannten Kriterien beziehen, sind in der Regel nicht statisch, sondern fluide und als Prozesse zu verstehen. Zentral ist dabei der Prozess der „boundary maintenance, [because it is] the ethnic *boundary* that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (Barth 1969: 15, Hervorhebung im Original).

Auf die Frage warum sie auf Kundgebungen geht und *Azadi* ruft, meinte Sana (25), eine Studentin, die ich auf vielen Demonstrationen gesehen habe, „I have to fight for my nationhood." Dabei sieht sie Jammu und Kaschmir als „state nation, not as nation state." Die Kaschmiris sind für sie in diesem Sinne keine Nation, die einen eigenen Staat gründen wollen. Der Staat Jammu und Kaschmir wurde schon ohne die Hilfe einer Nation gegründet. Sana zufolge macht der gemeinsame Staat aus ihnen aber eine Nation. Bei der Diversität der Bevölkerung mit ihren verschiedenen Sprachen und Religionen ist das nicht einfach: „we have to work for that." Dabei deckt sich ihre Vorstellung mit der von Gellner, wonach Staaten und Nationen unabhängig voneinander entstanden sind. Der Staat entstand sicherlich „without the help of the nation. Some nations have certainly emerged without the blessings of their own state" (Gellner 1983: 6). Sanas Aussagen zeigen deutlich, dass sie Nation als etwas sieht, für das man arbeiten kann, vielleicht sogar muss, was aber für alle diversen Bevölkerungsgruppen Kaschmirs offen ist und niemanden ausschließt.

Arif (ca. 30), ein Schriftsteller und Aktivist, spricht hingegen von „cultural nationalism." In der Fachliteratur versteht man darunter eine gemeinsame nationale Identität, die auf einer geteilten Geschichte und Kultur aufbaut. Nach dieser Konzeption ist der Kern jeder Nation eine charakteristische und unverwechselbare Kultur (vgl. Hutchinson 1994: 122ff). Für Arif haben die Kaschmiris diese gemeinsame Identität und Kultur, die sich beispielsweise

in einer gemeinsamen Sprache und einer gemeinsamen Religion äußert. Ihre eigenständige Kultur hat seiner Meinung nach traditionell engere Verbindungen zu Zentralasien als zu Indien. Trotz dieser kulturellen Nähe zu Zentralasien sind die Kaschmiris für ihn eine eigene Nation. Diese existierte dementsprechend schon lange vor Gründung des Staates. Teil dieser Nation sind in erster Linie die Kaschmiri sprechenden sunnitischen Muslime. Sie bilden die Mehrheit von Jammu und Kaschmir und sollten deshalb auch über sich selbst bestimmen dürfen, oder wie sich Wasim (ca. 30), ein Journalist aus Srinagar ausdrückt, die Mehrheit „makes the rules, and there is a muslim majority here." Doch daraus leiten sie zwei unterschiedliche Forderungen ab: Für Arif hat diese Mehrheit sunnitischer Kaschmiri in Jammu und Kaschmir das Recht auf einen eigenen Staat. Für Wasim hingegen haben die Kaschmiris zwar eine unverwechselbare Kultur, das bedeutet für ihn aber nicht, dass sie deswegen eine eigene Nation sind, geschweige denn einen eigenen Staat benötigen. Er ist ein Vertreter der Zwei-Nationen-Theorie. Jammu und Kaschmir ist für ihn Teil einer muslimischen Nation auf dem Subkontinent. Konstituierend für die Nation ist für ihn die Religion, wenngleich Kultur und geographische Nähe eine Rolle spielen. Er ist sich sicher: wenn die Kaschmiris ihre Selbstbestimmung erlangen, werden sie sich für Pakistan entscheiden.

Die Frage der Nation spielt für Fatima, eine angehende Juristin, erst einmal keine Rolle. Sie denkt, dass es sich bei Jammu und Kaschmir nicht um eine Nation handelt. Es sei vielmehr ein Staat gewesen, der unrechtmäßig von Indien besetzt und annektiert wurde. Die Bürger des Staates Jammu und Kaschmir sollten das Recht haben, über dessen Verbleib zu entscheiden. Sie beklagt sich über das nicht gehaltene Referendum über die Zugehörigkeit von Jammu und Kaschmir zur Indischen Union und die vielen anderen Vertragsbrüche seitens der indischen Regierung. Das meiste betrifft verfassungsrechtliche Aspekte und Gesetzesregelungen, aber auch Menschenrechtsverletzungen moniert sie. Dabei bleibt sie die meiste Zeit im Jargon einer Juristin. Erst gegen Ende des Interviews erzählt sie von persönlichen traumatischen Erlebnissen. Sie ist sich sicher, dass alle Bewohner unter dem Konflikt leiden. Es ist ihrer Meinung nach dieses Leiden, dass zu einem verstärkten Zusammenhalt der verschiedenen Gruppen führt und

„when the conflict goes on for hundred years we are even closer. Maybe we need this as a nation."

Dass Fatima während des Interviews nun doch von einer Nation spricht, kann auf zwei verschiedene Arten interpretiert werden. Möglicherweise glaubt sie doch nicht daran, dass es sich bei Jammu und Kaschmir nur um einen Staat handelt und Nation dabei keine Rolle spielt. Ihre Überzeugung will sie mir gegenüber nicht zeigen, aber als sie emotionale Themen anspricht, rutscht es ihr heraus. Zudem können ihre Äußerungen als Teil einer semantischen Illusion gedeutet werden. Es ist die gleiche „semantic illusion which today turns all states officially into 'nations' (and members of the United Nations), even when they are patently not. Consequently, all movements seeking territorial autonomy tend to think of themselves as establishing 'nations' even when this is plainly not the case; and all movements for regional, local or even sectional interests against central power and state bureaucracy will, if they possibly can, put on the national costume, preferably in its ethnic-linguistic styles" (Hobsbawm 2000: 177f).

In vielen Interviews wurden die Begriffe Staat und Nation nicht klar voneinander getrennt. Dabei kann das Problem von zwei Seiten betrachtet werden. Zum einen, dass sich die Bewegung, in diesem Fall der Kampf für *Azadi*, ein nationales Kostüm überzieht, obwohl es nur um die territoriale Autonomie des Staates Jammu und Kaschmir geht. Zum anderen, dass dem Kampf für *Azadi* dieses Kostüm von außen aufgedrängt wird. Es ist schwer vorstellbar, dass es einen Kampf für einen eigenen Staat oder zumindest Selbstbestimmung gibt, ohne dass dabei eine Form der nationalen Rhetorik eine Rolle spielt. Neben dieser nationalen Rhetorik gibt es im Kontext des Kaschmirkonflikts auch eine religiöse Argumentation.

Religion

Bei den Interviews waren die Passagen über Religion und deren Bedeutung für den Konflikt und ein utopisches Kaschmir die emotionalsten und führten in fast allen Fällen zu heftigen Diskussionen. Dabei waren das Erstarken des Hindunationalismus und die Benachteiligung der Muslime in Indien ein zentrales Thema. Diese Entwicklung wird in der Literatur ausführlich beschrieben (vgl. Jaffrelot 2001: 141ff). Für Tariq (27), einen Studenten in Delhi, ist die Religion der Hauptgrund für die mangelnde Integration Jammu

und Kaschmirs in die Indische Union. Das Verhältnis zwischen einigen Kaschmiris und den Hindunationalisten ist allerdings aus der Erfahrung des Autors ambivalent. Zwar ist man sich letztlich nicht einig, was mit dem Territorium Jammu und Kaschmir geschehen soll, doch sind das politische Vokabular und die Denkart sehr ähnlich. Zum einen die „räumliche Abstraktion" (Belina & Miggelbrink 2010: 19), welche die jeweiligen Territorien – in diesem Fall Indien und Kaschmir – auf die jeweilige Religion der Bevölkerungsmehrheit reduziert und sie im Inneren homogen und eindeutig zuordenbar erscheinen lässt. Zum anderen die Überzeugung, dass ein gleichberechtigtes Zusammenleben zwischen Hindus und Muslimen innerhalb eines Territoriums nicht möglich ist.

Azhar, ein Journalist aus Srinagar (29), versteht die Bedenken, den Kampf für *Azadi* auf eine religiöse Komponente zu reduzieren. Aber er betont die Bedeutung der Religion für diesen Konflikt. Seiner Meinung nach wurde dieser Aspekt gerade bei den Protesten und Demonstrationen zwischen 2008 und 2010[9] vernachlässigt. Zu dieser Zeit wurde ihm zufolge von vielen jungen Teilnehmern weitgehend auf islamische Propaganda verzichtet. Dadurch sollte der Westen nicht abgeschreckt werden und Indien keine Steilvorlage bekommen, um den Protest als islamistisch zu diffamieren. Der Westen zeigte sich allerdings unbeeindruckt und Azhar sieht wieder ein Erstarken der islamischen Komponente. Er findet es gut, dass sich die Kaschmiris wieder auf ihre muslimische Identität berufen und diesen Aspekt hervorheben.

Auch Ala (33) sieht den Islam als einen Teil der gemeinsamen Identität der Kaschmiris. Die Rolle der Religion bei dem Konflikt hält er für legitim. Für ihn ist Religion bzw. die Zugehörigkeit zu verschiedenen Religionsgruppen aber nicht der Auslöser für den Konflikt. Die Kaschmiris wollten *Azadi*, nicht aber im Namen der Religion oder wegen der Religion eines Landes. Allerdings ist es seiner Meinung nach normal, dass die Kaschmiris im Kampf für ihre Freiheit ihren Gott anrufen, und der ist für die Mehrheit der Kaschmiris nun mal der islamische. Dass auch im Namen des Islam mobilisiert wird, findet er nicht problematisch. Die gemeinsame Religion ist auch, ne-

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[9] In diesen Jahren kam es in den Sommermonaten zu Massenprotesten im Kaschmirtal, die von den indischen Streitkräften blutig niedergeschlagen wurden (vgl. Bukhari 2013: 3ff).

ben der jahrelangen politischen, finanziellen und militärischen Unterstüt-
zung, ein Grund für die enge Verbindung mit Pakistan, die er sehr begrüßt.

In der Fachliteratur hebt Peter van der Veer die bedeutende Rolle der Reli-
gion „in the making of the modern nation-state in both Britain and India" her-
vor und verwirft die Annahme, dass die „British polity is secular and the Indian
religious" (van der Veer 1999: 39). So wie die Briten durch ihren vermeintlichen
aufgeklärt-rationalen Säkularismus ihre Überlegenheit gegenüber den religiö-
sen vormodernen Indern legitimierten, so kann man auch die Argumentation
Irfans (ca. 30), eines Journalisten aus Delhi, verstehen. Er wirft dem vermeint-
lich modernen und säkularen Indien vor, die Kaschmiris als religiöse Fanatiker
darzustellen, die gegen die Moderne ankämpfen. So wird ihnen ein entwick-
lungsgeschichtlicher Rückstand attestiert und die kulturelle Gleichwertigkeit
abgesprochen. Dabei geht es hier nicht um die Frage, inwieweit Indien oder
Kaschmir säkular sind oder nicht, sondern um die implizierte Zuschreibung
von (Unter-)Entwicklung bzw. den normativen Charakter der Säkularismus-
These, die besagt „in order for a society to be modern, it has to be secular"
(Asad 1999: 179).

Viele Kaschmiris äußerten den Verdacht, dass nicht Religion und der
Wunsch nach Unabhängigkeit für Kaschmir das Problem sei, sondern viel-
mehr, dass die Religion der Kaschmiris der Islam ist. Dadurch würden sie
von der internationalen Gemeinschaft weitestgehend ignoriert und ihr
Kampf für Freiheit als islamistisch delegitimiert. Dass der Islam in Kaschmir
eine bedeutende Rolle spielt, ist ohne Zweifel. Dabei bewegt er sich aber in
einem breiten Spektrum, das von einem wahabitischen sunnitischen Islam
bis zu einem lokalen sufistischen Islam reicht, der schon im Konzept des
kashmiriyat beschrieben wird.

Kashmiriyat

In der Fachliteratur ist *kashmiriyat* ein zentraler Begriff, wenn es um die
Identität der Kaschmiris und die ideologische Basis des kaschmirischen Na-
tionalismus geht (vgl. Wani 2010: 89ff). Der Begriff steht für einen toleran-
ten Islam und eine multikonfessionelle regionale Identität in Jammu und
Kaschmir. Des Weiteren benutzten und benutzen Politiker das Konzept
kashmiriyat, um einen säkularen Nationalismus in Jammu und Kaschmir zu
propagieren (vgl. Zutshi 2010: 44ff).

Es gab nur ein Interview, bei dem der Begriff *kashmiriyat* ungefragt genannt wurde. Für Yasar und Zaheen (beide ca. 30), ein Paar, das in Delhi interviewt wurde, gibt es definitiv *kashmiriyat* und „to be a kashmiri has nothing to do with religion." Jammu und Kaschmir ist demnach eine Nation von Kaschmiris. Die Kriterien dieses Kaschmiri-Seins sind für sie aber auch nicht eine gemeinsame Sprache oder Kultur. Im Mittelpunkt steht eine gemeinsame Geschichte und Identität. Diese gemeinsame Identität wurde wegen des Versagens der Politiker verstärkt und auf die mehrheitlich muslimischen Aspekte reduziert. Nichtsdestotrotz gibt es für sie eine alle religiösen und kulturellen Gruppen Jammu und Kaschmirs umfassende *kashmiri identity*, die schwer zu erklären ist, sich aber nach Yasar auf ein „not being an Indian" stützt. Die Selbstdefinition erfolgt also zuvorderst über eine Abgrenzung gegenüber anderen.

Alle anderen Interviewpartner kannten auf Nachfrage den Begriff *kashmiriyat*, fanden ihn aber aus verschiedenen Gründen nicht geeignet, um mit ihm ihre Selbstbestimmung einzufordern. Zum einen gibt es eine Gruppe, die *kashmiriyat* zwar positiv bewerten, es aber als ein Relikt der Vergangenheit ansehen, das keine Bedeutung für die Gegenwart oder gar die Zukunft hätte. Zum anderen gibt es eine Gruppe, die die Idee von *kashmiriyat* generell ablehnt. So meint Azhar, dass es so etwas wie *kashmiriyat* nur in der Dichtung der Mystiker zu finden sei und es nie eine Zeit der gemeinsamen religionsübergreifenden Identität und eine Kultur der Toleranz gab. Für ihn handelt es sich bei *kashmiriyat* um eine Konstruktion, die die Unterdrückung der Muslime verschleiern und Jammu und Kaschmir als friedlichen Ort ohne Konflikte darstellen soll. Dabei soll nur von einer klaren muslimischen Identität Jammu und Kaschmirs abgelenkt werden.

Für Arif spielt es keine Rolle, ob es das *kashmiriyat* jemals gab, oder ob es für politische Zwecke konstruiert wurde. Er meint, dass es in den 1930er und 1940er Jahren eine gute Idee gewesen sei, aber leider nicht funktioniert hätte. Auch die Idee eines *Naya Kashmir* (Neues Kaschmir), eines sozialistisch geprägten unabhängigen Kaschmirs, findet Arif gut. Die Zeiten hätten sich aber geändert, und er sähe keine Möglichkeit, diese Ideen zu verwirklichen, und – so scheint mir – er will das auch nicht mehr. Die Idee eines Neuen Kaschmir wurde 1944 im gleichnamigen sozialistischen Manifest

von Sheikh Abdullah vorgeschlagen und nach seiner Machtübernahme teilweise umgesetzt (vgl. Malik 2002: 93ff).

Sozialistische Ansätze

Sozialistische Ansätze spielen allgemein eine geringere Rolle bei den Vorstellungen von *Azadi*. Sie tauchen zwar als Begriffe in der Rhetorik einiger Befragter auf, doch sind sie meistens sehr ungenau und offen gehalten und werden in den Interviews jeweils mit anderen Ideen verbunden, die eine räumliche Abgrenzung ermöglichen. Einerseits ist die sozialistische Idee in Jammu und Kaschmir eng mit dem Islam verknüpft, der auch ein Grund dafür ist, dass Indien „gehen muss." Andererseits sind die teils konkreten sozialistischen Begründungen eng mit dem Konzept des *kashmiriyats* verbunden. Letzteres kann dann zur Argumentation der Notwendigkeit einer eigenen Nation bzw. eines eigenen Staates herangezogen werden. Das soll nicht heißen, dass die oben genannten Befragten keine sozialistischen Überzeugungen besitzen, sondern dass diese in andere Ideologien eingebettet werden (müssen), um eine räumliche Dimension zu legitimieren und nachvollziehbar darzustellen.

Die Analyse der Interviews hat erkennbar gemacht, dass die meisten utopischen Orte für die bzw. von den Befragten als Nationen konzipiert wurden. Dies ist zum einen sicher auch der bereits erwähnten Semantischen Illusion nach Hobsbawm geschuldet, die aus allen Staaten Nationen macht. Ein anderer Grund ist wohl „the magic of nationalism to turn chance into destiny" (Anderson 2006: 12). Beides führt dazu, dass die utopischen Orte theoretisch kartographisch darstellbar sein sollten und über ein begrenztes Territorium verfügen.

Grenzen

Wie bereits gezeigt wurde, spielen Karten und Territorialität für die Vorstellung und Konstitution von Nationen eine erhebliche Rolle. Im Falle der Indischen Union wurde die Karte als Territorium nicht nur emotional als Ort aufgeladen, sondern mit Mutter Indien symbolisch personalisiert. Die (T)räume der Freiheit bzw. die utopischen Orte, die der Vorstellung von *Azadi* inhärent sind, verfügen ebenso über Grenzen und eine Territorialität. Dabei geht es nicht (nur) um die genauen Grenzverläufe, sondern vielmehr um die Begründung dieser (neuen) Grenzen.

Nahezu alle Interviewten waren sich einig, dass dieser Ort die Grenzen von Jammu und Kaschmir von 1947 haben sollte, als dieses für eine kurze Zeit formal unabhängig war. Dabei ist ihnen die Entstehungsgeschichte des Fürstentums und die Entwicklung der Grenzen bekannt. Es ist ihnen ebenso bewusst, dass es sich bei diesen, wie bei jenen von Indien und Pakistan, um (post-)koloniale Grenzen handelt, die sich im Laufe der Zeit verändert haben und einer Prozesshaftigkeit unterworfen waren bzw. sind. Im Falle der LoC (*Line of Control*), die mittlerweile schon mehrere Jahrzehnte besteht und einen Grenzcharakter hat, sehen sie sehr deutlich diese Eigenschaft und akzeptieren sie nicht als Grenze.

Synthese (T)räume der Freiheit

Zusammenfassend lässt sich festhalten, dass die Begründungen für die Forderung nach *Azadi* vielfältig und teils widersprüchlich sind. Die oben beschriebenen Beispiele sind auch keinesfalls als statisch und unveränderbar zu verstehen, sondern zeigen deutlich den evolutionären Charakter der Forderungen nach *Azadi*. Trotz dieser Prozessualität und der diversen Legitimationen für die Freiheit Jammu und Kaschmirs gab es eine gemeinsame Aussage, die bei allen Beteiligten eine bedeutende Rolle spielte. „Wir sind keine Inder" bzw. „Jammu und Kaschmir gehört nicht zu Indien" war die Botschaft, die jeder Interviewte während der Diskussion nannte. Die Gründe hierfür sind verschieden, wie oben bereits dargelegt wurde, aber das Ergebnis (oder der Ausgangspunkt) ist dasselbe (bzw. derselbe). Die verschiedenen (T)räume der Freiheit bzw. von utopischen Orten lassen sich durch die unterschiedlichen Selbsttechniken der Subjekte, die, wie alle Diskurse „nicht unabhängig von gesellschaftlichen Machtkämpfen und Herr-

schaftsverhältnissen" (Strüver 2009: 76) sind, als alternative Diskurse bestimmen, die den prävalenten Diskurs, „Jammu und Kaschmir ist ein integraler Teil Indiens", in Frage stellen und herausfordern.

Die utopischen Orte erfüllen dabei hauptsächlich zwei Funktionen. Zum einen verdeutlichen sie, dass es Alternativen zur hegemonialen Wahrnehmung des Territoriums und des Ortes Jammu und Kaschmirs, und damit auch automatisch Indiens, gibt. Zum anderen dienen die utopischen Orte der Mobilisierung der Bevölkerung, die sich durch diverse diskursive Praktiken gegen die Besatzung Indiens auflehnt. Damit sind sie nicht nur individuelle (T)räume, sondern besitzen auch kollektive strategische Eigenschaften, die aus der Perspektive der Befragten möglichst von vielen Kaschmiris geteilt werden sollen.

AZADI ALS WIDERSTAND UND ORTE DES WIDERSTANDS

Während bei den Themen der Selbstbestimmung und der Utopien in den Gesprächen eine Vielzahl verschiedener Überzeugungen zum Ausdruck gebracht wurden, waren sich die Befragten einig, dass es sich bei *Azadi* im Kern um den Widerstand gegen die Unterdrückung durch den indischen Staat handelt. Manifestationen des Widerstands sind Graffitis, Märtyrerfriedhöfe und Straßenproteste.

Graffiti

Eine Möglichkeit zur Äußerung der eigenen Meinung im öffentlichen Raum bieten Graffiti, von denen es in Srinagar eine Vielzahl gibt. Ihre Analyse soll im Folgenden dazu dienen, die Raumvorstellungen innerhalb der Widerstandsdiskurse in Kaschmir zu interpretieren und zu verstehen. Graffitis werden hier nicht nur als sprachliche Aussagen betrachtet, sondern als eine Form diskursiver Praxis. Wie andere diskursive Praktiken „manifestieren, erhalten und transformieren" (Strüver 2009: 65) sie die jeweiligen Diskurse, im vorliegendem Fall den (Widerstands)-diskurs. Auf diese Weise werden Graffiti ebenso wie Demonstrationen, Versammlungen und weitere soziale Widerstandsformen zur Aktion, die „Raum [produzieren] und zusammengenommen als Territorialisierungsstrategie verstanden werden [können]" (Belina 2013: 98). Graffiti haben hier den Vorteil, dass sie an Plätze gesprüht

werden können, an denen Demonstrationen schwer durchzuführen sind, und sie haben, falls sie nicht übermalt werden, eine längere materielle Präsenz im Raum als diese. Sie schreiben sich im wörtlichen Sinne im physischen Raum fest. Da sich die Slogans gegen die indische Besatzung richten, verankert sich auch der Widerstand an solchen Orten.

Abb. 2: Graffiti am Clocktower des Lal Chowks, Srinagar.
© Frederic Maria Link.

Am *Lal Chowk* (Roter Platz), einem zentralen Platz in Srinagar, auf dem am indischen Unabhängigkeitstag und am Tag der Republik Militärparaden abgehalten werden, ist ein Graffiti mit dem Slogan *Go India. Go Back* zu sehen (Abb. 2). Es wurde auf die Basis des *clocktowers* gesprüht. Keine fünfzig Meter entfernt davon befindet sich ein Armeebunker. Den ganzen Tag sind die Polizei und Einheiten der Armee auf dem Platz präsent. Ein Journalist aus Srinagar sagt, dass die Graffiti früher weggewischt oder übermalt wurden. Aber sie wurden immer wieder gesprüht und nun werden sie nicht mehr übermalt. Nun müssen auch die Sicherheitskräfte und Polizisten, wie man auf Abbildung 2 sehen kann, an diesem Slogan vorübergehen und werden direkt von ihm „angesprochen".

   Neben diesem *Go India. Go Back* am *Lal Chowk* gibt es in Srinagar an vielen anderen Stellen, und meistens auch in exponierter Lage, Graffiti. Vor der Fußgängerbrücke des *bandh*, des Uferweges entlang des Jhelum, steht

in roter Schrift auf weißem Hintergrund *Azadi, we want freedom*. Der Hintergrund ist so auffallend weiß und sauber im Vergleich mit den angrenzenden Gebäuden, dass er sicher erst vor kurzem frisch gestrichen wurde. Da auf einer Seite der Brücke eine große Schule und auf der anderen ein College gelegen sind, wird sie vor allem morgens und nachmittags stark frequentiert. Auch diese Stelle wird häufig von den Sicherheitskräften patrouilliert und keine fünfzig Meter entfernt befindet sich ein Stützpunkt mit besetzten Wachtürmen.

Abb. 3: Graffiti am einen Durchgang von Lal Chowk zu
Maisuma, Srinagar. © Frederic Maria Link.

Geht man vom *Lal Chowk* in Richtung *downtown* Srinagar, so passiert man einen Durchgang unter einer Straße. Dort sind die Schriftzüge *Welcome to Gaza* und *Gaza Tigerz* zu lesen (Abb. 3). Diese nehmen klar Bezug auf einen anderen Ort, den Gazastreifen, und die mit diesem Ort assoziierte Besatzung und den Widerstand dagegen. Damit soll eine Verbindung zwischen dem Kampf der Palästinenser und dem der Kaschmiris hergestellt werden. Beide Orte weisen eine muslimische Bevölkerungsmehrheit auf, verlangen nach einem eigenen Staat und sind von Nicht-Muslimen besetzt, wie es Abdullah, ein Begleiter mit dem ich das Graffiti zum ersten Mal sehe, zusammenfasst. Dabei hebt der Vergleich mit dem Gazastreifen, neben der muslimischen Bevölkerungsmehrheit, auch andere Momente hervor. Zentral ist dabei der vermeintlich unerschütterliche Wille zum Widerstand der Palästinenser, wie Wasim, den ich am Abend zu dem Graffiti befrage, meint. Die Bezugnahme auf diesen Willen kommt im Vokabular der Kasch-

miris zum Ausdruck, wenn etwa von einer Intifada in Kaschmir die Rede ist. Die Graffitis unterstreichen demnach die „Besatzung" des Ortes, geben aber gleichzeitig mögliche Handlungsanweisungen an die Bevölkerung.

Auch der Schriftzug *Welcome Taliban* (Abb. 4) nimmt Bezug auf eine andere Gruppe und einen anderen Ort außerhalb Jammu und Kaschmirs. Er war an verschiedenen Stellen der Stadt zu lesen. Azhar zufolge geht von den Taliban in Afghanistan eine „strong message" an die anderen kämpfenden Muslime weltweit aus und dementsprechend auch an die Kaschmiris. Für ihn sind die Taliban momentan weltweit die einzige erfolgreiche muslimische Widerstandsgruppe.[10]

Aber wie ist das *Welcome Taliban* zu verstehen? Azhar bezweifelt, dass die Kaschmiris wirklich die Taliban willkommen heißen würden. Sie wollen aber die indische Armee um jeden Preis vertreiben und um *Azadi* zu erreichen, würden sie seiner Meinung nach von jedem Hilfe annehmen, auch von den Taliban. Er sieht in dem Graffiti den Aufruf an die Kaschmiris, nicht länger Opfer und Feiglinge zu sein, sondern „brave warriors like the Taliban." Er ist sich jedoch bewusst, dass die Taliban nicht nur mutige Krieger sind, sondern auch für einen islamistischen Staat stehen. Sollen die Kaschmiris nur so stark und mutig wie die Taliban werden, oder auch die Ideologie der Taliban übernehmen? Azhar würde letzteres bevorzugen, fügt aber hinzu, dass die Mehrheit der Kaschmiris momentan dafür noch nicht bereit sei.

Die *Welcome Taliban* Graffiti können unterschiedlich interpretiert werden. Sie können als Hinweis auf andere, „erfolgreiche" Widerstandsgruppen dienen. Dadurch wird zum einen das Scheitern der Widerstandsgruppen aus Kaschmir deutlich, zum anderen werden aber auch Strategien – in diesem Falle die der Taliban – für einen erfolgreichen Widerstand vorgeschlagen. Ob damit auch die islamistische Ideologie der Taliban miteinbezogen wird, lässt sich nicht eindeutig klären. Nach den Erfahrungen des Autors gibt es zwar eine beträchtliche Zahl von Taliban-Sympathisanten unter den Kaschmiris, doch gilt dieses Wohlwollen in den meisten Fällen dem oben erwähnten Kampfeswillen und der Opferbereitschaft der Taliban und nicht deren Ideologie.

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[10] Das Interview wurde 2013 geführt, also noch vor der Zeit des sogenannten islamischen Staats.

Abb. 4: Graffiti am Rand von Nowhatta, Srinagar.
© Frederic Maria Link.

Ein anderes Graffiti, *15 August Black Day*, nimmt Bezug auf die Geschichte des Subkontinents. Der Unabhängigkeitstag Indiens am 15. August, neben dem Tag der Republik am 26. Januar einer der wichtigsten nationalen Feiertage Indiens, wird von den Separatisten als Schwarzer Tag empfunden. Für sie ist es ein Trauertag. Neben dem 15. August gibt es noch eine Reihe anderer indischer Gedenktage, die von den Separatisten umgedeutet wurden. Aus dem *Accession Day*, bei dem der Anschluss Jammu und Kaschmirs an Indien gefeiert wird, wird *Day of Occupation*. Daneben gibt es noch einige inoffizielle „Feiertage" der Widerstandskämpfer, wie Todestage politischer Führer, die nur in Jammu und Kaschmir begangen werden (vgl. Behera 2008: 618ff).

Mit Hilfe von neuen Feiertagen bzw. der Umdeutung vorhandener indischer Gedenktage versuchen die Separatisten eine alternative Geschichte von Jammu und Kaschmir zu konzipieren und fordern so die hegemoniale Geschichtsschreibung der Indischen Union heraus. Die Gedenktage sind dabei ein Teil des Diskurses, der betont, dass sich der Ort Jammu und Kaschmir vom Rest Indiens unterscheidet und nicht zu ihm gehört. Das Graffiti erinnert nicht nur an den Trauertag, sondern zeigt, dass an diesem Ort andere Tage gefeiert respektive betrauert werden.

Die Graffiti sollten aber nicht auf ihren Nachrichten-/Botschaftscharakter reduziert werden. Sie können auch als ein Versuch bzw. eine Strategie der

Raumaneignung und Raumproduktion durch Bedeutungszuschreibungen gewertet werden. In dieser Hinsicht dienen Graffitis einerseits der Schaffung von Raum, denn durch die Sichtbarmachung des Widerstands wird ein Ort des Widerstands produziert. Andererseits dienen sie der Raumaneignung, indem sie auf andere Weise auf den Raum wirken und diesen mit neuen Bedeutungen beladen. Dabei werden Räume zu Orten im Sinne der geteilten Bedeutungszuschreibungen. Die Graffitis richten sich sowohl an die indischen Streitkräfte als auch an die lokale Bevölkerung, die zum Beispiel ihre gefallenen Kämpfer nicht vergessen soll.

Märtyrerfriedhof

Der Märtyrerfriedhof (*Shaheed Malguzaar*) bei *Eidgah* ist mit über tausend Gräbern der größte in Srinagar. Über dem Eingangstor des Märtyrerfriedhofs (Abb. 5) stehen Widmungen in drei Sprachen: Arabisch, Urdu und Englisch[11]. Die oberen Zeilen sind in Arabisch verfasst und sind ein Zitat aus einem Koranvers. Sie lauten: „*Bismillah* (Im Namen Allahs) halte jene, die für Allahs Sache erschlagen wurden, ja nicht für tot – sondern lebendig bei ihrem Herren; ihnen werden Gaben zuteil." Es folgt ein Satz auf Urdu und seine Bedeutung im Englischen: „Lest you forget we have given our 'today' for 'tommarow' [sic] of yours." (Vergesst nicht, dass wir unser „Heute" für euer „Morgen" geopfert haben). Die unterste Zeile schließt mit „Paradies der Märtyrer Kaschmirs." Die drei Sprachen, in denen die Widmungen verfasst wurden, spiegeln in gewisser Weise die Hybridität des Widerstands wider. Das Arabische steht klar für eine islamische Komponente. Die Koranverse werden in der sakralen Schrift wiedergegeben, obwohl ein Großteil der lokalen Bevölkerung diese nicht lesen kann. Das Konzept des Märtyrers, der von Gott ins Paradies geholt wird, unterstreicht das religiöse Element. Die Ansprache der Märtyrer an jene, die nicht vergessen sollen, ist dagegen in Urdu und Englisch verfasst.

Der Märtyrerfriedhof ist ein Ensemble von Gräbern. Diese Gräber gehören denjenigen, deren Opfer für die Zukunft Kaschmirs nicht vergessen werden soll, wie die Märtyrer „persönlich" ermahnen. Das erste Grab ist Maqbool Bhat (Butt) gewidmet, der im Februar 1984 im *Tihar Jail* in Delhi

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[11] Übersetzungen aus dem Arabischen und dem Urdu von Rabiah Shaikh.

hingerichtet wurde. Sein Grab ist leer, genauso wie eines der jüngsten Gräber, das Grabmal des im Februar 2013 für seine Beteiligung am Anschlag auf das indische Parlament im Dezember 2001 hingerichteten Afzal Guru. Beide wurden innerhalb der Mauern des *Tihar Jails* beigesetzt. Und beiden Hinrichtungen, die bis auf zwei Tage exakt 29 Jahre auseinander liegen, folgten Proteste und Demonstrationen in Kaschmir (vgl. Bose 2013: 283; Malik 2002: 282f).

Die zwei Gräber stehen nicht nur stellvertretend für die Dauer des militanten Widerstands bzw. den indischen Kampf gegen diesen, sondern sind auch ein Symbol für das breite Spektrum der Oppositionsbewegung und der Überzeugungen der diese konstituierenden Fraktionen. Beide Persönlichkeiten können als Ikonen[12] des Widerstands interpretiert werden. Während Maqbool Bhat Mitbegründer der JKLF (*Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front*) war, die sich selbst als nationale und nicht-islamische Organisation sieht, sprach bzw. schrieb Afzal Guru von einem *jihad* in Kaschmir und benutzte ein islamistisches Vokabular. Er bezeichnete Selbstmordattentäter als Märtyrer und als geeignete Strategie, Indien aus Kaschmir zu vertreiben.

Auf dem Märtyrerfriedhof liegen sowohl gefallene Kämpfer der verschiedenen Widerstandsgruppen, als auch zivile Opfer. Letztere starben zum Beispiel bei Demonstrationen oder wurden durch „Querschläger" getötet. Auch Personen aus Pakistan sind darunter. Aber nicht alle Opfer starben durch die Hand der indischen Sicherheitskräfte. Es gibt sogar einige Fälle, in denen sowohl das Opfer als auch der Täter ein Grab auf dem Friedhof haben. Grund hierfür waren die Konflikte zwischen den verschiedenen Widerstandsbewegungen, vor allem in den 90er Jahren, als sowohl die JKLF als auch andere militante und politische Gruppen unter massiven Druck der islamistischen und pro-pakistanischen *Hizbul Mujahedeen* gerieten. Dabei kam es wiederholt zu bewaffneten Auseinandersetzungen und gezielten Mordanschlägen. Auch einige Opfer dieses Konflikts liegen auf dem Friedhof und sind zu Märtyrern geworden.

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[12] Das Portrait von Maqbool Bhat ist sehr präsent in Srinagar und klebt an vielen Hauswänden. Afzal Guru ist zwar erst vor kurzer Zeit gestorben, doch wird gerade gewissermaßen an seiner Ikonisierung gearbeitet.

Abb. 5: Eingangstor des Märtyrerfriedhofs in Eidgah, Srinagar.
© Frederic Maria Link.

Der Märtyrerfriedhof transformiert durch sein „Gräberensemble" (Abb. 6) die vielfältigen, teils widersprüchlichen und gegensätzlichen Elemente des Widerstands in eine besondere Raumform, auf einen Ort, zu einer Geschichte. Diese Raumproduktion steht dabei für ein Narrativ, das mit Hilfe von Auslassungen und Arrangements konstruiert wird. Deutlich wird dies anhand der Grabinschriften. Diese sind – bis auf arabische Koranverse – auf Urdu abgefasst. Neben den Vermerken, dass es sich um Märtyrer handelt, die für *Azadi* gestorben sind, sind der Name, der Geburts- und Todestag, der Name des Vaters und der Geburtsort angegeben. Ob es sich bei den Märtyrern um Zivilisten oder um Mitglieder einer bewaffneten Widerstandsgruppe handelt, und wenn ja um welche, wird nicht erwähnt. Die Gräber sollen deutlich machen wie „unwichtig" die Widersprüche und Verschiedenheiten des Widerstands letztlich sind. Zumindest ist dies das Narrativ des Märtyrerfriedhofs.

Abb. 6: Gräber auf dem Märtyrerfriedhof.
© Frederic Maria Link.

Damit wird der Friedhof zu einem Ort der gemeinsamen Erinnerung, der Vergegenwärtigung des gemeinsamen (vergangenen) Kampfes. Der Märtyrerfriedhof erzählt *eine* Geschichte des Konflikts und richtet sich damit direkt an die Kaschmiris. Er wird damit aber auch zu einer Agenda für die Zukunft. Es wird nicht explizit geklärt, wie diese Zukunft oder das „Morgen" aussehen sollen. Einerseits wird davon ausgegangen, dass alle wissen, was gemeint ist und andererseits wird genug Freiraum gelassen, die Variationen des Einzelnen einzuschließen. Die Botschaft ist aber dahingehend klar, dass es einen Kampf gibt, und da man dabei zum Märtyrer werden kann, dass dieser ein gerechter ist. Des Weiteren zeigt er auch den Märtyrern von morgen, dass sie nicht vergessen werden würden, falls sie im Kampf für *Azadi* sterben sollten.

Neben diesen Funktionen ist der Märtyrerfriedhof als Ort auch in andere räumliche Kontexte eingebunden. Bei Beerdigungen oder Gedenktagen dient der Friedhof als Ziel oder Ausgangspunkt von Demonstrationen. Dabei dienen die Trauermärsche oft als Kristallisationspunkt größerer Kundgebungen, bei denen gerade bei dem Tod von populären Persönlichkeiten

oder bekannten „Fällen" eine große Anzahl von Menschen mobilisiert wird. Diese Demonstrationen sind eine weitere wichtige Praxis des Widerstands.

Protest auf der Straße

Demonstrationen und Proteste auf den Straßen sind Situationen, in denen Widerstand räumlich sichtbar wird. Das Besetzen eines Raumes durch Demonstranten, wenn auch nur für eine begrenzte Zeit, und das Vorrücken der Sicherheitskräfte, die versuchen, diesen Raum wieder unter staatliche Kontrolle zu bekommen, machen diese räumliche Dimension sehr deutlich. Hinzu kommen die Parolen oder Transparente mit den Botschaften der Demonstranten und andere diskursive Praktiken mit Raumbezug, wie zum Beispiel das Verbrennen der indischen Flagge oder das Schwenken der pakistanischen Flagge bzw. jener der *Jamaat Islami*, einer islamistischen Organisation.[13]

Straßenproteste sind in Srinagar an der Tagesordnung. Kleinere Zusammenkünfte schaffen es nicht einmal in die lokalen Zeitungen. Im Folgenden soll nun eine „Choreographie" solcher Proteste beschrieben werden. Dabei wird nicht eine spezielle Demonstration wiedergegeben, sondern das bei mehreren solchen Ereignissen Erlebte quasi als Schema oder „Drehbuch" einer typischen Protestaktion veranschaulicht.

Die meisten der Demonstrationen beginnen mit dem Blockieren der Straße. Eine kleine Menge versammelt sich und hindert den Verkehr an der Durchfahrt. Die Gründe für den Protest können Verhaftungen, das Verschwinden von Personen, Vergewaltigungen oder Todesfälle sein. Es können aber auch Jahrestage bedeutender Ereignisse oder Todestage von wichtigen Persönlichkeiten sein. In anderen Fällen rufen die Führer der Widerstandsgruppen zu Streiks (*hartal*) und Protesten auf oder Prediger in den Moscheen geißeln die Unterdrückung.

Mit der Zeit werden es immer mehr Menschen, die sich auf den nun verkehrsfreien Straßen versammeln. Die Ladenbesitzer nehmen ihre Waren von der Straße und schließen ihre Rollläden. Das ganze passiert relativ schnell, geschieht aber ohne Hektik und alles wirkt sehr routiniert. Immer mehr Protestierende kommen dazu, vor allem junge Männer bzw. Jugendliche, die teilweise noch wie Kinder aussehen. Aber es sind fast immer auch

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[13] Die Fahnen sehen sich auf den ersten Blick sehr ähnlich und werden oft verwechselt.

einige Frauen anwesend. Die meisten Jugendlichen tragen westliche Kleidung, Jeans, T-Shirt und Sportschuhe. Einige tragen religiöse Kleidung und haben eine Gebetskappe auf, aber sie sind in der Minderheit. Es liegt eine gewisse Spannung in der Luft, ein bisschen wie vor einem Fußballspiel oder einem Konzert. Man sieht die angespannte Erwartung und Konzentration in den Gesichtern der Demonstranten.

Die ersten Sicherheitskräfte erscheinen. Meistens handelt es sich um CRPF (*Central Reserve Police Force*) zusammen mit der lokalen Polizei. Einige der Demonstranten beginnen Slogans zu rufen wie *„Hum kya cahte? Azadi!"* (Was wollen wir? Freiheit!) oder *„Allahu Akbar"* (Allah ist groß). Sowohl die Anzahl der Sicherheitskräfte als auch die der Demonstranten nimmt zu. In einigen Fällen versuchen die Sicherheitskräfte die Absperrungen aufzubrechen und die Demonstration aufzulösen und setzen dabei Tränengas ein. Darauf antworten einige der Demonstranten mit Steinen (*stone-pelting*). In anderen Fällen werden die Sicherheitskräfte gleich mit Steinen beworfen und reagieren mit Tränengas. Während der Auseinandersetzungen werden weiterhin Slogans gerufen.

Verlässt man den Ort der Demonstration, geht in den Nebengassen alles seinen gewohnten Gang. Menschen kaufen ein und Händler haben ihre Waren vor ihren Läden. Nur der Geruch des Tränengases erinnert daran, dass keine fünfzig Meter weiter eine Schlacht stattfindet. Die verwinkelten Nebengassen der Altstadt Srinagars bieten gute Fluchtwege und Verstecke. An ihren Ecken warten bei Demonstrationen oft kleine Gruppen. Dabei handelt es sich um Passanten, die auf ihrem Weg zum Markt oder nach Hause nicht weiter können und die darauf warten, dass die Demonstration zu Ende geht. Einige sind aber auch Demonstranten, die aus den Gassen hervorkommen und Steine in Richtung der Soldaten werfen. Sie sind meist näher an den Soldaten als die Spitze des Hauptdemonstrationszuges. Ihre geworfenen Steine erreichen die Soldaten. Neben Tränengas werden jetzt auch *Pellets*, kleine Plastikkugeln, eingesetzt. Mit diesen schießen die Sicherheitskräfte auf die Demonstranten. Die meisten haben Respekt vor diesen Geschossen, da sie schwere Verletzungen – vor allem an den Augen – hervorrufen können. Einige Soldaten benutzen auch Schleudern, mit denen sie die auf sie geworfenen Steine auf die Demonstranten zurückschießen. Aber einige Demonstranten, es sind meistens Jugendliche, sind muti-

ger (oder leichtsinniger). Sie bleiben in Schussweite auf der Straße stehen und weichen den *Pellets* und den Steinen aus, als würden sie einen eleganten Tanz aufführen. Währenddessen werfen sie Steine und verhöhnen die Sicherheitskräfte.

Die Demonstrationen und Proteste in Srinagar erfüllen mehrere Funktionen. Sie dienen als eine Art „Ventil" für Wut und Empörung über die als Besatzung aufgefasste indische Präsenz. Für eine kurze Zeit werden die besetzten Orte – und damit metaphorisch ganz Jammu und Kaschmir – zu „Orten der Kaschmiris", zu denen den indischen Sicherheitskräften der Zugang verwehrt ist. Der Ort, in manchen Fällen nur ein Stück Straße, wird gegen sie verteidigt, wenn auch nur mit bescheidenen Mitteln und nur für kurze Zeit. Aber für diese kurze Zeit scheint ein Raumgewinn gegen die Staatsmacht möglich zu sein. Durch diese soziale Praxis werden die diffusen und dabei dynamischen Grenzen gesetzt, die einen Ort des Widerstands für die Kaschmiris, wenn auch vorübergehend, produzieren. Dies kann als Strategie der „Territorialisierung" betrachtet werden, welche auch in anderen Kontexten kein „Selbstzweck, sondern [...] räumliches Mittel für an sich unräumliche Zwecke" (Belina 2013: 89) ist. Im konkreten Fall gewinnen die Kaschmiris vorübergehend Zeit und Raum in der Geschichte, indem sie die Kontrolle über den von ihnen abgegrenzten Ort zu halten versuchen und für ihre Selbstbestimmung kämpfen.

Für die Demonstranten dient der Protest auch als Medium der Selbstinszenierung und der Durchführung von Selbsttechniken. Gerade für die jungen Männer in den ersten Reihen, die ihren Mut öffentlich beweisen und sich von Tränengaskartuschen und *Pellets* nicht beeindrucken lassen. Sie werfen weiter Steine und setzen ihre Gesundheit und ihr Leben aufs Spiel. Sie inszenieren sich als furchtlose Kämpfer, die selbst nur mit einem Stein bewaffnet gegen die übermächtigen und mit Waffen ausgerüsteten indischen Sicherheitskräfte kämpfen. Auf der einen Seite ein Jugendlicher mit Jeans und T-Shirt und einem Stein in der Hand, auf der anderen indische Soldaten mit Gewehren, Helmen und schusssicheren Westen. Dieses Bild zeigt auch die Entschlossenheit, Englisch *determination*, in Anspielung auf die Forderung nach *self-determination* einiger Demonstranten. Es inszeniert und symbolisiert aber auch Opferbereitschaft und Todesverachtung und bietet hier eine Anschlussstelle für das Konzept des Märtyrers.

Wie einleitend erwähnt folgen die meisten Demonstrationen einer Art Schema, ihre Handlungen wirken wie ein choreographiertes Stück, bei dem jeder seine Rolle spielt und bei dem sogar Zuschauer anwesend sind. Vor allem durch das Verhalten der Jugendlichen, ihr Lachen und Tanzen und ihr Verhöhnen der Soldaten, fühlt man sich unweigerlich an ein Spiel bzw. eine Aufführung erinnert. Dabei ist die Trennung zwischen Bühne und Zuschauerplatz fließend. Passanten, die auf dem Weg nach Hause durch eine „normale" Gasse gehen, stehen plötzlich vor einem Schlachtfeld. Aus Zuschauern, die das Treiben auf der Straße beobachten, aber weder Steine werfen noch Slogans rufen, werden Ziele von „Querschlägern." Wegen dieser Gefahren ziehen es einige vor, ihren Widerstand auf einem anderen Feld zu artikulieren. Mit anderen Worten, der Protest auf den Straßen mag zwar wie eine spielerische Choreographie anmuten, aber es geht um hohe Einsätze und um unvorhersehbare Entwicklungen. Dem Lachen der Jugendlichen folgt nicht selten ein Wehklagen der Mütter, die um ihre gestorbenen Söhne trauern.

FAZIT

Zusammenfassend lässt sich festhalten, dass es sich bei *Azadi* um mehr als nur eine politische Parole handelt. Die Analyse der Interviews machte deutlich, dass mit den (T)räumen der Freiheit eine räumliche Komponente bei der Vorstellung von *Azadi* zentral ist. Die Konkretisierung dieser individuellen (T)räume der Freiheit in kollektive utopische Orte hat dabei zwei Hauptfunktionen: Erstens die Artikulation eines alternativen Raumbilds von Jammu und Kaschmir und zweitens die Mobilisierung der Massen zum Widerstand. Ersteres fordert die hegemoniale Vorstellung einer Mutter Indien heraus, und letzteres appelliert direkt an den Wunsch zur Selbstbestimmung der Kaschmiris. Die Auswertung der für diese Studie erhobenen Interviews zeigte anschaulich, dass die utopischen Orte anhand hegemonialer nationaler, religiöser und sozialistischer Ideologien entworfen wurden bzw. werden, überraschenderweise ohne dabei die bestehenden territorialen Grenzen in Frage zu stellen. Die meisten Befragten waren sich dieser territorialen Problematik bewusst, verwiesen aber auf die Schwierigkeit, alternative Ansätze zu finden. Außerdem verweisen sie auf die Funktion der

Mobilisierung der Kaschmiris, die nur ein begrenztes Repertoire an Begründungen für die utopischen Orte zulässt.

Der Text macht (hoffentlich) deutlich, dass der Konflikt um Kaschmir mit all seiner Komplexität nicht nur aus einer staatlichen Perspektive gesehen werden sollte. Diese, aus der auch ein Großteil der Fachliteratur verfasst wurde, reduziert den Konflikt auf eine Auseinandersetzung zwischen Indien und Pakistan *um* Kaschmir. Dabei wird die Perspektive auf den Streit *in* Kaschmir oftmals vernachlässigt. Sie soll die lokale Bevölkerung und ihren politischen Willen in den Vordergrund stellen. Dieser zeigt sich neben sprachlich geäußerten Vorstellungen und versuchten Raumaneignungen auf ideeller Ebene auch in physisch-materiellen Räumen und macht aus diesen Orte des Widerstands. Dabei dienen Graffiti, Märtyrerfriedhöfe und Demonstrationen als Strategien der Raumaneignung und Raumproduktion. Diese Strategien sind zum einen an die Gegebenheiten des überwachten und besetzten Raums in Kaschmir angepasst, zum anderen lassen sie sich von anderen internationalen Konflikten „inspirieren."

Die Orte des Widerstands befinden sich in wechselseitiger Beeinflussung mit den utopischen Orten. Beide sind das Produkt diskursiver Praktiken und dienen gleichzeitig als Ausgangspunkt zur kontinuierlichen Transformation derselben. Dabei sollte die Bevölkerung nicht als verschiebbares Material und manipulierbare Masse wahrgenommen werden, sondern als politisch relevanter Akteur mit Forderungen und Überzeugungen. Nur wenn diese ernst genommen und berücksichtigt werden, sowohl politisch als auch akademisch, kann der Konflikt angemessen verstanden und langfristig gelöst werden.

Frederic Maria Link ist Doktorand an der Abteilung Geografie des Südasien-Instituts der Ruprecht-Karls Universität Heidelberg. Er studierte Geographie, Ethnologie und moderne Indologie in Heidelberg und Delhi. Seine Forschungsinteressen sind Südasien, politische Geografie und kritische Geopolitik.
E-mail: frederic.link@googlemail.com

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Bollywood's Imagination and the Middle Class – a Review of *Queen* and *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi*

Jan-Sijmen Zwarts

Abstract: A curious contradiction is present in Bollywood cinema, as enunciated by Jyotika Virdi in *The Cinematic Imagination – Indian Popular Films as Social History*. It is a cultural apparatus very much embroiled in the process of nation-building, which it does by imagining the nation with the bourgeois hegemony in mind (Virdi 2003: 9-10). The bourgeoisie, or middle class, of India is a complex audience. Because of its disparity in income levels as well as social positions, William Mazzarella recommends defining the middle class in India not as an empirical category, but rather as a performative and discursive space. Bollywood cinema, which Mazzarella situates as a cultural device that 'brings the various middle class formations into an active – if often contested – alignment' (Mazzarella 2016: 9), thus becomes a multi-layered space that engages with and offers resolutions for the social anxieties of the middle class.

Definitions of romance, love, and the female have been part of these social anxieties. This paper will analyse the manner in which the female protagonists of *Jodi* and *Queen* manage to steer their way through these anxieties as part of their coming of age. By making a comparative analysis of two films that arguably represent two different modes of middle class formation, this paper will show that Bollywood does not represent the status quo in the shape of a monolithic ideal.

To resolve this apparent contradiction within the Bollywood industry, Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality will be put forward as a critical concept. The analysis of the movies will illustrate that Bollywood has a tendency to refer to itself, instead of strongly adhering to values outside of the industry. That does not mean that these values have disappeared from Bollywood films; it does however create a space in which certain deviations from the status quo are made possible.

When I was visiting India in March 2014 I had an encounter with a group of university students that left a notable impression. After exchanging the usual details – did I like India, which country I was from, did I have a job – they wanted to know if I saw any Bollywood films, and what did I think of them. Truth be told, the curiosity was mutual; so after responding to their questions I asked them if they had seen *Queen*, and what did they think of it? I wanted to know, because I found this film interesting in particular be-

cause of its, somewhat unorthodox, protagonist Rani, a traditional Delhi girl who decides to travel through Europe all by herself. In addition, the film contained one of the very few instances in Hindi film of an on-screen kiss. I was wondering how this film was received by the all-male group of young students I was talking to; would they be positive or negative? Would they encourage the more progressive image of woman and femininity espoused by the film, or dismiss it as a liberal fantasy?

As it turned out they were enthusiastic about Rani's free spirit, sense of adventure, and strength of character; yet, at the same time, they were deeply aware that this was a fictional representation. As Chandrahas Choudhury expressed in his 2014 Bloomberg article 'A kiss is never just a kiss in India': kissing in public is still very much a taboo in India, and associated with debauchery (Choudhury 2014: 1).

It was this notion that led me to wonder about a number of things. The display of the kiss in *Queen* is a breach of Hindi film convention; not only because it disregards the unwritten Bollywood rule of 'no kissing', but also because it connects the kiss both to the notions of desire and of national pride. Moments before it happens, Rani expresses her infatuation with the Italian chef she kisses. The kiss itself, however, is framed within the idea of a global kissing contest: Rani feels the need to prove that Indians are the best kissers in the world. At the same time, kissing in public is an issue in much of India: it is at least frowned upon, and at worst it might lead to violent arrest and time in prison.

Queen, then, takes an interesting place in the public sphere: its protagonist is almost unanimously praised in the media, yet the morals she displays are far from encouraged in Indian society at large. For example, public display of affection and/or intimacy is often considered vulgar; in 2007, actor Richard Gere kissing Bollywood actress Shilpa Shetty sparked protests across the country (cf. BBC 2007). In that sense, *Queen* made me think of another fairly recent Bollywood production; namely, *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (in English: 'A match made in heaven'). I decided to watch this film a few years ago when I heard about the illustrious Shah Rukh Khan for the first time, and wanted to see what he was all about. I know now that it may not do the actor justice to bring up *Jodi* as an example of his acting skills. Never-

theless, the film stuck with me for other reasons; reasons similar to the ones that drove me to playfully interrogate the group of students I met.

Jodi concerns a young married couple with a problematic relationship. The wife, Taani, was set to marry someone else. Not just anybody, either; she was to have a 'love marriage', as opposed to a more traditional arranged marriage. However, on the wedding day, the groom tragically dies in a road accident. Taani's father suffers a heart attack after hearing the news, and moments later Taani finds herself in the hospital with her dying father. He has only one last wish: to see his daughter married. He proposes that she marry his favourite student, Surinder. She agrees, and the couple lives unhappily (thankfully not forever) after.

A somewhat curious start for a romantic comedy. Once the film is underway, however, it takes the form of a more traditional Bollywood rom-com. Surinder tries to win his wife's heart by creating an alter-ego that he uses to anonymously take dancing classes with Taani. This entire situation raises some questions about the film's relation to public morality. Surinder's alter-ego, Raj Kapoor is a womaniser and plays the part of someone seducing a married woman; at the same time, because he is the same person as Surinder – who is married to Taani – Raj's womanising is confined within the limits of the social contract of the marriage. The extra layer added here is that Raj Kapoor is also the name of one of Bollywood's biggest stars – as such, Bollywood inserts itself into the film.

Jodi and *Queen* thus appear to have something in common. Both films construct a certain space for their characters in which they can perform a morality that is markedly distinct from what is acceptable in India at large – both as defined by unwritten rules of Hindi film (no kissing, limited physical intimacy [Ganti 2004: 81]) as well as according to what happens in Indian society (moral policing concerning kissing in public, for example [cf. Ganguli 2015]). This is an interesting thing to note, most importantly because arguably, as M. Madhava Prasad writes, the middle class in Indian film – to which the protagonists of both films clearly belong – 'carries the burden of national identity on its shoulders' (1998: 163).

As such, a curious contradiction is present in Bollywood cinema, as enunciated by Jyotika Virdi in *The Cinematic Imagination – Indian Popular Films as Social History*. It is a cultural apparatus very much embroiled in the

process of nation-building, which it does by imagining the nation with the bourgeois hegemony in mind (Virdi 2003: 9-10). The bourgeoisie, or middle class, of India is a complex audience. Because of its disparity in income levels as well as social positions, William Mazzarella recommends defining the middle class in India not as an empirical category, but rather as a performative and discursive space. Doing so 'enables a certain set of 'imagined Indias' – both utopian and dystopian – to be articulated' (Mazzarella 2016: 3). This means that the middle class contains a variety of interests that at times are at conflict with each other. Mazzarella identifies the 'projection of the social anxieties that beset liberalization' (Ibid.: 6) as an important part of the discourse on the middle class. Bollywood cinema, which Mazzarella situates as a cultural device that 'brings the various middle class formations into an active – if often contested – alignment' (Ibid.: 9), thus becomes a multi-layered space that engages with and offers resolutions for the social anxieties mentioned earlier.

Definitions of romance, love, and the female have been part of these social anxieties. This paper will analyse the manner in which the female protagonists of *Jodi* and *Queen* manage to steer their way through these anxieties as part of their coming of age. Doing so will shed light on the manner in which Bollywood attempts to 'rehabilitate the family on terms of the individual will' (Virdi 2003: 208). By making a comparative analysis of two films that arguably represent different sides of the equilibrium, this paper will show that Bollywood does not represent the status quo in the shape of a monolithic ideal. As such, this paper will continue on Virdi's premise that Bollywood does not possess a 'monological voice' (Ibid.: 212), and add to this statement by exploring how two very different manifestations of subjectivity arise from two very different coming-of-age stories in *Jodi* and *Queen*.

To resolve this apparent contradiction within the Bollywood industry, Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality will be put forward as a critical concept. The analysis of the movies will illustrate that Bollywood has a tendency to refer to itself, instead of strongly adhering to values outside of the industry. That does not mean that these values have disappeared from Bollywood films; it does however create a space in which certain deviations from the status quo are made possible.

The line along which the argument will be developed is the notion of the bourgeois subject. In order to do so productively, the definition that will be used is one proposed by Rachel Dwyer. Dwyer (2001) posits Bourdieu as an important voice concerning Indian middle class identity. Instead of cultural production, Bourdieu identifies cultural consumption, or taste, as the leading factor contributing to status (Dwyer 2001: 186). The bourgeoisie, or middle class, defines taste; according to Dwyer (Ibid.), this means that the middle class aesthetic becomes cultural capital. In this context, Bollywood appears to function as a prism, taking in bourgeois definitions of taste on one end while disseminating these notions through film screens all over India. The industry thus maintains a tense relation to the middle class: though Bollywood regulates taste by distributing cultural products ready for consumption, it is also dependent on its consumer base for financial support. As such, Bollywood's relation to the middle class takes the somewhat problematic appearance of a closed loop in which the middle class has found a way to reinforce its own values, leading to an ideological equilibrium.

This essay will analyse the way in which *Queen* and *Jodi* function as cultural products within this loop. As stated before, *Queen* appears to challenge a number of conservative notions at the heart of Indian society. As such, it appears the ideological equilibrium is not as stable as it appears; the popularity of *Queen* demonstrating that, in fact, many Indians long to identify with arguably progressive characters.[1] At the centre of the analysis will be the concept of a 'class space' that serves as 'a condition for the emergence of bourgeois subjectivity', as defined by Prasad in *Ideology of the Hindi Film* (Prasad 1998: 181). The notion of bourgeois subjectivity is in this case understood as a progressive ideal. As mentioned before, Indian cinema has a role in the (re)production of the state; the imagination of a middle class forms an important part of this endeavour. By analysing *Queen* and *Jodi*, both recent films, new insights may be gained in the way Bollywood imagines the middle class. The fact that both films construct a certain space

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[1] According to data found in IMDB.com and Wikipedia, *Queen* earned around Rs. 97 crore (USD 14 million) at the global box-office and earned several awards: lead actress Kangana Ranout was awarded Best Actress in both the National Film Awards (2015) and the International Indian Film Academy Awards (2015). As such, the film can be considered both a commercial and a critical hit.

for their protagonists in which to enact their idealised middle class subjectivities, serves to illustrate how India – under the influence of the opening market and the subsequent influx of consumer culture – imagines itself within the global capitalist system. *Queen* and *Jodi* illustrate the departure from a realist national cinema towards a globalised, bourgeoisie-oriented mode of production that idealises a Western-style progressive subject within an Indian cultural frame.

In order to demonstrate how this is the case this paper will use three key concepts in Indian cinema, and subsequently analyse the ways in which they surface in both films. The first chapter will concern itself with characterisation; the second chapter concerns the notion of physical locations; and the third chapter will explore Baudrillard's notion of hyperreality as an analytical tool in an effort to bring the observations made in the former chapters together. All quotations used from both films are taken from the English subtitles.

CHARACTERISATION – LOOKS ARE DECEPTIVE

This paper strives to argue that the idealised bourgeois character as portrayed in Bollywood film is no longer merely concerned with a contribution to nation; instead, it is defined by an expression of individuality that reaches its highest point when partaking of a global culture. It is important to note that while this mode is often expressed through channels of capitalism and consumerism, it also has an ideological side that is too often conflated with an omnipresent late-capitalist system. *Queen* and *Jodi* contain notions of consumerism as an expression of class; yet, at the same time, the way in which their subjectivity is defined is ideological. In *Queen*, the development of Rani illustrates the importance of self-worth and assertiveness. *Jodi* shows the importance of love and mutual communication in a marriage; in other words, the film supplants the definition of marriage as a social contract between families with that of the romantic couple. At the same time, the protagonists in both films are strongly tied to their own cultural heritage.

This leads to different results. In *Queen*, Rani discovers that being Indian does not necessarily mean being a traditional Indian wife. In this sense, *Queen* reinvents the Indian woman as an independent cosmopolite. *Jodi*, on the other

hand, subjects the characters to the constraints of Indian tradition. Subjectivity, in this film, is reinvented as a trope rather than an ideal: the invocation of subjectivity serves to underline the validity of traditional cultural mores, such as the arranged marriage in its most conservative form.

This chapter seeks to illustrate how the main characters in both films negotiate themselves through Indian tradition and capitalist modernity to arrive at an ideal example of the Indian middle class by analysing characterisation and character development. Instances from both films will be analysed and compared to illustrate how, when it concerns the project of the state, consensus is relative: tradition and modernity continually mix and merge to create new forms of subjectivity.

A suitable point of departure would be the notions of love, marriage, and couple. Both films start off with a wedding that has to be cancelled, though for different reasons. It could even be said that what happens in *Queen* is entirely opposite of what takes place in *Jodi*. *Queen* starts off *in medias res*: through the camera, the viewer is transported to Rani's hectic family home, in the middle of the preparations for her wedding. Her character is introduced on screen; the viewer witnesses a short interaction and dialogue between Rani and her grandmother. Following this instance, the viewer is granted access to Rani's inner world for a moment. Time slows down, ambient noise fades, and using voice-over, Rani expresses her hopes and dreams concerning the marriage. A number of things are mentioned: she worries about the practical issues of the wedding preparation; she is concerned about what her parents, little brother, and friends are doing. This signifies Rani's somewhat traditional way of imagining her wedding: she recognises the part it plays in the community. She mentions that her father decorated his shop 'like a bride' (*Queen* 2014: 00:04:55). The wedding as such becomes something bigger than an affair between Rani and Vijay; in addition to the joining of two individuals, it serves as a way to (re)organise relationships within the community, and also as a rite of passage for Rani, who by getting married ascends to a similar state as her friend Sonal. Rani's wish to upload the pictures of the wedding preparations to Facebook (Ibid.: 00:05:10) further illustrates the way in which she imagines her wedding as an issue of status. In short, Rani is characterised as possessing a fairly traditional outlook on marriage, as defined by her belief that

getting married will, apart from it being the next step in her relationship, also allow her to attain a new mode of middle class subjectivity – or at least reinforce her position as an upstanding member of the urban middle class.

The characters in *Jodi* are introduced as slightly different. Taani, as a bride-to-be, can be considered as Rani's counterpart. The first part of *Jodi* coincidentally also includes a wedding preparation; and this event also serves as an introduction of Taani's character. Interestingly, contrary to Rani, Taani is not allowed to introduce herself; instead, it is a voice over by Surinder who introduces her to the viewer. She is instantly revealed to be his love interest. Taani, as such, is immediately characterised as desirable – something that sets the scene for a conception of a husband-wife relationship that is characterised by a traditional disposition; namely, the desire by the male to possess the female. Modernity enters the scene immediately afterwards however, because Taani is not set to marry Surinder just yet. She is about to engage in a love marriage, which appears to be done to give her a progressive, bourgeois character: she is the girl that goes her own way.

Unfortunately, as her father articulates with his last breath, God has other things in mind. Her father's impending death forces Taani to abandon the dream of middle class subjectivity, in this case defined as a freedom to marry whom one chooses. The subsequent part of the film, in which Surinder's friends visit his house to see his new wife, the viewer sees Taani reluctantly accepting the role of a traditional Indian wife. After initial hesitation, she takes on the responsibility of serving drinks at the party – a symbolic act, illustrating her acceptance of her marriage as the social contract Indian marriages are traditionally conceived to be. This is further illustrated by her apology for her behaviour and subsequent promise to be a 'good wife to [Surinder]' (*Jodi* 2008: 00:25:01). She even goes as far as to state that she 'has to kill the old Taani that I was, and become a new Taani' (Ibid.: 00:25:13). She is forced to abandon her ideal of marrying the man she loves; this necessitates her to reinvent herself as a 'good wife' rather than the female half of a loving couple.

The 'new' Taani, who conforms to the more traditional position of the wife in a marriage, is strikingly similar to Rani in the beginning of *Queen*. After the blissful introduction, Rani slips away from the wedding preparations for a moment to see Vijay, her husband-to-be. They meet up in a café,

even though it is considered bad luck to do so the day before the wedding. Vijay then tells Rani that he cannot marry her; his time in London changed him, he says, and Rani stayed the same. In his words: 'For me, it's all about travel, business, meetings. It'll be tough on you' (*Queen* 2014: 00:10:45). It appears that Rani, the traditional girl, does not fit into Vijay's all-new jet set cosmopolitan life.

In both films, then, the first dramatic act that sets the scene for the rest of the film revolves around the (in)compatibilities of traditional and modern definitions of love and marriage. Surinder and Taani are stuck with one another, which causes Taani to face the challenge of giving up her ideals about love; Rani, on the other hand, sees her world fall apart when Vijay announces incompatibility – which means he prioritises, by proxy, his own bourgeois lifestyle – as a reason to call off the wedding. As such, the main characters in both films become polar opposites: Rani is rejected because she 'stayed the same', which is, her traditional self, while Taani suffers because she chooses to abandon her ideal of love and instead conform to her father's expectations.

Both films follow a similar narratological structure. In both cases, the exposition provides the main characters with a challenge to surmount; the remainder of the film serves to illustrate the building of character, which includes the acquisition of the necessary skills and/or attributes, that allows the eventual resolution in the end.

For these reasons it can be argued that in the cases of *Queen* and *Jodi*, the notion of *Bildung* (education) surfaces quite visibly as both motive and key to the protagonists' narratives. An obvious and important difference between both films is the fact that in *Jodi*, Taani is not the only protagonist; as such, the notion of *Bildung* applies both to Surinder and Taani. The fact that it does is fitting, as the analysis will show, for *Jodi* strives to demonstrate that the ultimate resolution is for both subjects to dissolve into a couple. It would be imprudent to import a concept from the German literary tradition and apply it wholesale to Indian cinema; however, in this case, the concept proves helpful to illustrate what is at play in both films. *Bildung*, as it surfaced in 19th century *Bildungsromane*, concerns the notion of self-development within a liberal society. The protagonist in such a novel is free to determine his or her own path; yet, at the same time, the protago-

nist learns that the road to happiness also entails a level of conformation to society. The process of *Bildung* is complete when the protagonist's desires and society's expectations are harmonised, usually through a mutual negotiation in which society accepts and to a degree adapts itself to the protagonist's realised potential.[2]

This diagnosis lines up with the notion of ascendancy into the bourgeoisie, as the bourgeoisie in this context is equated with the hegemony in society that the protagonist of the *Bildungsnarrative* becomes part of. This also means that the way in which the character develops him- or herself during the narrative illustrates the way society imagines itself. In that sense, the development of the characters in *Queen* and *Jodi* illustrate the manner in which the subject reaches its ideal form; or, in other words, the individual his and/or her full potential.

Jodi contains a peculiar way of framing the notion of personal development. In order to make a useful analysis, it is most practical to consider the two main characters, Surinder and Taani, as a couple. First of all, because they eventually manage to fully realise themselves as a couple instead of as individuals; but also because the couple takes an important place in Indian cinema, where it is reproduced as a way to maintain the parental patriarchal family structure (Prasad 1998: 95). *Jodi* indeed shows that this is the case. The couple remains sharply defined, thanks to Surinder's double life as Raj. It is the convoluted relationship between Raj and Taani that allows the latter to realise her potential. Interestingly, the notion of potential is closely linked to cinema itself. Taani is a fervent cinema-goer, and the films she watches infuse her with the Bollywood ideal, which makes her choose to attend dance classes. Taani's dancing can be seen as an attempt to become incorporated into the bourgeoisie ideal presented by Bollywood. Interestingly, she cannot do so alone: only couples can register for the dance contest. Her partner Raj, who is also her husband, completes the couple. All in all, the dancing couple in *Jodi* then strikingly illustrates how the ascendancy into a modern bourgeois subject is only possible within the confines of the traditional patriarchy, as reinforced by the couple.

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[2] Post-colonial narratives and *Bildung* share a number of similarities; an extensive analysis and criticism of *Bildung* and the post-colonial can be found in Slaughter's *Human Rights, Inc.*

Queen, on the other hand, leaves slightly more room for the subject, Rani, to grow into her potential. In fact, her subjectivity arises from a rejection of the paternalistic couple. While in the beginning Rani is heartbroken and still attached to Vijay, she has several encounters that show her that, while her feelings about the rejection are legitimate, being single does not entail that she cannot reach her full potential. Rani takes an important step towards realising her potential through her friendship with Vijaylakshmi, a girl of part-Indian descent she meets in Paris. Vijaylakshmi calls herself Vijay for short, making her a remarkable replacement for Rani's now ex-fiancée. Vijaylakshmi is a single mother; someone who, from a traditional Indian perspective, has a rather unfortunate social position. Despite that being the case, Vijaylakshmi is depicted a wholesome person: assertive, independent, and joyful, or as Rani calls her, a 'jolly person' (*Queen* 2014: 01:02:20). In a defining moment, Rani and Vijaylakshmi sit together under the Eiffel Tower at night, exchanging glances in the way lovers might (Ibid.: 01:13:40). In this instance, true friendship supplants the romantic couple, and sets Rani on the road through self-realisation.

The fact that Rani leaves Vijaylakshmi behind and continues on her own further emphasises that alone really is enough. This is further demonstrated as the story continues: Rani discovers her potential as a cook, which establishes her as possessing her own economic means – a prominent feature of an independent subject. The cherry on this figurative pie of self-realisation is the moment she kisses the Italian chef. It is not a very romantic moment; instead, it functions as a climactic moment in which Rani's assertiveness is fully realised. In addition, the fact that she kisses the man to prove that 'India is the best at everything' (Ibid.: 02:01:39) illustrates another issue; namely, the fact that the abandonment of the traditional patriarchal state, in this analysis symbolised by the couple, does not mean a rejection of India's culture.

Jodi and *Queen* as such find themselves at odds with each other. Where *Jodi* incorporates the bourgeois ideal into the couple in order to make it work in India, *Queen* has the couple crash and burn in order to demonstrate its limitations, or even its restrictions, by having Rani attain her full potential only once she is outside of the couple. At the same time, it appears that both films demonstrate – though in very different ways – that the ideal of

liberal bourgeois subjectivity can only manifest itself within certain confines: Taani and Surinder only realise their potential within a couple, and Rani requires a trip through Europe to enter into a new mode of subjectivity. To understand whether this is truly the case or not requires an analysis of the role of physical space in the two films.

PHYSICAL LOCATIONS – INHABITING CLASS

When it comes to the creation of a middle class, the imagination of what the lives of the members of said class would be like is indispensible. It is from this perspective that Indian cinema aids in the construction of the middle class. It appears that the connection between Bollywood and its audience takes the shape of a continuing feedback loop: the screen shows the viewer what to be, and simultaneously, the screen can only show so much – there are expectations as well as demands to be met. From this feedback loop (among others) arises the state: a level of consensus mixed with an idealised subjectivity and a culture of its own.

What makes Indian cinema interesting, however, is that in many cases the ideal subjectivity as it is presented in Bollywood film cannot be expressed in public. Many popular forms of self-expression are, often because of their Western origins, associated with taboo. Examples are Western dress, public expressions of love, and notions of gender equality. This has led Prasad to define within film the aforementioned class space, in which the characters of the film are free to enact their subjectivity without being under the scrutiny of the communal public. Prasad goes as far as to state that this space is 'necessary'; in other words, the attainment of a bourgeois subjectivity is not possible outside of this space (Prasad 1998: 181).

Queen and *Jodi* display a certain level of necessity of such a space as well. In these films, however, matters are slightly more complicated. First of all, in the case of *Queen*, the space required lies outside of India. Ultimately, it is Rani's journey through Europe that allows her to attain a mode of agency that she lacked previously, and that also conforms to the idealised form of subjectivity as illustrated by the overly positive reception of her character. In *Jodi*, the dancing school – and later on, a number of other places – facilitate the space required for Taani and Surinder/Raj to develop

their growth into modern subjects, by allowing them room in which they are able to evolve into a couple.

For accurate analysis then, the notion of setting has to be considered. The overall setting of a film, or *mise-en-scène*, contributes largely to the sense in which space finds its cinematographic expression. While *mise-en-scène* traditionally includes, among other things, the characters' dress, this paper will focus on the use of locations and sets to construct the bourgeois space. *Jodi* and *Queen* will be analysed by comparing first of all the setting, and secondly, the presence of the exotic.

Jodi is set in the city of Amritsar – something that becomes quite clear at the very start of the film. The film opens with a shot of the Golden Temple, with the title of the film superimposed in neon letters. A fitting shot, considering the film title's referral to God (*Rab)*. Subsequently, while the intro credits roll, more shots of Amritsar follow, depicting daily life in the early morning in the city. The beginning of the film as such creates a realist atmosphere: it is set in a real city, and through its depiction of the hustle and bustle of ordinary life, it seems to emphasise that indeed, this film is about common people and the struggle of day-to-day life. In doing so, the film situates itself within a realist aesthetic, which is a mode often employed throughout the history of Indian cinema (Ibid.: 21). Realism is generally employed to a political end; in the history of Indian cinema, it is connected to the Nehruvian theme of the 'discovery of India' (Ibid.: 160).

As such, *Jodi* contains an apparent contradiction. Realist cinema and middle class cinema are considered opposites. Further instances in the film seem to illustrate this contradiction further. While Amritsar is generally known to be a highly crowded, densely populated urban centre, *Jodi* generally takes place in spaces that seem remarkably removed from the Amritsar shown in the beginning of the film. For example, the dancing school and the cinema are depicted as glamorous environments, populated with nothing but well-off middle class individuals. By positioning these glamorous sets within the greater setting of a realist Amritsar, the film continues the project of (re)invention that was observed in the former chapter: the unlikely combination of tradition and bourgeois modernity that was noted in the couple of Taani and Surinder is also present when the film allows a realist Amritsar to contain the glamorous narrative of a Bollywood couple.

Queen takes a slightly different approach in its setting and the depiction thereof. The majority of the film is set in the foreign cities of Paris and Amsterdam. This is not a very surprising notion in an Indian film. Rachel Dwyer notes in *Cinema India* that foreign destinations often provide 'some sort of privacy for the romantic couple' (Dwyer 2002: 59), in addition to representing 'Utopias of consumption for a range of lifestyle opportunities and consumerist behaviour' (Ibid.: 59). At a glance, then, foreign locations appear to provide for the need of a middle class space. In *Queen*, however, the foreign location takes on a different appearance. First of all, as has been established in the first chapter, Rani's character deconstructs the necessity of the couple; as such, this notion does not play a role when assessing the function of the foreign in *Queen*. Interestingly, neither does the concept of Utopia. Paris, as Rani experiences it at first, is far from Utopian. For example, the camera registers from a distance how she fails to perform something as simple as crossing a street; the raw, voyeuristic perspective from which it is filmed further adding to the feeling that the viewer is witnessing something painfully embarrassing (*Queen* 2014: 00:45:30). Another example is the food served at the hotel. The seafood dish she is served does not appeal to Rani at all, illustrating that she feels – quite aptly – like a fish out of the water.

Queen, as such, does something unexpected: it takes the concept of the middle class space, but uses it to introduce an Other instead of a Utopia. The encounter and cultural exchange that follows is not a very familiar trope in Indian film, where usually the foreign serves as a backdrop for middle class fantasies. *Queen* turns these conventions upside down. This becomes most clear when Rani visits Amsterdam. She goes to meet Rukshar, a friend of Vijaylakshmi's, who turns out to work as a prostitute in the red light district. The presence of such an area in an Indian film is not directly surprising – as Dwyer notes, many films contain shady nightclubs as 'transgressive spaces' (Dwyer 2002: 68). She writes about them: 'The[se] sequence[s] allows the viewer to enjoy forbidden pleasures that are subsequently often disavowed by the film's narratives' (Ibid.). Interestingly, quite the opposite happens in *Queen*. First of all, the pleasures to be enjoyed by the viewer are limited. Rani does not visit Amsterdam's red light district to revel in extramarital sexual pleasure; instead, the brothel is shown to be a

woman's place, where for the most part the girls (admittedly, while dressed rather scantily) dance and party and appear very much in control of their own bodies. The second thing to note is that the 'pleasures' are not disavowed by the narrative at all. Rani compliments Rukshar on her dancing, and Rukshar's work is honest – she pays for her little sister to go to school, and, as Rukshar says herself: 'This is a legit job here' (*Queen* 2014: 01:46:46). Amsterdam's red light district, then, clearly does not qualify as a place of transgression; instead, it serves as a place of exotic Otherness, where Rani has another enlightening encounter, contributing to her development as a person.

Even though *Jodi* takes place in Amritsar, it also contains notions of exoticism. However, these notions fall into the expected pattern of the middle class space. Surinder gains two passes to a trade fair from his work, which he attends with Taani. It is announced as Bhangra's 'Japan Fun Fair', which is proudly displayed on a sign held up by a plastic-looking statue of a giant sumo wrestler. At the centre of the fair is a sumo wrestling ring, including a wrestler, who is announced to the fair attendees as follows: 'We have for you, imported specially from Japan, Mr Sumo' (*Jodi* 2008: 02:00:20). This announcement effectively reduces the cultural artefact of the sumo wrestler to a commodity; an item to be imported at the leisure of those that can afford to. The trade fair, despite the lavish presence of exotic items, does not manage to truly represent the Other; instead, it functions as a capitalist and consumerist space, because of the way culture is commodified and its limited accessibility.

Nonetheless, this space is of interest. Dwyer makes a connection between these exclusive exotic spaces and the notion of romance. In the case of Surinder and Taani, however, the Japanese trade fair becomes a place of tragedy rather than romance. In an effort to impress Taani as himself, rather than his alter ego Raj, Surinder opts to fight Mr. Sumo. Taani, still bothered by Raj confessing his love to her the night before, is annoyed to see Surinder display this macho-like behaviour. Somehow, though, Surinder manages to defeat the wrestler and win a vacation to Japan. Taani is not at all happy about the ordeal however. After it is over, she comments: 'What is this drama? Aren't you aware that you are an average working class man?' (Ibid.: 02:07:37). Surinder explains that with just his salary he would

never be able to afford a trip to Japan, so he wanted to take this chance to make Taani happy. The exotic, as such, becomes a symbol for affluence, and Surinder imagines Japan to be a space in which their middle class-ness can be performed in such a way that it will lead to mutual happiness.

And, in the end, exotic Japan turns out to be just that: when the credits roll, the viewer is informed that after winning the dancing contest, Surinder and Taani went to Japan to have a great time together. The difference it makes is that by this time, Surinder and Taani have become a couple, instead of just husband and wife. The merger of Raj and Surinder into the same person infuses the marriage with the energy of a love affair. It is at this point that Taani and Surinder are ready to perform their roles as a middle class couple. *Jodi*, then, appears to make the point that the middle class does not only require a certain space; the middle class space also makes demands of those willing to partake in it.

Queen and *Jodi* differ radically on this point. *Queen*'s depiction of the foreign is much more complicated than it being a middle class space. Instead, Rani discovers that it is quite different and not Utopian at all; however, she learns a number of important life lessons by engaging with the Otherness that the foreign is shown to be. *Jodi* on the other hand takes the foreign exotic, as symbolised by Japan, as a fairly cheap Bollywood trope: it exists as a place in which the middle class can perform their ritual-consumerist modern form of love (Dwyer 2002: 53). By restricting access to the exotic, however, *Jodi* moulds the concept of the middle class into a specific, Indian kind of consumer: the consumerist ritual can only be performed along the lines of tradition. Just as Japan only becomes a synonym for happiness when Taani and Surinder become the perfect couple, the middle class couple needs to develop along the lines of the patriarchal tradition in order to access their space of desire. *Jodi*, then, continues along the lines established in the first chapter by imagining a middle class that is shaped by the space it inhabits.

THE HYPERREALITY OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

So far, this paper has illustrated how *Queen* and *Jodi* imagine the middle class, and the importance of the middle class space in these two films. In the case of *Queen*, it has been shown that the film imagines the attainment of a middle class subjectivity to arise from an encounter with Otherness. The film does this by having its protagonist Rani travel through Paris and Amsterdam, where several encounters with people from other backgrounds help her attain self-realisation. The importance of space in *Queen*, then, is that it facilitates a departure from the familiar into the unknown. Space is therefore portrayed as necessary; though not in the traditional way, because it does not serve as a background for a ritual consumerist romance.

Jodi, however, does precisely that: it portrays exotic, glamorous spaces as the place where the middle class can manifest its desire for a consumerist love affair, which echoes Dwyer's comment on the necessity of the ritual-consumerist in modern love (Dwyer 2002: 53). At the same time, the film goes a little further by adding an additional constraint to the notion of middle class. *Jodi* shows, by employing the couple as a narratological device, that the Indian middle class is only sanctioned by Indian society as long as it adheres to its traditional demands. This is illustrated by the exotic, symbolised by the foreign country of Japan, which loses its redeeming values when it is not accessed from the mode of the married couple.

As has been established in Prasad's writing, the middle class film has a long history in India. Such a history allows Bollywood to become, to a large degree, self-referential. The (d)evolution of narratological device into a trope is a sign of this happening; the faux-realist atmosphere at the beginning of *Jodi* is an example of such a device. The middle class in popular Indian cinema has become a construction that legitimates itself by creating its own space – the film screen – and multiplying itself endlessly. *Jodi* illustrates this point quite clearly by its incorporation of the cinema into the film itself.

As mentioned in the first chapter, Taani is an avid movie-goer, and it is her love for film that drives her to take dancing lessons in the first place. In other words, her middle class life is to a large degree defined by her re-enactment of a Bollywood lifestyle. This is the only thing that defines her –

as far as the viewer is concerned, she does not have any hopes and dreams of a career, children, family, her future, or otherwise. The only things that define her as a person are her dancing classes and her marriage. At one point in the film, Taani and Raj have a falling out during the dancing lesson. Raj's dancing is not good enough to win the contest; as such, Raj decides to quit the dancing lessons for good to allow Taani to win the contest with another partner. After this happens, Taani falls asleep in the cinema, and dreams about Raj appearing on the screen. He comments on how the love story in the film she was watching is boring; he then states: 'But never fear, Raj is here! I'll show you how to romance and dance in Hindi film style' (*Jodi* 2008: 01:04:50). This highly metaphorical self-referential sequence illustrates the closed loop of the Bollywood middle class. A song-and-dance sequence with the song 'Phir Milenge Chalte Chalte' follows; in appearance an innocent song about the timelessness of love, but from the perspective of self-referral it takes on different meanings.

The sequence spans a number of sets and locations, as Bollywood song-and-dance sequences tend to do. However, the interesting thing to note is that Raj – played by Sharukh Khan – is dancing with a different girl every time. All of them are played by famous Bollywood actresses, like Preity Zinta and Kajol Mukherjee. The chorus of the song is translated as follows: 'In every life we change our form / On dream's curtains are we reborn / We are traveling the love lane / down the road we will meet again' (Ibid.: 01:05:40). The first two lines of this chorus are fairly self-explanatory: The dream's curtains are a clear reference to the screen on which the film is projected, which makes the film screen a space in which a particular reality is grounded. This is the reality of the Bollywood couple: it changes its form, its appearance, but in its essence remains the same. The changing scenes during the sequence serve to further emphasise the notion of Bollywood continuity: the first scene, for instance, features Raj wearing a tramp-like outfit, which recalls the Bollywood classic *Shree 420*. The sequence then follows Bollywood history, referring and alluding to a number of classic films.

It is at this point that Raj's name appears not to be innocently chosen at all. Raj Kapoor is also the name of a famous Bollywood actor, and one of his famous roles was his character in *Shree 420*. It appears, then, that the char-

acter of Raj is not a mere alter-ego; he is the Bollywood hero incarnate – in a Bollywood film. This is further illustrated by the catchphrase he always uses when he says goodbye: 'We are traveling the love lane, down the road we'll meet again', the same words as the chorus of the song.

Jodi, as such, serves as an example that illustrates the hyperreality of the notion of the middle class in Bollywood film. Where characters such as Kapoor's in *Shree 420* referred to reality, infusing the film with a sense of realism, *Jodi*'s palimpsest as it is portrayed in the song 'Phir Milenge Chalte Chalte' creates a closed loop of signs referring to other signs. Jean Baudrillard argues that this process eliminates the possibility of representation: 'Whereas representation tries to absorb simulation by interpreting it as false representation, simulation envelops the whole edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum' (Baudrillard 1998: 4). The Bollywood couple, which is a stand-in for the middle class in *Jodi*, becomes an empty sign; its signifier is lost somewhere under a thick layer of Bollywood tropes. In relation to the notion of space, which has been the focal point of this paper, *Jodi* posits the cinema as the centre of the middle class lifestyle. It takes on a prescriptive mode: the couple that is (re)produced by Bollywood comes to represent the sanctioned mode of middle class subjectivity. By employing such a tactic of cultural reproduction, *Jodi* illustrates the properties of Bollywood that turn it into a culture industry in the sense Adorno and Horkheimer defined it. More precisely, *Jodi* embodies the incorporative mode of Indian cinema that creates false psychological needs that can only be satisfied through capitalism – which echoes Adorno and Horkheimer's criticism of cinema (Adorno & Horkheimer 2002: 22). The spaces that appear in *Jodi* fit this description: the exotic was observed to possess the qualities that satisfy the ritual-consumerist needs of the couple. Even though it presents itself as a realist-infused piece of work, *Jodi*'s entanglement in Bollywood's middle class hyperreality makes it unable to represent anything but itself.

It is with this analysis of *Jodi* in mind that *Queen* really begins to shine. There are moments in which *Queen* reproduces a number of Indian cultural artefacts, such as Rani's cooking skill; on the other hand, Rani does end up earning her own money, which grants her considerable independence considering the larger, capitalist-infused framework the film is part of. What is more important is the way in which the film takes the same Bollywood

tropes that *Jodi* builds on, and instead switches them around. The use of the foreign space as a symbol for Otherness is a good example. *Queen*'s refusal to turn Rani's narrative into a cheap romance makes it stand out, in particular against a film like *Jodi*. As such, *Queen* demonstrates that Bollywood has the means to interrogate itself.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper set out to explore the plurality of Bollywood films in a response to Virdi's statement that though it represents the status quo, Bollywood is not ideologically monolithic (Virdi 2002: 212). It has done so by analysing the coming of age of the two female protagonists of *Jodi* and *Queen*. The application of Baudrillard's notion of the hyperreal appears to shed new light on the issue: because Bollywood reproduces variation on itself to satisfy consumer needs, it lacks a clear ideological direction. Instead, Bollywood has created a reality for itself, one that borders indistinguishably with the everyday, and reproduces the middle class space as an exotic backdrop for a ritual-consumerist romance. At the same time, things are never as simple as they seem; especially when it comes to a medium as multi-faceted as India's film industry. As illustrated by *Queen*, Bollywood itself has the tools necessary to deconstruct and interrogate its tropes, and successfully propose alternatives by reinstating space as room for improvement. This brings me back to the boys I talked to in Nasik and their enthusiasm about the film and its protagonist. If *Jodi* shows that reality and fiction are not so far away from each other, then perhaps *Queen* will help imagine a reality in which being middle class means more than being a consumer. It might not be a cultural revolution, but the way Rani has made her way into the hearts of many shows that Bollywood does not entail the end of civilisation, either.

Jan-Sijmen Zwarts holds a BA in English Language and Culture and an MA in Comparative Literary Studies, both from Utrecht University, the Netherlands. His areas of interest are Indian English literature, post-humanism, ecocriticism, and climate change. He has worked extensively on the notion of landscape, climate, and (post-)humanity in the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Arundhati Roy, Amitav Ghosh, and others. In addition, he's always held an interest in cinema and the cultures and languages of South Asia.

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Islam and Contraception in Urban North India – Muslim Women's Reproductive Health Behavior and Decision-making

Constanze Weigl-Jäger

Abstract: This paper is based on ethnographic research conducted in a predominantly Muslim community in South Delhi. It analyzes the reproductive health behavior and decision-making of low-income Muslim women by focusing in particular on the context, in which the lives of these women are embedded. Fieldwork methods were participant observation, life histories and the conduction of in-depth interviews with forty women as well as medical practitioners and non-governmental/governmental health workers.

It is shown that particularly socio-economic constraints as well as women's poor state of health are the main factors influencing women's reproductive decision-making. Women's perception of reproductive health behavior is also closely intertwined with the existing social context and its related social and cultural norms. Local religious beliefs and practices however play a less significant role in determining women's fertility decisions. Building on case studies of women who articulate their motivations regarding contraceptive use, I argue that Islamic norms and reasoning are fashioned pragmatically. Women manipulate, adopt or reject Islamic legal tenets in regard to contraception to achieve their own goals. All these factors result in a decline of fertility.

INTRODUCTION

Fertility rates among Muslims in India are higher than average of the population but are declining substantially and converging towards the average. Fertility among Muslims varies with socio-economic characteristics and there are significant interregional variations[1]. Muslims use contraceptive methods and the contraceptive prevalence is about 10 percentage points lower than average, which is primarily responsible for keeping Muslim fertility above the average level (Kulkarny 2010: 92-122).

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[1] For example, fertility rates among Muslims in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh are much lower than fertility rates in Northern Indian states such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Haryana and Gujarat.

There have been a number of explanations exploring the causes of differ-
ences regarding the use of contraceptive methods. It is has been often ar-
gued that there is an ideological influence of religion on fertility attitudes
and practices (e.g. Bhat & Zavier 2005, Moulasha & Rao 1999). In other
words, Muslims have a higher fertility because there might be a theological
opposition to contraception in Islam and a debate on whether Islam allows
contraception. Based on fieldwork in a settlement colony in southern Delhi,
I argue that Islamic law is not the main driver in determining fertility pat-
terns of women and that women fashion religious (Islamic) norms and re-
productive reasoning pragmatically in this context.

In present-day India, there are many discussions about the growth of the
Indian Muslim population and about the changing religious composition of
India's national population. Political interests motivate these discussions.
The so called "Muslim fertility" is especially used by right-wing Hindu-
parties in their battle for political power. In India Muslims are in a minority
(14,23 percent of the population)[2], but from the perspective of the so-
called Hindu-Right[3], Muslims are a threat to the Hindu majority. They argue
that Indian Muslims are supposed to refuse contraception and Muslim fer-
tility rates thus must be higher than that of others. In the view of "Hindu-
Rights" Islamic doctrine opposes contraception and Muslims docilely re-
spond to their religious leaders' sayings. Muslims are planning to turn Hin-
dus into a minority, as the "Hindu-Rights" propaganda insists, thus Indian
Muslims' fertility is seen as part of a plan to outnumber Hindus. With my
research I want to challenge the myths of "Hindu-Rights" about Muslim
fertility in India and show that Muslim women's reproductive behavior is
not a straightforward product of Islamic legal prescriptions[4].

In this paper I further want to consider the fertility practices and deci-
sion-making from a woman's point of view in her local context. To give a

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[2] Government Census 2011.

[3] The "Hindu Right" comprises several organizations including the Bharatiya Janata Party
(BJP), the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Bajrang Dal, and the Vishwa Hindu Pari-
shad (VHP) (Jeffery & Jeffery 2006: 26-27).

[4] A number of articles and studies exist in academic literature discussing the reasons for
higher fertility of Muslims compared to Hindus in India. All studies argue that differences in
fertility rates are more attributable to geographical location and socio-economic conditions
than to religious affiliations (Jeffery & Jeffery 2000, 2006; Borooah & Iyer 2005, Bose 2005).

holistic description of women's reproductive health behavior, one has to take into account the economic, socio-cultural, religious and political settings, in which reproductive decision-making takes place. Therefore, the following questions are of primary concern: What are women's motives and explanations for the decision to use methods of contraception? What are the various factors influencing women in their daily reproductive decision-making and practices? What are individual perceptions of religious doctrine regarding contraception and how do these doctrines and individual interpretations of them influence reproductive decision-making? Specifically, how do women manipulate, adopt and construct their understanding of Islamic mandates regarding contraception to achieve their own goals?

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH SITE

Chanda Nagar[5] is a low-income settlement in the Southern part of New Delhi. It has a population of around 13 000 people living on half a kilometre square, which is predominantly Muslim (more than 95%) with a Hindu- and Christian minority. The majority of Muslims is Sunni. The research area is marked by poverty and the majority of households live under severe socio-economic conditions.

A striking feature about the community is that it appears homogeneous as most of the people are from a common religious background (Islam). However there are several groups within the population that differ from each other on the bases of geographical origin, language, social norms, castes and length of stay within the area. For example, migrants from the eastern Indian states of Bengal and Bihar and the neighbouring Eastern country of Bangladesh prefer to speak Bengali and Bhojpuri and speak Hindi or Urdu only in a broken way. Their language as well as their customs differ from migrants who come from North Indian states. There is little communication between these groups.

In addition, the population of the area embodies a caste-based fragmentation (*biraderi*) with Ashraf Muslims occupying the top caste ranks and *Dalit* Muslims claiming the bottom rung of the system. The majority of Muslims of the area belongs to the lower castes, which comprise occupationally specific caste groups such as for example Ansari, *Kasab*

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[5] The name of the area as that of all respondents have been changed to maintain anonymity.

(butcher), *Darzee* (tailor), *Nai* (barber), carpenter, *kabari* (junk dealer) and *rangrez* (dyer).

The population consists mainly of migrants and their families. They migrated from small towns or districts from Northern or North-Eastern Indian states like Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar or Assam to Delhi. Reasons for migration were employment opportunities, low profit in traditional occupation, lower wages at their places of origin and distribution of land among siblings. Other inhabitants of the colony come from inner city slums of Delhi as consequence of a state resettlement. They had lived in other inner city slums of Delhi before but their houses were demolished by the state and were relocated to other areas. Poverty-induced migration from rural areas and state resettlement has led to a congestion in the area and caused increasing unemployment, the growth of an urban informal sector and further impoverishment of the population.

The men of the low-income community are involved in the informal sector as for example daily wage labourers, rag pickers and small vendors. They are not protected by labour laws, earn below the minimum wage and work often under exploitative conditions. The community has a high prevalence of unemployment, school dropouts, drug and alcohol abuse and domestic problems.

Today, the settlement colony is so overcrowded that the poorest of the inhabitants live along city sewers, under bridges, in parks and on pavements of the streets surrounding the area. Several problems associated with the rapid urbanization like lack of sanitation, poor water supply and unhealthy environmental conditions are affecting the population of the whole area. Despite its congestion and affiliated difficulties its residents declare the settlement colony as safe and peaceful. There have been no communal riots in the last decades and in addition to the area's central location in Delhi, inhabitants regard Chanda Nagar as a preferred place to live.

DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

I talked to 40 Muslim women altogether and collected their reproductive histories. The women selected were in the age group of around 20 to 40 years.

The majority of women I talked to were migrants and belonged to a poor socio-economic strata, but they were no homogenous group as they distinguish by region and language. Most of the women were from Uttar Pradesh, others from Bihar, West Bengal and very few from Assam, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana. They were first, second or third generation migrants and the majority of women had been living in Delhi for more than ten years. The date of migration to Delhi began from the 1970s up until the year 2000. A small number of women moved to Chanda Nagar from other parts of the city, especially from Old Delhi.

The migrant women from rural areas particularly had not been to school at all in their childhood and youth, and never learned to write or read. A few women could read and write in Urdu. They didn't learn these skills in school, but had acquired them at home while being taught to read the Koran by female tutors. Half of the women either went to primary school only, or to primary and secondary school, however most of them had only a few years of education. Two women had a higher education (university). The level of education amongst the women was low because a majority of them were withdrawn from school as soon as they reached puberty since they were considered grown-up enough to be "married off". Some women were withdrawn from school in order to join paid work directly or to help out with housework and sibling care while family members worked longer hours to make ends meet.

Regarding their occupation, majority of women of the sample were working in the informal sector earning a rather low salary. Unorganized sector occupations are characterized by casual, unprotected wages and an absence of contractual relations with employers. These women were working in this sector for their livelihood and were utilizing the earned income for the purpose of their children, education and family commitments.

However, in Chanda Nagar employment of a woman outside the home - as in many parts of India - was connected to disapproval from family members and kin. A woman's honour (*izzat*) could be endangered by her daily

leaving home for work. Therefore, some women were earning their liveli-
hood in home-based activities, for example as piece rate workers engaged
in embroidery. For majority of women however, there was no question
whether to work or not outside the house – they had to go for work out of
sheer poverty, socioeconomic necessities and financial pressures. Women
did all different kinds of work outside their homes and took whatever and
whenever employment was available – for example as day labourers or as
domestic servant. Women worked to contribute to the household income
and to support the subsistence of the family. Three women of this group
were unemployed at the time of fieldwork, but desperately searching a job.
For these women living in a slum, working was more of a necessity than a
privilege brought on by their condition of poverty.

However, the fact that they contributed to the household income often
inadvertently did serve to strengthen their bargaining position within the
family. Working outside the home marked also an immense increase in
mobility for these women, in opposition to middle-class women, who often
faced limitations on their mobility and employment because of their hus-
bands or in-laws. The working women living in Chanda Nagar were highly
mobile because of their financial necessities.

All of the women are "ever married women". The term "ever married"
designates a person who has been married at least once, but is not neces-
sarily married presently (at the time of fieldwork). Thus "ever married"
women include all married, widowed, divorced or separated women.

The majority of women had either completed their reproductive career
or had no intention of having more children at the moment of fieldwork. On
the one hand these women were currently in the situation to make deci-
sions on how to regulate their fertility by using contraceptive methods, and
on the other hand they already had experience regarding its use, availabil-
ity, and problems.

Description of Research methods

The research of this paper is based on fieldwork, which I carried out in Chanda Nagar for 12 months altogether. Fieldwork methods were participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews and the collection of life histories. Due to the very sensitive research topic the explorative phase[6] of fieldwork had to take a couple of months. This was especially important because the research site is a conservative Muslim area and it is a taboo to talk about topics like contraception, as these topics are still associated with sexuality. And as these issues were regarded as culturally taboo and not supposed to be talked about, it was not an easy endeavour to ask women questions about these issues.

I participated in the women's family activities, events, discussions and their general lives at home. Due to the fact that women were spending much of their time within the house, most participant observation took place there. Occasionally I accompanied women going out, for example visiting relatives and friends or going to the market and also participated in community activities like funerals, weddings, religious holidays and school events. In addition, interactions between women and health workers in maternity centres, at homes or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were observed. By participating in women's daily activities I was able to share their current life situation and the different kind of pressures they were exposed to in their reproductive decision-making. All these day-to-day observations were recorded in detail into a fieldwork diary.

In conjunction with the participant observation semi-structured, open-ended interviews were conducted with forty women. In particular, the women were asked about general information related to their marriage, education, occupation, their contraceptive experiences, and their knowledge of Islamic legal tenets regarding contraception. The semi-structured interviews lasted between one and one and a half hour. The majority of interviews were conducted in Urdu, a minority of interviews in English. I also invested time to get to know the women while improving my

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[6] The explorative phase is marked by collecting data, getting in touch with potential informants and establishing trust relationships with them.

Urdu language skills to the point where I felt sufficiently confident in an interview session. Only after a couple of months I started to ask questions regarding contraception. The interviews were tape-recorded and translated with the help of a local female research assistant.

Besides, life histories of individual women, which I came to know very well during my research stay, were collected. Life histories are very interesting for the analysis of reproductive health decisions, provide a background and besides a possibility to understand the cultural context in a much better way. These interviews were mostly conducted in the women's households, which in itself was a very challenging interview setting. Often, along with being interviewed, the women would simultaneously do housework. Some rooms were crowded with children so we would almost end up whispering to each other while talking about matters related to contraception. At other times men and women simply went in and out of the room interrupting the interview in process. Despite all the inconveniences, women came and spoke and were interested to help clarify issues, because as Shabana simply put it "It's a relief sometimes to empty one's heart out".

Expert interviews were conducted with a range of medical practitioners, including doctors, nurses, both governmental and non-governmental female health workers, and local midwives. These professionals provided important information on reproductive health issues and their opinion complemented the comprehension of women's notions.

The results of this research are not only based on qualitative, but also on quantitative data. Data of a Survey of the community, which had been conducted by a NGO working in the research area, has been used. The main objectives of the survey included mapping the households and developing a demographic profile of the community, assessing its' basic situation in the areas of health, education and livelihoods. One of the reasons, I decided to do my fieldwork in Chanda Nagar was the opportunity to work as a volunteer with the above mentioned NGO, who also worked on women's reproductive health issues.

Through my participation in the NGO, especially in their health centre activities I could establish good contacts to a number of women and medical doctors, but there arose of course also challenges because of my associ-

ation with this NGO[7]. There is no doubt that I was only able to enter the community through the friendship and help of NGO members. Finally, me being a woman was a great advantage when interacting with these women and asking them about their contraceptive practices. Due to my own female sex I had greater access to their world, which is rather private and more difficult to enter from outside.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH BEHAVIOR AND DECISION-MAKING IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL NORMS, RELIGION, POVERTY AND WOMEN'S POOR STATE OF HEALTH

I argue that a range of factors, including socio-cultural norms, religion, socio-economic constraints and women's poor state of health, influences women's reproductive decisions and practices.

Socio-cultural norms

First and foremost, women's use of contraception is determined by the prevalent social and cultural norms in the community such as (early) marriages, the virtue of motherhood, the value of children and the woman's subordinated kinship-position at her natal and particularly conjugal home. Women's childbirth-rates are embedded in these social and cultural norms of northern India.

Marriage is nearly universal in India among Muslims as in other communities. Marriage in India, as in many other countries of the world, also points out the moment in a woman's life when sexuality and childbearing become socially acceptable. An unmarried woman cannot be legitimately a mother and this is the reason that in Chanda Nagar marriage remains near universal.

Besides being a wife, motherhood is still a much respected position for many Indian women. Because of the patrilineal system prevalent in North

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[7] For example I found it difficult to balance NGO concerns with my own ideas of my duties to my assistants and study participants. When I decided to give gifts to women participating in my study or a wage to my assistants, this was viewed with great concern by NGO staff because I had set a precedent for future expectations. But after the many hours women had given, I felt it right to show my appreciation.

India, a woman leaves her natal home upon marriage to live at her husband's and in-law's home, where she has to start at the bottom of a hierarchy of women and men. The period of being married but not yet being a mother is a liminal stage in a woman' life. Uncertainty and fear prevail – and for her natal and conjugal family as well - as long as she has not given birth to a child, preferably a boy to perpetuate the patriarchal family line. Only by becoming a mother herself, will a woman be able to improve her relationship with her in-laws and in particular with her mother-in-law, so as to lead to an enhancement of her status at her conjugal home. By becoming a mother a woman's esteem will be doubled. And only by becoming a mother, a young married woman will be able to point out her identification with the household and gain a permanent position (cf. Jeffery, Jeffery & Lyon 1989; Jeffery & Jeffery 1996). The actual operation of this system was a bit diffused in an urban context such as Chanda Nagar. For example, only a part of the women lived with their joint families as many had separated from their in-laws when they migrated to Delhi. Often, women would live with their in-laws soon after marriage but would eventually shift to independent homes after some years. Still - all women were dependent on their families and if it was not their in-laws, husbands were determining their range of choices. And there were not only expectations from the family, but also from neighbours, or the community regarding the sex and number of children a woman should have. Therefore all women of the sample strived to give birth within the first or second year of marriage, and looking at the data most women had done so.

If a woman doesn't conceive within the first year of marriage or shortly after, she may become a subject of defamation by household members and neighbours. Infertile women still face severe social problems in present-day Indian society (Mishra & Dubey 2014: 160-161). For example, childlessness is considered inauspicious and childless women are not allowed to participate in any auspicious occasion particularly rituals related to childbirth. In India, women with children have a higher status within the family and in general (cf. Seal 2000; Jeffery & Jeffery 1996; Hussain 2008). And this applies also to the research area - women of reproductive age are highly respected as mothers and wives, but if they fail to meet these ideals for some reason, they become rather marginalised in the society of Chanda Nagar.

Thus, pregnancy and childbirth were seen to provide the primary identity of women. However, women generally attain a certain degree of autonomy as they get older, and eventually gain authority within the family if and when they become mothers-in-law themselves. The cyclical nature of this gender system ensures that women have an interest in maintaining gender roles to a certain extent (Kirmani 2013: 172).

Despite sons being preferred, all women declared that a family is not complete without daughters because both have special social characteristics and functions. It is important to have a son because he continues the father's lineage and it is only him, who is able to carry out the funeral rites for his father. However, a daughter is essential as she supports her mother with the household chores, by taking care of younger siblings, and is a huge social and emotional support. It was obvious that daughters were as welcome as sons for the women of Chanda Nagar. In addition, children are a valuable means of insurance in old age - there is no widespread or national system of social security in India, and women who have never been married or do not have children are often in a precarious position in old age.

Marriage, the virtue of being a mother and the value of children – all place a premium on the fertility of a woman and the importance of childbearing. Therefore, women barely try to prevent the birth of a child if they are freshly wedded. Women like to keep giving birth until both a daughter and a son were born; only at this point may they decide to stop childbearing and start to use contraception. The majority of young women considered two or three children to be enough, as long as one of them was a boy, and then decide for contraception. However, if couples have daughters only, most of them continue to have children until a son is born. Some women explained that they had more children, as they desired.

Within the family however, contrasting opinions were found regarding the ideal number of children. In general, the senior generation, in particular the mothers-in-law, were much more eager to get more children into the family than the younger generation. Women's reproductive interest was also in many cases separate and distinct from that of their husbands. Therefore negotiations pertaining to number of children may not necessarily reflect decisions of a "couple". However, there were women who did not share the idea of going on giving birth to children just because their moth-

ers-in-law or husbands insisted on it, especially if women felt they had enough children. These women regarded themselves as having the right to decide over their body, to conceive or give birth to a child, even if their mother-in-law or husband opposed their choice. Women – having reached their social optimum number of children or more – therefore went for example to a gynaecologist for the insertion of an IUD (intrauterine device), underwent a sterilisation or even resorted to an abortion. In these cases women sometimes went to arrange for contraception behind the backs of their in-laws or husband and secretly defied them. These women did submit to local hierarchies, but they also employed their own reason and listened to their body. They were not passive, although the constraints, under which they must resist or make their choices, were severe. The decision for and the use of contraceptive methods, despite prevalent social or familial objections, was a way for women in Chanda Nagar to achieve their own reproductive goals and challenge what presently prevailed as socially legitimate norms.

Nafisa, married, 24 years old, two sons: "I have two small sons, therefore when pregnant again I decided for an abortion. Nowadays two children are enough and we couldn't afford another one, because my husband does not find work. If we can make both of them eligible it's enough. We are eight-nine people living in one room; there is no more space left. When my period was two weeks late, I went to a doctor to make a test. He transferred me to a public hospital where the abortion was carried out. Additionally, I underwent a sterilisation. After the operation I was very weak, however I didn't have any pain. My mother and my sister accompanied me to the hospital. They agreed with me on my decision. However, my mother-in-law didn't. I didn't tell her anything in the beginning. Not until four weeks after I told my mother-in-law about it and she became very angry".

Islamic Law

Women's own (reproductive) decision-making takes place not only in the context of family relations, but is also crucially connected to women's forms of knowledge framed by religious ideologies. Many women in Chanda Nagar exercised their own interpretation of religious sources to attain their own personal contraceptive objectives, which often differed from the dominant discourse.

The respondents in my study, ordinary women and men as well as religious experts, all had differing ideas on the Islamic law in regard to contraception. The authoritative, dominant religious knowledge in Chanda Nagar represented by males - husbands, fathers or religious authorities - prohibited the practice of contraception. Publicly, women in Chanda Nagar may share and follow the above mentioned male perception. On my question on the position of Islam on contraception, women answered most of the time very brief and casual "This is not allowed in Islam" or "Our religion prohibits it". Women usually referred to children as gifts or provisions of God, believing the individual number of children to be destined by God, and only him deciding whether it will be a girl or boy. One thing all women agreed upon was the prohibition of permanent methods of contraception like sterilization[8] based on religious grounds. Women considered sterilization to be a greater sin than the practice of any other form of contraception. Reasons mentioned were that sterilized people could not make the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca, and that such people's daily prayers would be invalidated or their fasts during *ramzan* would no longer be accepted by God. The main arguments women brought forward were that a sterilized woman's funeral procession could not be performed and her soul would forfeit its place in paradise (see also Jeffery, Jeffery & Jeffrey 2008: 519-548).

> Shanaz, 30 years old, married, three daughters: "The operation is not allowed in our religion, therefore it is a great sin. The operation is prohibited by God. Children are a gift of God. God will not forgive you an operation. When a sterilized woman dies, her funeral prayers will not be recited; her soul will stay in the graveyard and cannot go into heaven."

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[8] Women never called the sterilization or tubectomy by name, but labeled it as *nasbandi* („tube closing") or „operation".

Consequently, the use of contraceptive methods was considered to inter-fere with God's will, and regarded as a sin (*gunah*). Women considered in particular sterilization in the context of Islamic law as forbidden (*haram*). One reason, why this view might prevail amongst women in Chanda Nagar is the following: The majority of women did not get much exposure to Is-lamic legal tenets, and in addition barely were able to read the predomi-nantly Arabic scriptures themselves. They did not know much about Islamic law related to contraception and what they knew as based on a misconcep-tion that Islam forbids any method of contraception[9]. A social worker of Chanda Nagar explained it as follows: "People here have a misconception regarding the Quran and contraception; they think it is forbidden to use contraceptive methods and if they make use of it they won't come to para-dise, but this is neither written in the Quran nor in the *hadith* (the collected sayings of the Prophet Muhammad). Still many people believe that if they use condoms after death their soul will not receive the last funeral prayer."

However, a high number of sterilizations were prevalent in the research area. When I talked to women a few months later, a much more complex picture emerged. There was a difference between what women publicly said about contraception in the context of Islamic law, and what they told me in private interviews. Many women asserted that according to public opinion birth control is in contrast to Islam, but almost in the same breath complained about poverty and their inability to rear and educate numerous children properly. For many women the hope of living a slightly better life

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[9] However, within Islam or Islamic legal tenets there are a variety of theological positions on contraception. From a historical point of view Islamic texts as such do not present a major obstacle to practicing contraception. Religious experts often do have different ideas on Islamic prohibitions related to contraception, and the Indian *ulema* (religious scholars) in particular has developed strong religious attitudes against its practice. But a certain level of incongruity between Muslim perspectives that reject family planning as contrary to Islam on the one side, and an Islamic legacy permitting family planning on the other side prevail, which is absolutely nothing knew as such. Pointing out the variety of theological positions within Islam, the complex relationship between theological doctrines and everyday social practices, and the varied demographic situations in countries with Muslim populations chal-lenge relatively easily the cruder arguments about linking Islam with high fertility due to supposed religious practices and counter further the general misconception that Islamic scriptures and religious leaders have an undue influence on determining the reproductive behaviour of Muslims (Jeffery & Jeffery 2000).

was a sufficient reason to practice contraception. Due to socio-economic pressures women decided to have a sterilization – problems such as feeding and rearing children were considered as more essential than the violation of Islamic law.

> Asma, 37 years old, deserted, two children: "The operation is prohibited in Islam and this is written in our scriptures. However, I had an operation, because two children are enough in these days. Children are expensive and I do not have the money. If you have much money, it is possible to have more children. When my son was just a baby, his father and my husband left our home and the family. Till now we don't know where he is. That year I did undergo an operation. I had an operation, because my husband had left me but might return any time. He didn't do any work, so I decided to get myself operated."

> Roshan, married, two children, 40 years old: "I use a Copper-t (IUD) because there is not enough money to feed and clothe more children: even though the *maulana* and the elders are telling that in Islam birth control is prohibited. In Islam birth control is not good. But we have lots of sorrows on how to raise and feed our children therefore I use a Copper-T. However, I will not have an operation (sterilization), because this is a very big sin and the soul will not go up to heaven."

Other women expressed understandings of Islam that highlighted egalitarian values, and argued that it was actually not Islam that hampered women's rights and was to be blamed, but rather men caused women's oppression. Some women cited Quran verses proclaiming it a sin to have children and not being able to raise them properly. Here women referred to a verse in the Quran in which the quality of children rather than having any children is emphasized (Quran 37: 100). So these women, by pointing to the fact that it goes against Islamic law to have children if one is unable to raise them, used their own interpretation of the textual sources.

> Imrana, 25 years old, married, four children: "We use something (condoms) because we do not want to have more children. A child needs food, clothes and an education. Since two months I have stomach pain, but no money for treatment, how should we feed another child? It is a sin in Islam, if you have children and you cannot feed or educate them. If you can raise your children properly, it will be Allah's blessing."

> Anisa, 36 years old, married, four children: "It is a sin to have an operation (sterilization), but all women here go for it. And it is a sin to use the oral pill. But it is also a sin to have too many children and if you can't provide for them clothes, food and education."

Another woman asked a religious leader for advice and confirmation whether her practice would be conforming to Islam. And other women believed their use of contraception (temporary as well as permanent) was religiously permitted because they had been diagnosed with health problems and it therefore was regarded as a necessity. Women also explained that God would understand their behavior because they were forced by external circumstances like their socio-economic situation to act accordingly. In these cases the Islamic legal rule "necessity knows no law" can be invoked.

> Farida, 30 years old, two children, married: "The one above knows that we do not have any money, therefore the safai karna (abortion) was necessary (majburi). With God my abortion is agreed. I believe and I know God will understand that I had no choice. Allah knows the limitations and situations that compel to do so."

Women understood and interpreted Islamic religious proscriptions regarding contraception differently and therefore not only were able to circumvent the prevailing public opinion, but also to act contrary to what the general Islamic norms in Chanda Nagar prescribe. Utilizing their personal religious interpretation to legitimize their contraceptive practices and to justify their situation to themselves, women were able to make their own reproductive decision-making based on the perception of what was best for them, and achieved their goal of stopping childbearing. In other words, women viewed, interpreted and manipulated their understandings of Islam in their own pragmatic ways.

This is not to say that Islam did not have an important place within women's narratives. Women emphasized that their use of contraceptive methods had nothing to do with being a good Muslim and that they lived an Islamic way of life. When talking to Ruksana (39 years old, deserted, four children) about contraception and Islam's view on it, she explained: "We do our daily prayers (*namaz*), we do the fasting, we read the *Quran* and we make the profession of faith (*shahada*). The fact that someone is sterilized has nothing to do with being a good Muslim." Women explained that although Islam was one of the most important issues in their life; they did not always agree on how it worked for them. Islamic doctrine was central to many aspects of women's everyday life, however not necessarily in regard to the issue of contraception.

Despite the often-represented opinion that Muslim women live in a context were Islamic rulings regulate their lives and in particular their fertility, women in Chanda Nagar manipulated, adopted or rejected Islamic legal tenets in regard to contraception to achieve their own goals. My research has shown that religion has a rather limited impact on women's fertility patterns. In addition, various surveys confirm that there is substantial practice of contraception among Muslims in India (Kulkarni 2010: 103). Socioeconomic constraints are the main factor influencing women's reproductive decision-making.

Poverty

Chanda Nagar is a predominantly low-income settlement and poverty leads to the decision of a woman to have less children. In this research, poverty is not seen as just another variable with equal weight to other factors influencing women's reproductive decision-making process, but is depicted as one of the most important components permeating every level of a woman's live. Women stated that they desired a limited number of children and the reasons cited were mainly economic in character - they had to provide and secure food, education, medicine, and clothing to the children, which were costly. Any woman did not regard having many children as economically rational, and their explanations were always connected to the ubiquitous expression that it was very difficult these days to nurture and nourish children and to raise children properly.

Reasons to have fewer children also included the fact that children were no longer regarded as an additional labour power by their parents. Despite the fact that some children earned money and worked productively for their parents, they were seen rather as an economic burden than as financial contributors. Parents also tried to avoid having more than two daughters because of the high costs of dowry.

> Farida is 30 years old, married and has three sons and one daughter. She lives with her husband, four children and her mother-in-law in one and a half rooms of the size of 20 square meters. Her husband worked as a painter. He was self-employed but nowadays he is without work. Farida earned a little amount of additional money by doing embroidery at home; however at the moment she also had no orders to stitch clothes. When I asked her about her children, Farida told me: "Please note down how difficult the life for us women is here. The women here have many problems and sorrows. I cannot work, I do not earn money and I do not find any job. My husband gets 150 Rs (2,80 Euro) daily and from this amount my husband, our four children, my mother-in-law and me have to live. How can we pay for the school of the children, how can I pay the water, the electricity, the daily household items? My husband and I are using contraception because we do not want another child. A child needs good food and education. It has to learn to read and write. How should I in this situation nourish another child?"

Women's poor state of health and their use of contraceptive methods

Not only the impossibility of rearing numerous children properly due to economic constraints, but also the harm caused to a woman's health by repeated child-bearing, fears of maternal mortality, and the costs of medical interventions during childbearing affected the women's contraceptive practices. There was a high number of anaemia and malnutrition among women. The common ailments women mentioned they suffered from were back pain, headache and weakness. Women could not afford to buy medicine; diseases were not treated at all or only at an advanced state. Poverty

and lack of financial resources were powerful factors affecting the health of a large number of women in Chanda Nagar, younger and older ones alike. Accordingly, one reason why women desired to limit their number of children was their poor state of health.

Due to the urban location of Chanda Nagar a wide range of providers offering contraceptive methods exist and are easy accessible to most women. Women's sources of information on contraception range from "other women" to "female kin", "husband", "hospital", "health centre", "NGO", "village", "radio and television". It must be emphasized that the centralized family planning program in India has very visible promotional tactics. Consequently it is not surprising that most women have heard of contraceptive methods.

Nearly all women of the sample used contraceptive methods. The majority of them received methods and contraceptives, which were freely distributed by the government. The Family Welfare Program promoted sterilization (tubectomy), pills and IUDs (Intra-Uterine Devices) as the main methods. It comes as no surprise that majority of women received particularly these methods by government institutions (hospital, urban health care centers) and NGOs.

However, in the conversations women hardly ever referred to or mentioned any positive experiences with temporary contraception (oral pill, IUD, condom). Women mentioned medical side effects as well as perceived health hazards, which can be attributed to ethno-physical concepts assigned to temporary contraceptives. These perceptions were derived from the different forms of contraceptive knowledge women had, ranging from explanatory models rooted in traditional medical systems to interpretations or information gleaned from biomedical practitioners. For example, the majority of women believed the oral pill would dry up the blood in the body and lead to weakness, consequently they rejected it. Women additionally complained about not being told the advantages, disadvantages and complications of the contraceptives they opted for. So women's inadequate knowledge regarding these temporary contraceptives and their application was a major factor affecting its use. This and the various difficulties and inconveniences women had with the use of modern temporary contraceptives after some time led to the discontinuity or permanent change of temporary methods to a permanent method of contraception.

One prominent aspect of the contraceptive trajectories of women in the sample is therefore, that more than half of them had obtained sterilizations. Thus, even though some women explained that they could not obtain sterilization due to religious prohibition, they opted for it. Most women were forced to use government institutions, which provide different kind of reproductive health services for free as they could not afford to pay for the services provided by private hospitals or gynecologists. However, these governmental institutions were often marked by an inadequate quality of service and sometimes-coercive character in delivering services. A heavily criticized feature of the Family Planning Program was its preoccupation with sterilizations (Gupta 2000: 278). According to critics the Family Planning Program in India promoted sterilizations (tubectomies) over other methods since the latter require a better education and more monitoring; thus they are more troublesome than inducing women to terminate child-bearing once and for all. Despite it's declared "cafeteria approach" which might have given women an option to choose from whichever form of contraception they wanted, such choices in reality were restricted by primarily promoting sterilizations, preventing usage of reversible methods, and inadequate facilities and information (Seal 2000). In addition, women explained that they have received monetary incentives after having a sterilization. These limitations of government services posed not only problems for women's reproductive choices, but for women's health in general. Thus, contraceptive services made available to women seem to capitalize upon their poor socio-economic status and gender situations.

CONCLUSION

In Chanda Nagar, women's reproductive decisions and practices, down at the level of the day-to-day realities, are determined by socio-cultural norms, socio-economic constraints, women's poor state of health and their use of governmental health facilities. My research has shown that Islam and its prescriptions is not the main driver for fertility patterns of women of this settlement colony. In other words, Islamic legal tenets do not necessarily have an influence on women's reproductive decision-making. Thus women construct reproductive lives that challenge overly deterministic understandings of the relationship between Islam and contraceptive practices (cf. Hussain 2008; Krehbiel Keefe 2006; Seal 2000; Unnithan-Kumar 2006). Further, various factors such as changes in costs of child rearing and perceived value of children have lowered desired family size and therefore led to a fertility decline amongst women of this low-income settlement.

Examining only quantifiable elements like number of children does not necessarily render a full picture of women's reproductive decision-making. Therefore I have also described the context and the specific conditions in which women's lives are embedded, as one has to understand the circumstances within which women's reproductive decisions take shape.

The narratives of Chanda Nagar women demonstrate that their lives were bound by a set of constraints, which were related to their social positioning and dependent on their husbands and extended families. Despite these constraints, women had their own chances of agency, e.g. when it came to contraception – this was true for their religious as well as their social context alike. The decision for the use of contraceptive methods, despite prevalent social or familial objections, was a way for women to achieve their own reproductive goals. In spite of all the hurdles that dominated women's lives, women were able to glean some kind of contraceptive information, network with other women with similar agendas and obtain for example a sterilization so they could make a reproductive choice. Women's agency is also crucially connected to their forms of knowledge framed by religious ideologies. Women's decision to practice contraception, even against religious objections, as well as their individual religious outlook and

thinking, enabled them to make their own reproductive choices based on the perception what was best for them.

Finally, this paper focuses on Muslim women; still my research has shown that socio-economic poor women of other religious identities such as Hindus or Christians in this low-income settlement shared almost the same social and demographic characteristics. Therefore I argue that poverty – not religion – is the main factor influencing women in Chanda Nagar in their reproductive decision-making and practices.

The author is research associate and coordinator of the MA *Health and Society in South Asia* at the Department of Anthropology, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University since February 2009. This paper is based on her PhD-thesis received from Heidelberg University with the title *Reproductive Health Behavior and Decision-Making of Muslim women: an ethnographic study in a low-income community in urban North India* published by LIT Verlag. She studied Medical Anthropology, History of South Asia and Modern Indology (Urdu) at the Universities of Heidelberg and Edinburgh. From 2005-2008 she worked in a research project on Islamic bio-ethics anchored at the Seminar of Islamic Studies, Ruhr-University Bochum and financed by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Her research interests in Medical Anthropology include lifestyle diseases, reproductive health, Islamic bioethics and migration and health; she has conducted research in North India, Pakistan, and Germany. Email-address: weigl@uni-heidelberg.de.

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Engines vs. Elephants –
Train Tales of India's Modernity

Nitin Sinha

Abstract: The encounter between engines and elephants was represented in colonialist writings as metaphors for 'clash of civilizations'. Precisely because of this reason, the essay uses this binary to delve deeper into the train tales of India's modernity. Peoples, technologies and places together made up India's railway modernity. In events, claims and histories such as those of alleged British superiority and native ignorance lay the train tales of India's modernity.

In encounters between engines and elephants we find the everyday practices of this modernity. Institutions and their role in the process of nation-state building of course give us a bigger picture of political and social change. Laws, regulations and policies do speak about the intention of the state and the production of subjecthood (or the lack of it in some cases). But stories connected with quotidian matters, fantasies and imaginations, satire and rhetoric, and more importantly their retellings are no less powerful than factsheets of institutions to understand the complex encounters and adaptations that constitute modernity in its processual form. The power of steam was pitted against the force of Oriental beliefs. The essay, which makes use of a largely untapped rich visual archive available for railway studies, however argues that the tracks of modernity often did not erase the site of tradition. In place of simple framework of competition and co-existence it proposes to explore the transport modernity of India through regional and functional segmentation and dependence.

In the late 1910s, a satirical sketchbook *The Koochpurwanaypore Swadeshi Railway* was anonymously published. The sketches about this imaginary railway line, KPR, were earlier published in *The Great Indian Peninsular Railway Magazine* but were brought together in a book form with a claim that 'they may serve to amuse the Railwaymen of India and the general public' (Jo Hookum n.d.: Foreword).[1] A perusal of the book leaves no doubt

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[1] I have consulted this book in the British Library. Hurd II and Kerr have dated it 1920 although it is not clear which edition they are referring to (Hurd & Kerr 2012: 127, fn. 44). I am thankful to Maria Framke for bringing to my notice that some sketches were already reprinted in the *Indian Ambulance Gazette*, VII, 1, 1917 but they could also be taken directly from the GIPR Magazine. The sketches were definitely produced in the context of the First World War and the ongoing Swadeshi based anti-colonial thinking.

that the sole purpose was to mock the technological and organisational skills of Indian workers of all ranks and classes. Those who would soon be running the country, according to this book, were unfit to run the world's third largest railways. Being 'truly Swadeshi in conception, equipment, and management' the KPR was the ideal future of Indian railways which would be attained only 'when the English finally leave India' (Ibid.).[2]

KPR was not only a line but also an imaginary railway town. Although the claim of the author or publisher was to amuse both railwaymen and the general public of India, the tone and content was not just of providing amusement through insiders' industrial jokes but of deep political satire. The very title contained three Hindi words in their typical Anglicized spelling: Kooch purwa nay (*kuch parᶦvāh nahīṃ*), meaning 'it doesn't matter at all'. So Koochpurwanaypore was a town where nothing mattered. At what expense this mocking satire operated was therefore quite evident: by pictorially showing the ineptness of Swadeshi skills (both in terms of production and services) in each and every department of railway management. The chief engineer was depicted enjoying nautch (an Anglicized word of *nāch* meaning a performance by dancing girls) in his office and the general manager was asleep under the cool breeze of a *paṅkhā* (Engl. 'fan'). The subalterns of the railway workforce on the other hand formed the K.P.R. Pioneer Corps with tools ranging from simple drill machine to traditional broom and basket.

The *language of command* was the only thing Indians allegedly comprehended. *Hukum* (Engl. 'command') was their predilection; it was their necessity. No wonder, the author caricatured the authorial position itself to generate sarcasm and satire. The author's name given in the title of the book is 'Jo hookm' (*jo hukum*; Engl. 'as ordered').[3] Each of the engravings in the book is signed with 'Jo hookm'. In contrast, the phrases of command and reply were turned into identities of imagined native railway families. The tribe of KPR native railway-folk had family names of Pichi (*pīchī*; Engl. 'yesterday'), Kal (*kal*; Engl. 'tomorrow'), Abbi nay (*abhī nahīṃ*; Engl. 'not

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[2] For the concept of Swadeshi see: Sarkar 1973.

[3] This is the pseudonym. Some library websites have identified the author as William Henry Deakin. See: http://www.franklin.library.upenn.edu/record.html?id=FRANKLIN_5900753&, accessed: 22.08.2016.

now'), and Hazir hi (*hāzir hai*; Engl. 'present', 'available' in terms of roll call or duty).[4] In the absence of reason and intellect, the best native/Indians could do was to follow command. For running steam engines, steel-like nerves and unfailing alacrity of the *man* was required. For long, the Raj thought Indians possessed none.

Failing to have such qualities, it must have delighted the British and An-glo-Indian railway community to see a native station master send telegram to his European superior when a drunk elephant lay across the tracks. The elephant alone had not gone berserk; the whole place was in the state of madness and confusion. From the viewpoint of its author and sympathetic readers, the message was clear: once the British were gone and the Anglo-Indians had retrenched from the railways, the whole country would turn into Mutwalabad (*mat^lvālā* + *ābād*; Engl. 'an inebriated place'). It would remain connected through tracks but obstructed by elephants.
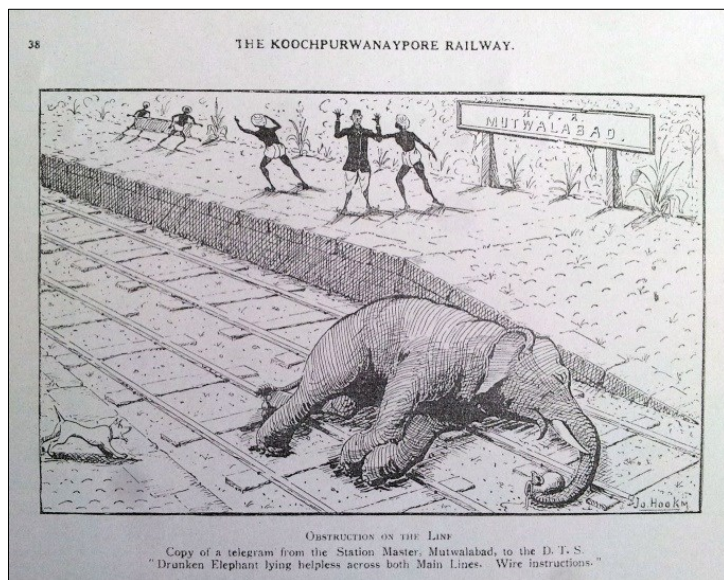
Image 1: Obstructions on the Line.
Source: The Koochpuranaypore Swadeshi Railway, published with permission from the British Library, © The British Library Board, ORW.1986.c.29.

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[4] The texts accompanying the sketches make it amply clear that these one words usually used by natives were answers to the commanding questions of the sahib.

This, of course, was the dominant trope of the Raj and its representations of Indians. This powerful imagery had complex historical truths refracting through it. The power of simplified representation and the truth of historical complexity therefore need to be addressed together. For instance, keeping racial prejudices aside, as early as the 1860s, Indian drivers were deemed fit to run engines in certain parts of the country. In Madras this was encouraged right after the introduction of the railways in the 1860s. Ironically on the same Great Indian Peninsular Railways in whose magazines the sketches first appeared, by the end of 1882 no fewer than sixty native engine drivers were in employment.[5] These men must have waited a while to command mail express engines as initially Indians were only put in charge of goods trains. But examples such as these clearly show that the racialised satire at the expense of the alleged lack of skill was only one aspect of the history of train tales of India.

The reason the colonial state vindicated the employment of natives was financial. Indian labour was cheaper than imported British skilled workforce. We can read this interplay between race and financial constraints in two ways which apparently stand in contradiction to each other. One, the practice of employing Indians can be seen as a compromise of the racial division and a limitation to the discourse of European racial superiority. Two, the logic of economics itself can be seen as framed by racial beliefs, thus reiterating rather than compromising the unequal racial divisions. The Indian engine drivers were employed not because they were skilled or could be skilled but because they were cheap on the imperial scale of racialised labour market. The skilled white labour, on the contrary, was very expensive.[6]

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[5] 1883. "General News", in: *The Edinburgh Evening News* (14 September 1883): n. p.
[6] In England this debate had a strong class connotation. It was said that drivers ought to be hired from 'higher classes' particularly when the existing ones were found 'deficient in brains'. 1910. "A Good Word for Our Engine Drivers", in: *The Railway Magazine*, XXVI, Jan-June: 344.

Peoples, technologies and places together made up India's railway modernity. In events, claims and histories such as those of alleged British superiority and native ignorance lay the train tales of India's modernity. In encounters between engines and elephants we find the everyday practices of that modernity. In Mutwalabad, the lines of modernity, at least momentarily, were disrupted by the weight of mighty oriental traditionalism but in Burdwan the same traditional beast carried people to witness the charm and surprise of the railway modernity.
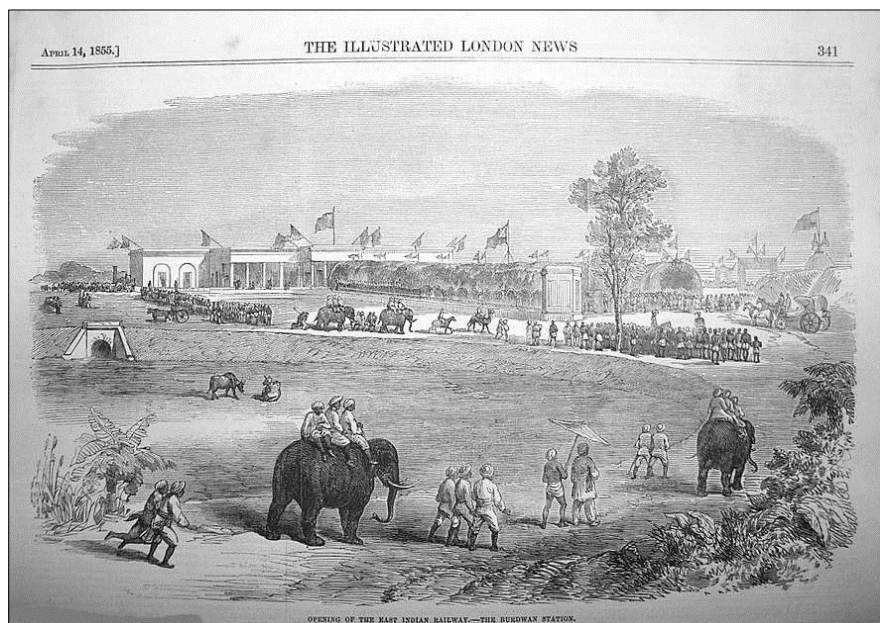
Image 2: Opening of the East Indian Railway, Bengal.
Source: The Illustrated London News, April 14, 1855.[7]

The encounters between engines and elephants and other such instances provide gateways into exploring the commensurate but deviant tracks of India's tryst with modernity. Through them, we get a sense of the making of

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http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1800_1899/britishrule/railways/iln1855.jpg

time, travel and geography. Institutions and their role in the process of nation-state building of course give us the bigger picture of the state, society and polity. Laws, regulations and policies do speak about the intention of the state and the production of subjecthood (or the lack of it in some cases). But mundane stories connected with quotidian matters, fantasies and imaginations, satire and rhetoric, and more importantly their retellings are no less powerful than factsheets of institutions to understand the complex encounters and adaptations that constituted modernity in its processual form. This short essay uses one such binary of engines vs. elephants to talk about this modernity. There could be many more which directly deal with our social world and its manifold realities: beasts and gods; ghosts and machines; bullock carts and motor cars; and not least, pigeons and electric telegraph.

SALAAMING THE ENGINE

Railway engines running on the power of steam were championed as the harbinger of modernity. Speed and punctuality were the essence of this new modern technology. On the other hand, India was seen and portrayed as the land of elephants and indolent people, not to forget snake charmers. Engines and elephants represented two civilisations, two epochs that came face to face.
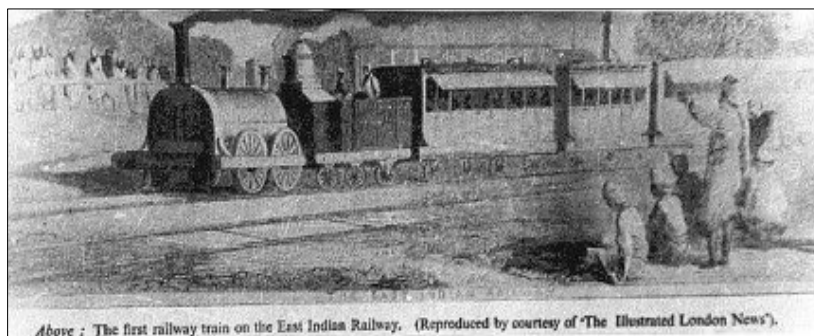
Image 3: First Railway Train on the East Indian Railway.[8]

Soon after its introduction in India, the British parliament was assured that the whistle of the steam engine would force the slumbering *rājā* (Engl. 'landlord/king') trotting on the back of the elephant to change his way. The director of Indian Railways Juland Danvers proclaimed 'now even a Rajah […] in his own territory must submit to the "imperative call" of the railway bell' (Danvers 1877: 28). The general thrust of colonialist writings was that the power of steam would become the panacea for all ills Indian society and culture stood for. For instance, besides instilling a new sense of time, railways were said to unshackle the caste system.[9]

The old had to make the way for new. The black beauty represented calm concentrated power. When the wheels of the *Falkland* moved on the opening of the first railways in Bombay, the *Illustrated London News* reported that the ageless superstitions of natives had melted away. Engine was the new divinity to which natives salaamed as it passed.[10] Thousands of natives and a dozen of Europeans witnessed the first railways snorting, hissing and finally moving from the shed.[11] One eye witness report claimed that the moving iron-horse put natives in awe and wonder. The 'hissing monster' which was called *āg-gārī* (Engl. 'fire carriage') in native parlance was not only to be seen from a distance but to be touched, stood upon and ran along with.[12]

The enchantment with engine was not unique to the colonial world. Both amidst general public and railway workforce engines were a subject of fascination in metropolis as well as colony. In Britain, while the railway enthusiasts drew pleasure by spotting engines and using yet another contemporary new technology of the camera to take interesting eye-catching shots, the drivers and their mates who were part of the railway workforce shored up their identities of hard working men by discursively relating themselves to engines. In the poem titled 'A Knight of the Footplate' it was

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[9] This view although dominant was not without its internal fractures, which has recently been convincingly shown by Sumangala Bhattacharya (Bhattacharya 2015: 411-430).

[10] 1853. "Opening of the First Railway in India", in: *Illustrated London News* (04 June 1853): 436.

[11] 1852. "India", in: *The Fife Herald* (15 April 1852): 1; 1852. "The first running of a railway locomotive in India", in: *The Westmorland Gazette and Kendal Advertiser* (17 April 1852): 3.

[12] 1852. "The First Running of a Railway Locomotive in India", in: *Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser* (13 April 1852): n. p. The other name for the engine was *āg-boat.* 1852. "The First Locomotive in India", in: *The Inverness Courier* (22 April 1852): n. p.

said, 'She dursn't stop to dawdle, for she knows who's on her back, She knows he'll help her up a bank, but flog her if she's slack.'[13]

The early railway enthusiasts in India might not have used their cameras but the element of charm and surprise — the bewilderment that the moving engine caused — was equally pronounced. There were some other things that were similar between the metropolis and the colony. One was the feminine address to the engine. She was a black beauty who could either make an apprentice her slave or happily obey her efficient master who would flog her if required.

In India perhaps the added element was of divinity. Myriad stories circulated in the print bazaar of the British Empire that used engine and the technology of steam to drive home the point that religious superstition of Indians would soon change, in fact, disappear. The power of steam was pitted against the force of Oriental beliefs. One such story reported was of a Brahmin reportedly exclaiming the following when the 'fire horse' *Lawrence* reached the Punjab, 'All the incarnations of all the gods in India never produced such a thing as that.'[14] The same was the case on the other side of the country. The power of steam enraptured the imagination of natives; the Bengalis flocked to see how the new 'car of Indra' looked.

How much of this reportage, gossip, stories, anecdotes, and their retellings about the religiosity towards engines and their reverence was the felt belief of Indians and how much was simply imputed to them through these literary representations to score the note of civilizational victory is difficult to decide. It can only be understood through examining each such representation in its context and juxtaposing it with other examples. Were such faith based relationships with engines only restricted to oriental subjects? When it came to engines and superstitions related to them, British and Anglo-Indians were no less firm believers than Indians. No. 31 in the Jamalpur work sheds was not popular with her drivers as she had reportedly on one occasion killed her driver and on another got derailed. Apparently,
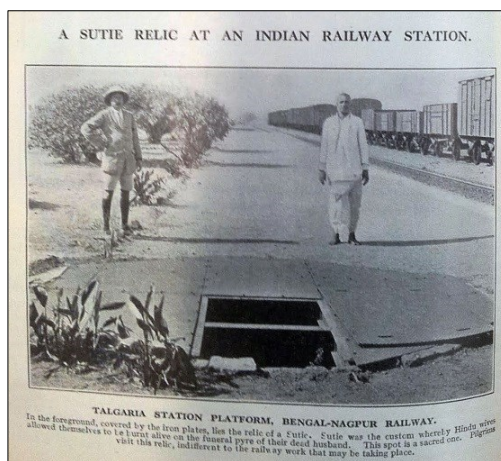
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[13] 1901. "A Knight of the Footplate", in: *The Railway Magazine* 8, Jan.-June: 236.
[14] 1862. "Steam in India", in: *The Dublin Evening Mail* (15 May 1862): n. p.; 1862: "The Locomotive in India", in: *Dundee Advertiser* (2 May 1862): 6.

'[t]he drivers went sick or took leave when they were told off for her.'[15] In narrating this Rudyard Kipling turned the engine no. 31 into an active agent of her own despise and awe that created superstition amongst the non-Indian railway workforce.

Was it just the clash of civilizations that were depicted in these stories or something deeper was at work? Do they show only conflict between two cultures — here represented through two modes of conveyance — or these depictions can be differently read to go beyond simplistic understanding of conflict and confrontation? Do above expressions also not show how railways with all their novelty still came to be understood through the language of providential creation? Next to traditional forms of godly vehicles stood the engine. When railways became the new vehicle of Indra the modern sensibility of speed and mechanical robustness was both acknowledged as novel and yet co-opted into the existing structures of tradition. The engine did not displace the belief in Indra. It rather became his vehicle. It should not therefore surprise us when we find instances of co-existence. The tracks of modernity often did not erase the site of tradition as is clear from the image below.

A SUTIE RELIC AT AN INDIAN RAILWAY STATION.

TALGARIA STATION PLATFORM, BENGAL-NAGPUR RAILWAY.
In the foreground, covered by the iron plates, lies the relic of a Sutie. Sutie was the custom whereby Hindu wives allowed themselves to be burnt alive on the funeral pyre of their dead husband. This spot is a sacred one. Pilgrims visit this relic, indifferent to the railway work that may be taking place.

Image 4: 'A Sutie Relic at an Indian Railway Station'.
Source: The Railway Magazine, LIII, July to December 1923.

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[15] Rudyard Kipling, "The Shops". This was part of the three chapters written by Kipling on Jamalpur in the late 1880s. I have used the online version available at: https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/k/kipling/rudyard/railway/chapter2.html, accessed: 23.08.2016.

ENCOUNTER WITH THE WILD

The encounter with culture was one aspect of presenting this modernity. The encounter with landscape which was often described as wild and untamed was another. The masculine efforts of European engineers and mechanics in constructing Indian railways through forests and marshes, in settling new towns surrounded by jungles and hills were incomplete without heroic stories of encounter with tigers. Numerous such stories were published in newspapers and reported in diaries and letters of these mechanics and engineers, which were sent back home that bolstered up the pride in these young 'lads'. The empire relied on the robustness of technology and scientific advancement; the imperial vision and pride required individual stories for its sustenance.

The encounter with the wild was a way to depict the wildness of India itself. Such encounters also worked to show the native timidity and fear vis-à-vis British natural instinct for adventure and courage. So went a story from Jamalpur, which was surrounded by hills on three sides. Regular spotting of a tiger filled the native community with terror but for Europeans it stoked a desire for sport. The former went to the Kali temple to pray for safety but the latter donned the *śikārī* (Engl. 'hunter') attire and managed to kill the 8 ½ feet long tiger.[16]

Some encounters were not so fun filled. After two nights of constant vigil, Greer, a Jamalpur workshop fitter, managed to kill a tiger but was himself found dead next to the tiger in his bungalow.[17] In yet another, a 27 years young mechanic was killed by a tiger. To avenge his death, his friends shot down the tiger. The grave erected in the friend's memory read: 'In the midst of Life we are in Death'.[18] This poetic expression of remembrance probably played upon the long standing grievance of British who described their service in India as exile. This sentiment was very popular amongst Railway folks as well. The friends of the mechanic buried the tiger about thirty yards away from its victim's grave. This fatal encounter during the

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[16] 1896. "Narrow Escape from a Tiger", in: *The Cork Examiner* (12 August 1896): 6.

[17] 1885. "Encounter with a Tiger", in: *The Edinburgh Evening News* (18 July 1885): n. p.

[18] "Archives of the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia", Mss EUR F370/92, British Library, London.

lifetime turned into a graveyard camaraderie after the death. Exile had its own peculiar ways of reconciling life with death.

For displaying personal valour as well as unstoppable march (and conquest) of imperial scientific enterprises, colonial landscapes were again and again overwritten by acts of personal heroism. Victory and tragedy both contributed to the stock of heroism. This man-tiger encounter has not only filled the pages of contemporary imperial reminiscences in both textual and visual forms but also subsequently proved to be an important theme of study for imperial masculinity. Parallel to this was the encounter of engine and elephant which has hardly been looked at.

The 'nature of the beast' to use the English saying quite in its literal sense, was however, different. Throughout the nineteenth century elephants did not pose a threat or become an object of adventurous hunting in the same way as tigers, antelopes and cheetahs did. To repeat, it wasn't that elephants were not hunted. An elephant hunt was organised when the Prince of Wales had visited Ceylon in December 1875.[19] But usually elephants were used for hunting rather than being hunted.

Apart from their use in finishing public works, the majestic character attached to them made elephants the preferred vehicle for royal mobility. Not only native rajas continued using them but also viceroys and other officials who alighted from their first class salons to march into towns on the back of elephants. State howdahs (ornamented covered seats fixed atop elephants) were maintained for these purposes.

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[19] 1875. "The Prince of Wales in India. The Elephant Hunt", in: *The Daily Gazette* (14 December 1875): 3. Also see http://www.victorianweb.org/history/empire/india/32.html, accessed: 23.08.2016, for the image of the Prince posing with the dead elephant. Interestingly, elephant hunting was banned by the colonial government in Ceylon because of the diminution in numbers of these 'useful and intelligent animals' due to hunting. The idea was to preserve the existing numbers because of their utility with public works. 1875. "Foreign and Colonial News", in: *The Illustrated London News* (29 May 1875): n. p.
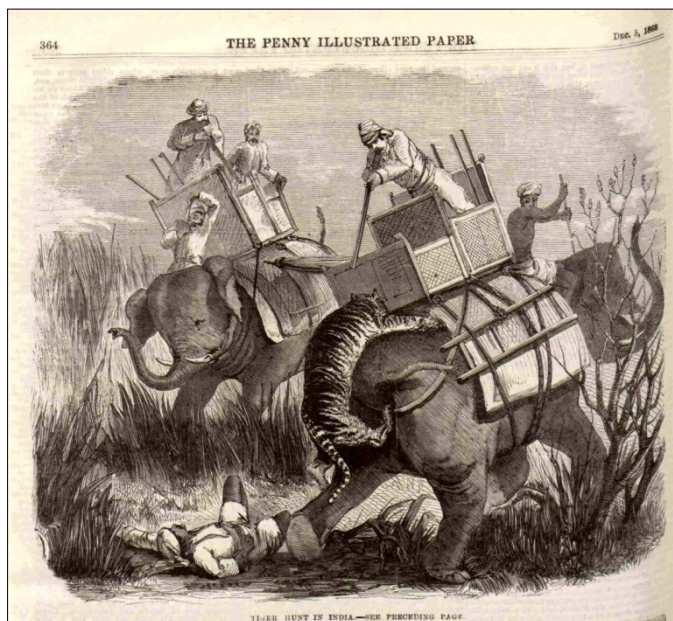
Image 5: Tiger Hunt in India.
Source: The Penny Illustrated Paper, December 05 1868.[20]

In some instances, however, the clash between engines and elephants was direct and the effect violent. The symbolic and visual value of this clash was not lost either on publishers or readers. It made headlines in popular magazines. In 1869, on the East Indian Railway line an accident took place that was reportedly unheard of anywhere in the history of railways all over the world. The story reported in several newspapers and magazines was something like this: a group of almost seventy elephants resting in a mango grove got irked by the red light, noise and the sound of the passing engine in the night. They tried to break free of their fastenings. Then '[o]ne large male, however, the strongest and most courageous of the lot, became so infuriated that he broke his chain and rushed forward to intercept and encounter the supposed enemy.'[21] Of course, the 'poor brute's' strength proved of no match against the 'steam and machinery' and was killed on the spot.

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[20] *Image reproduced with kind permission of The British Newspaper Archive,* http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/.
[21] 1869. "The Elephant and the Railway", in: *The Glasgow Daily Herald* (09 February 1869): 2.

REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.

No. 385. LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1869. Vol. XVI.

AN ELEPHANT CHARGING A TRAIN IN INDIA.—SEE NEXT PAGE.

Image 6: An Elephant Charging a Train in India.
Source: The Penny Illustrated News, 13 February 1869.[22]

Four days later, *The Penny Illustrated Paper* carried the same news but with the visual depiction of the clash.[23] The visual reality given to this incident made it appear as the clash of locomotive cultures of two different civilizations.

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[22] Image reproduced with kind permission of The British Newspaper Archive, http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/.

[23] 1869. "The Elephant and the Railway", in: *The Penny Illustrated News* (13 February 1869): 98.

BEYOND SIMPLISTIC REPRESENTATIONS

A set of these visual representations based upon colonial claims of indigenous cultural and intellectual deficiency was one way of depicting the introduction of modernity. In this version, the Western technological advancement brought modernity to India often through painful but necessary exercise of conflict, confrontation and displacement. Howsoever exploitative, the argument ran that colonialism brought science, education, hospitals and railways into India. Symbolically, the power of the engine eventually supplanted the brute force of the elephant.

The train tales of India's modernity are, however, more complex than the above framework would have us believe. As it happens with technology, direct importation often gets adapted in the receiving society. So it happened in India with railways also. As for the manpower required for running it, despite the KPR's satirical rhetoric and all other associated cultural discourses of native inferiority, natives were employed as guards and station masters in the Madras presidency at almost six times less wage than immigrant white skilled workers. As far as the relationship between culture and modernity goes the tracks of modernity had to accommodate the site of *satī* (Engl. 'widow immolation'); in turn, the engines had to find a place in the vehicular pantheon of Hindu gods.

The power of steam and that of the elephant together constituted and represented this modernity. It is no wonder that while the stories and visuals of the engine killing the elephant circulated widely, at the same time, images of engines being hauled by elephants equally embellished the pages of newspapers and magazines. The visual reading of the picture below is rather telling in suggesting that the engine of modernity was ushered into by utilising the power of elephants, quite literally.
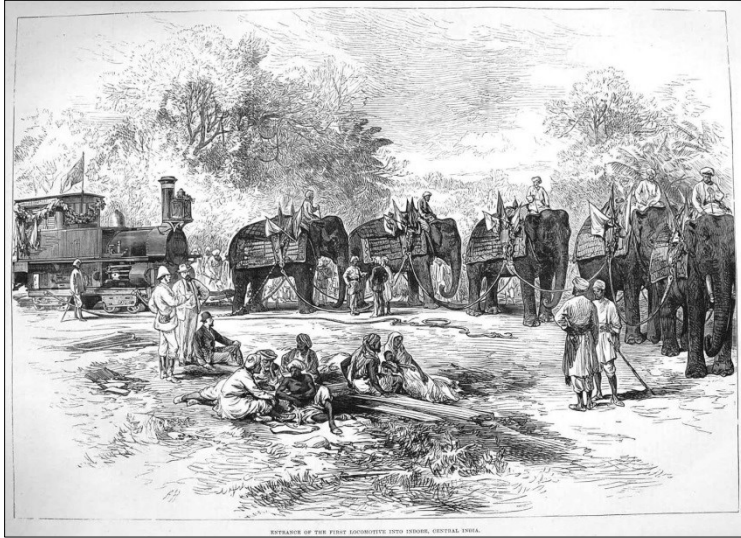
Image 7: Entrance of the First Locomotive into Indore.[24]

Once we speak of transport and through that of the bigger picture of Indian modernity, we soon realise that this modernity was not based upon displacement of one means by another. Complementary co-existence was the key but here also we need to go beyond the analytical pendulum of simple binary between competition and co-existence. As far as transport modernity is concerned, segmented regionalisation and functional dependence show us a way forward. The rajas, viceroys, lieutenant governors and district collectors continued to ride elephants on alighting from trains. When expensive swanky saloons of viceroys and royal visitors such as the Prince of Wales pulled over at stations, howdahs embellished with gold and silver awaited to take them into the streets of the cities.

Engines, platforms, elephants and narrow streets of bazaars were at once part of a uniform process of movement and power but each of them also had segmented relative significance. They were uniform in displaying

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[24] Source:
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1800_1899/britishrule/railways/railways.html, accessed: 23.08.2016.

the continuous flow of authority and power by relying upon each other. They were segmented because they represented different codes of power, different sites of operation and served to different layers of discourses on movement and power. Engines and elephants both were ornamented to display political and cultural gaiety of the empire. But engines did win the battle of speed while elephants continued to hold the symbolic power of majesty. Until the 1970s and 80s, it was a common practice to have an elephant or two even in households of moderate zamindaries in the villages.

In the anti-colonial struggle of the 20th century, both came under attack. While Bhagat Singh and his friends attempted to loot the train that was carrying guns, few years before that Viceroy Charles Hardinge was hurt in a bomb explosion in the street of Chandni Chowk in Delhi while riding on the back of the elephant.

To conclude, let us once again turn to our satirical text. As seen below, the satirist mocked the Swadeshi spirit by showing elephants hauling the engine.
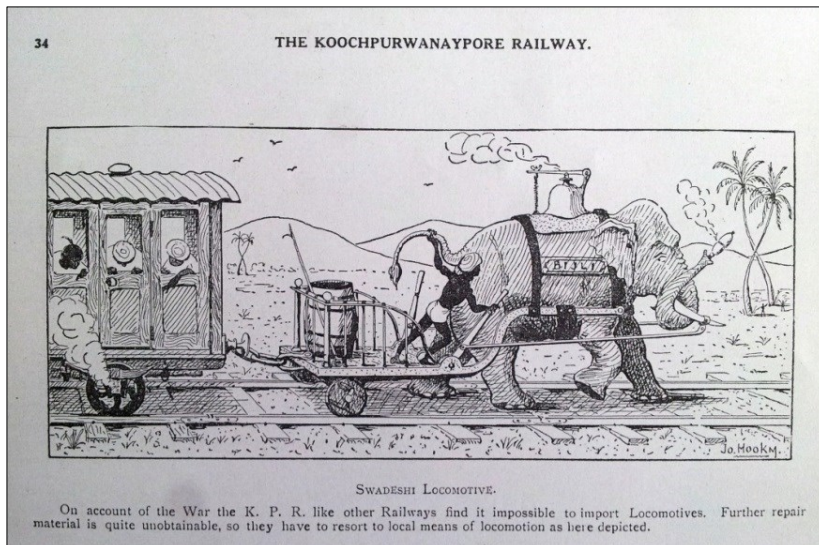
Image 8: Swadeshi Locomotive.
Source: The Koochpuranaypore Swadeshi Railway, published with permission from the British Library © The British Library Board, ORW.1986.c.29.

The satirical text's depiction of elephants pulling the train must have appeared to its readers unimaginable and hence a matter of ridicule. However, during the Second World War elephants were indeed used for shunting engines in the yards. Thanks to British imperialism whose protectionist market practice (in spite of the self-professed doctrine of the *laissez-faire*) did not allow other countries such as the U.S and Germany to supply locomotives to India, the colonial state thought it wise to turn to the power of the oriental beast when faced with the lack of locomotives. The train tales of India will ever remain incomplete if we just focus on tracks and engines and neglect what elephants did with them.

Image 9: Elephants shunting engines.[25]

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[25] Source http://gwydir.demon.co.uk/jo/genealogy/dibblee/railways.htm

Nitin Sinha is a Senior Research Fellow at Zentrum Moderner Orient (Centre for Modern Oriental Studies), Berlin. He has worked and written on themes of transport and communication, industrial labour, and agro-ecology. He is the author of the book *Communication and Colonialism in Eastern India, Bihar: 1760s-1880s*, published in 2012. Since October 2015, Nitin Sinha is the Principal Investigator on the European Research Council funded project on 'Domestic Servants in colonial South Asia'. He is also one of the series editors of the prestigious New Perspectives in South Asian History published by Orient Blackswan, India. nitin.sinha@zmo.de

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