URBAN DWELLING

AN EXAMINATION OF LIVELIHOODS, SPACES AND SYSTEMS IN CALCUTTA

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ABSTRACT

This master thesis examines the phenomenon of urban dwelling, and seeks to give an ethnographic account of urban dwellers residing in public spaces in Calcutta, India. Urban studies on homeless living in cities portray these people as isolated enclaves, fighting to make a livelihood in the margins of the city, showing cities unsatisfactory integration of population growth. Thus, this has been an increasing issue in the Global South. Nevertheless, when working in the city of Calcutta with such urban homeless, certain observations seemed to challenge these conventional notions. Hence, the thesis at hand seek to examine what underpin the livelihood of people living in public spaces in Calcutta, and how this challenge conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces. The aim is hereby to contribute to urban studies on dwelling in cities with a relational perspective on dwellers and cities, where the dwellers are not only a product but further a producing part of co-constructing cities.

The ethnographic account is based on eight weeks of fieldwork in Calcutta applying the approach of assemblage thinking, to examine the structures that underpin the everyday life of dwellers living at the second biggest railway station in Calcutta, Sealdah Station. Thus, inspired by Assemblage Theory articulated by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987), Assemblage Thinking provide a relational, post-structural way of examining how emergent social entities such as the space of the station is constructed. This Theoretical frame is thus constructed by the works of Manuel Delanda (2006), Ben Sellar (2011), Wayne Shand (2018) and Helen Briassoulis (2019). Furthermore concepts such as *marginalization* (Grabska, 2006) *agency* (Shand 2018, Sellar, 2011), *networks* (Kihato, 2011), *urban governance* (Kihato, 2011) *informal economies* (Huang et al., 2017) and *informality* (Roy, 2005, 2009), is integrated to grasp the analytical findings.

The analysis gives an account of the station, as constructed by interaction of multiple actors such as customers, station workers and dwellers that shape the features of the station to have the dual aim of supporting the transportation of people and goods *and* the livelihood of dwellers living there. Thus, these interactions generate networks that revolve around everyday practises of

exchange, where the dwellers help to cover the other actors needs in exchange for food, money and safety. A system of informality is hereby produced at the station, focused at controlling and insuring the resources at the station, whereby the dwellers as the station may be seen as such a resource. Thus, the the space of the station support and underpin the livelihood of dwellers by offering them shelter, food, work and safeguarding as they have become a vital integrated part of and resources to the station. Similar structures is evident when zooming out from the station to the rest of Calcutta. It is hereby claimed that the city of Calcutta underpin the livelihood of dwellers by integrated them in both the social and economic structures of the city and furthermore in interaction with the dwellers transform its public spaces to support this livelihood.

The analytical findings hereby challenges the conventional notions of marginalized urban spaces by claiming that these may be features of the western world overemphasizing exclusional structures of urban dwelling that hereby does not fully grasp the complex and interrelated nature of urban dwelling in Calcutta.

The conclusion is therefore, that the interaction and integration of and by dwellers with its surroundings, both human and non-human objects, create relations, networks and even whole systems that underpin and support the livelihood of dwellers living in public spaces in Calcutta. Thus, this challenge conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces by offering an account of a space not characterized by isolation and exclusion but by interaction and exchanges.

PICTURE OVERVIEW

Front page - Five pictures of urban dwelling in Calcutta, 28 of february to 17 of April 2019

Page 41 -Four pictures of material features of Sealdah Railway Station, 10th of April 2019.

Page 47 -Four pictures of jobs at Sealdah Railway Station, 23 of March 2019.

Page 56 -Three pictures of features found in public spaces in Calcutta, 10th of April 2019.

All pictures are personally taken during my fieldwork in Calcutta from 26 of February to 18 of April 2019.

INDEX

INTRODUCTION

As always, the air was thick and the cars was honking away. My team and I were sitting at a sidewalk, drawing on paper and hearing life stories in the middle of Calcutta city hassle. A family of five have their home at this sidewalk, they have plastic bags on the ground, that outline their property and plastic bags functioning as sunroof. A small cooking stowe is placed at one side of the property, and the mother is sitting next to it cutting onions and potatoes, they are going to have for lunch with rice. The children are playing along the sidewalk, drawing a bit when they fell like it. The husband is telling us the story of how him and the mother met, as I curiously ask into this. He tells in Bengali "I used to live on the other side of this road, just over at that side, as did she. We played together when we were small, and now.. This is how we met, we grew up together just over there". The mother chuckles, it was that simple and yet romantic. She was the girl next door without the door. A somewhat ironic romantic story coming from a man wearing a t-shirt that states: *my wife said I should be more affectionate, so now I have two wives.* That is indian humour for you. Unfortunately, the husband suddenly has to leave, as a truck has just come with some garbage, he has to sort, as this is his job. Afterwards, we played some football with the children in a nearby park, before ending our day with them.

In the evening I could not stop thinking of the story, I had been told by the husband. It was evenly what he said, and the way he said it, that puzzled me. How he casually talked about growing up on a sidewalk, to move to the other side of the road with the neighbours daughter, as the fact of having no house was not significant or exceptional in this life story. Additionally, the more I worked in the field, I further noticed how there seemed to be a community amongst these homeless people sleeping in clusters around the city. It was not simply one or two families living on their own on a sidewalk, they may have grandparents living across from them and uncles and aunties living next to them. Although, aunties and uncles are a loss description in India of people close to you. Nevertheless, these people seemed to take care of each other and help each other out with daily chores, child care and small jobs. There likewise seemed to be some sort of rules amongst them. Rules we often as foreign social workers found hard to understand and follow,

but that worked for them. Thus, my understanding of the streets slowly expanded; the sidewalk was not simply a sidewalk anymore, the homeless people had claimed this space and made it their home. People bypassing would mostly use the road and not the sidewalks, as they would literally step into a home, if they did. Same circumstances was apparent at the railway station we worked at, people would often stand up waiting for the trains as the benches was likewise claimed by homeless people living and working at the station. Everyday lives was lived in these spaces by the homeless with chores, conversations and neighbouring quarrels.

Thus, the emerging picture of communities and everyday lives of the homeless puzzled me the following months, and I wonder if there was something, I was missing in my picture of life on the street. Something that would explain, why someone can live their whole life on a sidewalk and have a family and a love story rooted in this waste space. The puzzling pieces to an unfinished puzzle in my head made me curious to dig deeper and try to put them together and examine, what really construct and foster homeless people's lives in this city. There may be multiple personal reasons behind ending up as a homeless person, but my quest was more fixated on the city structures that underpins these lives in spaces such as the sidewalks or the station. What is it within these urban spaces, that makes it possible for people to create a life on street corners and public spaces, and that may keep them there for their whole life? Is there something particular in Calcutta city, that generate and uphold this way of living for some people? Many cities have issues with homeless populations, but I have never seen it in the same scale or form as in Calcutta. Homeless people have for a long time been a general issue in India, especially in its biggest cities, causing a lot of critic of the government and its failure to address the issue successfully (Hindustantimes, 2017; Voanews, 2018). It is stated that even though there are 1.77 million homeless people in India, "(...) the state is blind to them" (Hindustantimes, 2017). This critic came in relation to a target set for the nation by the Premier Minister Narendra Modi in 2017, stating that every Indian must have a house by the year 2022 (ibid.). Two years has gone by and even though schemes for shelters has been set up and financed "(...) there is an extremely unsatisfactory state of affairs on the ground" stated the judge reviewing the implementation of the scheme (Scroll, 2017). A general question of what it is in India's urban spaces that underpin

homeless people and why it seemingly is so difficult to address for the indian government thus became interesting to examine and unveil. The research question, framing my quest to understand the urban spaces of Calcutta in relation to its homeless population, hereby is as follows;

What underpin the livelihood of people living in public spaces in Calcutta, and how does this challenge conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces?

STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Scope

The aim of the thesis is to examine the relation between homeless people and urban spaces in Calcutta. Thus the thesis seek to examine a specific group in a specific space, but not limited to understand only one of the two parts but their relation co-construction of each other. The empirical data has been selected through fieldwork, thus the field of study has centred around the second biggest railway station in Calcutta which is the home for many urban dwellers. Following sub questions is hereby outlined, granting a sort of progression in examining the relation between dwellers and urban space:

1. *What structures the dwellers everyday life at the station?*
2. *What kind of space does this create?*
3. *How does this correlate with previous notions on urban marginalized spaces?*

By answering these subquestions, the thesis aims at going from the particular experiences and observations from the field to more general conceptualizations of the findings to engage with and contribute to the already established understandings of urban dwelling. A blueprint of the different sections and progression within the thesis will be made clear in the following.

Outline

This section seeks to foreground the progressional steps of the thesis leading up to the obtained knowledge and conclusion. Furthermore, the specific litterature, methodological tools, theories and concepts used for the purpose of examining the field will be highlighted and explained. Thus, this chapter seeks to give an overview of the thesis at hand and the theoretical and methodological tools that frame it.

Review

Firstly, a review of previous studies on urban dwellers in Calcutta is undertaken. Hence, this elaborates on some of the perspectives within the field and further highlights some of the major reasons and inducers behind homeless people in Calcutta. Studies from Urban geographer Pablo Shiladitya Bose (2006) and professor in urban planning Ananya Roy (2009) on development-induced displacement in Calcutta, alongside the study of Rural- urban migration by Arup Mitra and Mayumi Murayam (2008), and an infographic released by DECCMA (2018) has been elaborated and discussed to understand the context of homeless in Calcutta. Moreover, studies of slums as an expression of urban dwelling by Roy (2011), researcher at HSRC Ivan Turok and geographer and sociologist Jackie Borel-Saladin (2018), has been viewed.

Thus, this chapter sketches out what has come before this thesis, which further addresses some crucial contextual facts when examining urban dwellers in Calcutta. The chapter may hereby be said to both be a review and a contextual chapter, elaborating on the field of urban studies that the thesis writes itself into.

The field

The second chapter narrows the actual field of study to be the space of Sealdah railway station and demonstrate why Sealdah Railway Station may be examined as a site for understanding urban dwelling in Calcutta. This choice has been made to ensure a deep and thorough examination in the limited 7 weeks of fieldwork available. Claims of railways stations in Calcutta being sites for dwelling from newspapers (TimesofIndia, 2016; Rediff, 2011; The Guardian, 2017) as well as scholars (Shand, 2018, Roy, 2011) has been incorporated to make this

choice alongside own experiences within the field. Thus, this chapter zooms in the researcher lens to the actual field of study of this particular thesis.

Methodology

As the previous chapter has outlined the field at hand, this chapter folds out the 'tool box' chosen to examine the everyday life of dwellers in this particular field to answer subquestion number one of the thesis. Thus, the general possibilities and use of fieldwork are demonstrated and afterwards the specific 'tools', participant observations and semi structured interviews, are presented along with considerations on the possibilities and challenges related to these 'tools'. These methods are thus elaborated and discussed on the grounds of methodological descriptions set forth by Regina Scheyvens, Barbara Nowak and Henry Scheyvens (2003), Pablo Shiladitya Bose (2006), Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw (2001), Donna Haraway (1988), Thomas Szulevicz (2015) and Barbara Sherman Heyl (2001).

Theoretical Approach

This chapter introduces the theoretical approach of the analysis; Assemblage thinking. This is an relational approach focused on describing the process of creating an emergent whole, elaborated and contested by Manuel Delanda (2006), Helen Briassoulis (2019), Wayne Shand (2018) and Ben Sellar (2011) inspired by Assemblage Theory introduced by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987). Assemblage Thinking works as an underlying approach in the analysis to structure the process of examining what structures the everyday life of dwellers at the station and then to understand how this constructs a particular whole/space. Nevertheless, as Assemblage Thinking is focused on explaining the processes of becoming, relevant concepts such as *Marginalization* (Grabska, 2006), *Agency* (Shand, 2018, Sellar, 2011)*, Networks* (Kihato, 2011)*, Urban Governance* (Kihato, 2011), *informal economies* (Huang et al., 2017) *and informality* (Roy, 2005, 2009) have been integrated in the theoretical frame, to examine and conceptualize the interactions and productions.

Analysis

The aim of the analysis is to examine the particular of the station and how this may be understood more conceptional. Thus, the analysis is divided in three parts inspired by Delanda's (2006) division of scales to examine and understand the process behind an emergent whole. Thus, each part seeks to address different scales of interactions and production structuring everyday life at the station and then conceptualize these interactions and productions. The analysis should in this line, progressional explain the production of the emergent whole that is life at the station, thus going from answering the descriptive subquestion one; *what structures the everyday life of dwellers at the station,* to answer the more conceptual subquestion; *What kind of space does this create?*

Discussion

After digging deep in the life and space of the station as a place of dwelling, this chapter zooms out from the station and contest the findings on life at the station with other urban spaces in Calcutta occupied by dwellers and discusses if dwellers in the city may be argued to engage in the same manner with other urban spaces of the city or if this is unique for railway stations. Furthermore, it goes on to discuss how the station and the findings may contribute to the general understanding of urban dwelling and how it correlate with previous literature on the subject outlined in the review. Hereby the discussion seeks to answer the last subquestion; *how does this challenge conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces?*

Conclusion

The conclusion wraps up the pieces to provide a clear answer to the research question put forth in the thesis; *What underpin the livelihood of people living in public spaces in Calcutta, and how does this contribute to the understanding of such urban spaces of dwelling?*

TERMINOLOGY

Some specific terminologies are present within the thesis, thus to avoid misunderstandings, these will shortly be elaborated before going further. Specific terms can have different connotations for people, therefore it is important to highlight and elaborate on the terms used within the thesis and the understandings intended by the use of these terms. Thus, the follow explains four central terminologies applied; *Homeless, Dweller, Space* and *Livelihood.*

Homeless

Homeless or homeless people have been used as a terminology to describe the people I meet, which slept on the street. Thus, homeless refers to my prejudgement of these people housing status, more than their factual status. The definition of being homeless is somewhat complicated as it has been described with broad definitions such as: someone without reliable shelter (Understandinghomelessness, 2019). Thus, when engaging more with these particular individuals some lived in shelters I would personally define as unreliable in relation to weather, theft and simple dismantling. Furthermore, others proven to have houses in their home villages, but did not live in them, but in this sense must be defined as not *being in* reliable shelter, but still *having* reliable shelter. Thus, as the homeless definition proven to be difficult to fit most of the individuals and unnecessarily complicating. Thus, dwellers has been chosen onwards to encompass all individuals sleeping in Calcutta's streets.

Dweller

The definition of a dweller may likewise be argued to be broad, often simply referring to people who live or settler somewhere (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019). Nevertheless this definition keeps the focus on these people living and residing in particular spaces correlating with the aim of the thesis. Moreover, synonyms for dwellers is term such as squatter, illegal immigrant, guestworker and city slicker (ibid.), which is fitting descriptions for most of the individuals I meet during my fieldwork, but again complicating and dividing the group. Therefore, dwellers or urban dwellers will be used anwards in the thesis to denote people living and sleeping in public spaces for various reasons.

Space

Another important terminology used in the thesis is the term space to denote the emergent whole that is produced at the station. Thus, space is not synonym with place, but must be understood in a more abstract definition. The point of departure taking for the understanding of space in this thesis is taken from Doreen Massey's (2015) conceptualization of space. Massey argues that space must be recognized as the product of interrelations and thus may be seen as always in the process of being made (Massey, 2015: 9). Hence, when using the term space, it refers to an abstract whole of the interactions and relations generated in the specific context of the station.

Livelihood

The term livelihood refers to the means that secure and support one's existence. Thus, this terminology is used within the thesis when collective discussing or addressing the practises and structures essential in supporting the dwellers everyday life.

Four important terminologies chosen, to help elaborate and frame the aim of examining the structures fostering people living in Calcutta's public space. These terminologies has thus been explained and argued for with this aim. Hereby, the general line of though and aim has been set by the two previous chapters, and the following will thus dive into the specific field of urban studies to frame the thesis and the contribution it wish to bring.

REVIEW

To examine any field one needs to understand the aspects and perspectives already embedded in the field. Thus, this chapter seek to glance over some of the research and literature within urban studies and displacement, before going in depth with the research question at hand. Hereby, this chapter seeks to pinpoint the literary field that the research and thesis at hand writes itself into and up against. Most regional literature on the subject of displacement have looked at the reasons

and inducers that causes people to end up on the streets. Hence, studies highlighting development-induced displacement and rural-urban migration as such reasonings behind displacement in the city will be discussed in the following. The reasonings may of course by diverse and complex, nevertheless, these general categories of displacement has been set forth as framing urban dwelling in India. Furthermore, studies examining urban spaces and dwelling will be uncluded, to understand the more concrete field of literature on dwelling in Indian cities. This chapter aims at exploring these studies and probable limitations in relation to the thesis at hand. Thus, the main point of the chapter argues, that even though these studies frame the reasonings behind urban dwelling in Calcutta, they do not offer an in depth understanding of what is created by dwellers staying in the city and what characterize the areas they occupy. Some general implications have been set forth about slums created in cities such as Calcutta, but without much depth to the construction and structure of such spaces. This thesis hereby wish to contribute to the existing literature with a thorough account of the construction of such urban spaces of dwelling in Calcutta.

Development-induced Displacement

It is well known that displacement is a global problem and a consequence of many of the world's tragedies such as war, poverty and climate changes. People all over the world are obliged to abandon their home and seek new places "(...) often at the price of serious threats to their welfare and rights" (Crisp, 2012: 1). This is likewise the case in India where its physical location close to Bangladesh and the conflicts internally in India has resulted in many refugees and displaced people residing in India, introducing a challenge for the Indian government in relation to housing (Bose, 2006: 7-8, Roy, 2009). This is hereby claimed to be one of the reasons behind the big number of homeless people living in India.

Nevertheless, Pablo Shiladitya Bose, scholar in migration studies and urban geographer, argues that a dilemma of greater concern may be the case of development-induced displacement (Bose, 2006: 10). Numbers presented by critics support this claim, showing that more than 100 million

people in total worldwide have been dislocated as a result of economic and human development processes (Cemea and McDowell, 1996 in Bose, 2006: 10). A troubling issue in India's biggest cities, which has brought forth literature examining this sort of displacement in Calcutta, especially by Bose and Ananya Roy, assistant professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning at California University (Bose, 2006, Roy, 2009). They argue that development-induced displacement has been a general problem in India for the last two decades, evident by a statement from 1994 where the government of India revealed that they had 10 million people displaced by dams, mines, infrastructure and related development projects, which still was awaiting for rehabilitation (Pandey, 1998; Parasuraman, 1999 in Bose, 2006: 11). This rehabilitation is what the state offers citizens when they force them out of their homes in the name of development and city upgrading. Rehabilitation is often meant to include some kind of housing close to their original home, but have long process times as we see from the statement above (Bose, 2006). Bose argue, that the effects of development-induced displacement is especially felt by vulnerable and low-income families, as they do not have many resources to make a new beginning for themselves (ibid.), and therefore end up residing on the street.

Development is likewise a central theme in contemporary Calcutta. This is to be seen in the light of the history of the city. Back when the city was the capital of the british colonization, it was a city of preeminence and power, the capital and node of command in the British Empire, where the city dominated a vast hinterland of towns and villages as well as industries and bureaucracies. This dominance and wealth took a sharp turn in the following years of India's independence, and Calcutta has for a long time now been depicted as a city in decline with an overwhelming urban poverty (ibid. 7-8). A sad storyline that seem to have taken a new and more positive turn, over the last decade. In the last decade the city has started to attract national and international investment as well as witnessing an enormous boom in its construction industry (ibid.). This turn was further helped forth by developing plans set by the Indian government. In 1998, the Government of India requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for financial assistance to reverse the environmental decline of India's largest cities, which included Calcutta. This led to the creation of the Calcutta Environmental Improvement Project (KEIP), which was made effective from 16 April 2002 (Mancha, 2010). The backside of this newly interest in

restoring Calcutta back to its glorious days, is argued by the eviction and displacement of vulnerable families and citizens. Researchers on the field argue that these people have voter ID cards and are taxpayers, but are asked to move as if they were unauthorized settlers or squatters (Bose 2006, Roy, 2009, Hill & Scrase, 2012), indirect claiming that the indian government are involved in making their own citizens homeless. It is the same case with the renewal plan for the ports in Calcutta, which has caused massive displacement as this reformation expands over greenfields occupied by low-income communities which hereby becomes displaced (Hill & Scrase, 2012). Roy argues that this development-induced displacement is led by the Left Front with the Communist party of India-Marxist (CPI-M), that are busy with acquiring land for private development (Roy, 2009:78). She shows how the argument has been made thus, by Nirupam Sen, Minister of Industries, West Bengal:

> "If a particular industry wants a big chunk of land in a contiguous area for setting up a large plant there, it is not possible for the industry to purchase land from each and every farmer, particularly in West Bengal where fragmentation of land is very high. If a large chunk of land is needed for a very important industrial project, will the State government not acquire it for the project? And, of course, it is a public purpose. Industrialisation means employment generation, it means development of society; the entire people of the State will be benefited. Therefore, it is in the interest of public purpose that the land has been acquired" (Chattopadhyay, 2006 in Roy, 2009: 78).

In keeping up with global trends and making Calcutta a site of international investment, the Left Front has formed a series of what they call Special Economic Zones; zones of exception, suspending laws and creating exceptional benefits for corporate investors (ibid. 79). This may be considered to be a smart business model with the consequence of evicting and displacing hundreds of citizens. This development to restore Calcutta hereby is an enormous inducer for displacement in the city which leaves many vulnerable citizens homeless but still with work and livelihoods rooted in the city. Some of these are promised rehabilitation, but often never gets it, while others are simply just pushed aside by these new zones of exception (Roy, 2009).

These studies hereby address development-induced displacement as a crucial reason behind why so many people live displaced on the streets in India and Calcutta, often neglected in comparison

with other reasons such conflict and poverty. It furthermore offers an insight in the indian government's relation to this issue and how they may be the actual villain in this scenario. Nevertheless, while some of the dwellers in my fieldwork proven to be displaced due to some of the well known reasons for displacement such as conflict, only a few had been displaced due to development. Thus, even though these studies help to get an understanding of some structures and tendencies in Calcutta that displace people from their homes, it does not give a comprehensive understand of the dwellers that I encountered in my fieldwork in Calcutta and their relation to the city.

Rural-urban Migration

Another line of studies argue that homeless people in Calcutta may be understood as a consequence of the general tendency of centralisation and urban migration. They argue that even though the general number of rural-urban migrants may be modest in the the total number of population growth in indian cities, the cities' poverty is linked to the rural-urban population: "In other words, much of the urban ills are attributed to the rural-spills" (Mitra & Murayama, 2008: 1).

An infographic done by DECCMA in 2018 on migration patterns in the Indian Bengal Delta shows how a lot of migrants in Calcutta come from smaller villages and towns close to Calcutta, to seek their luck in the big metropolitan city (DECCMA, 2018). It further stats that 18 % of the asked households had sent people in their family out to migrate, 94% of this was domestic and only 4% was international destinations. Most of these people move to Calcutta, the nearest metropolitan city and most of them move permanently (ibid.). This hereby addresses another reason for a big influx of people coming to Calcutta to stay. The infographic shows different reasons for migrating to Calcutta; men mostly migrate because of the lack of job opportunities and unsustainable agriculture in their villages while women migrate because of marriage or moving with family. The job opportunities they seek and obtain in the city likewise seem to be gender based to some extent. For the men the jobs are in areas such as transport, construction and hotels whereas for the women it is more domestic help, caretaker and household industry. Many

of the dwellers from my fieldwork belongs to this category of migrants in the city. They originally come from small villages an hour or two way from Calcutta, but choose to move to the city in search of work. What the infographic further shows is that these people migrate with the intention of staying in the new place but at the same time find it hard and doesn't assimilate or become a part of a the local environment and social groups (bid.). Finding it hard to assimilate and become a part of the community and social groups within the city may result in creating some alternative communities in the city, as seen in the slums and sidewalk communities evident from my fieldwork. Urban migration hereby may be argued to be a explanation for both the reason behind some ending up in Calcutta's streets and also why they reside in these areas of the city. But what these studies does not give an account for is what actually happens in these spaces; what sort of life is generate here and what and who underpin it? Migration studies mostly focuses on the cause and motivation for the migration, while my question is what happens after the migration, what is created in these areas or communities in the city?

Slums

A third set of literature, focuses on these spaces and communities that the presence of dwellers create in the cities. It is here outline how displaced or migrants in cities, often gather together and create informal settlements (Roy, 2011, Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018). Such kind of informal settlements have been a part of Calcutta for many years, often referred to as slums. A slum is defined as an informal often illegal housing in overcrowded and unsafe homes with limited or no access to basic services such as water and electricity (Habitat For Humanity Homepage, 2019). Critics claim that slums are a permanent feature that reveal a cities inability to absorb population growth satisfactorily (Davis, 2006; Obudho and Mhlanga, 1988 in Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018:769). A claim that may be the case in India with its enormous population. Nevertheless, The studies of slums has created two poles; some argue that for displaced people in the city, slums provide more than simply cheap accommodation; they provide connections and resources that help them to develop their own living strategies in the city. Alternatively, other argue that slums constitute an end-point, a cul-de-sac, positioning them with the lowest paid jobs

and in a harsh and violent environment, which pulls them further and further away from the normal society (Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018). Some scholars hereby sees slums as a sign of dweller's creativity and autonomy in the city while other scholars sees slums as a destructive end-point for a part of the population that the city has failed to help. An interesting debate that this thesis wish to contribute to and maybe shed some new light on. This contribution will be attempted by using some new lenses and tools to dig deeper into the construction of these spaces within the city.

Furthermore, what has come forth by my engagement in the field is that these slums houses children and grown-ups that are born and raised in these alternative communities and have therefore never experienced anything else than being an 'outsider'. In this manner, slums may be argued to introduce another category of urban dwellers - the born-into-homelessness dweller. Thus, when families in these informal settlements expands, they increase the number of homeless people in Calcutta. Furthermore it creates a new and complex category for the government to address, as they are not displaced nor are they migrants. This has been evident in many of the families I have come across in my research. Herewith this observation may be argued to offer a new angle to the causality of urban dwelling in Calcutta, as these people have not been forced or abandoned a home, but simply never have had one. This may be an interesting subject to examine further in relation to legal and social status of this group, however this is not the aim of the thesis at hand. Nevertheless, it is an interesting observation that foregrounds how urban dwelling in Calcutta must be understood as more than a consequence of development, war or lack of jobs in rural India, hereby highlighting the importance of examining this dwelling in the city further.

Concluding Remarks

Different regional literature and research on the field of urban studies in relation to dwellers has been outlined in the above chapter. Often the studies revolve around the causes and inducers for

people ending up as urban dwellers. Their are the often debated reasons such as war, poverty and climate change, but in relation to Calcutta issues such as development-induced displacement and rural-urban migration has been highlighted as major catalysts. Nevertheless, these studies does not go further in investigating and accounting for this dwelling within the city. Hence, another set of literature focusing on slums in cities, thus goes more in depth with this relation between the city and the dwellers. In this literature two poles have been created; one arguing that slums are a sign of dwellers agency that create networks and resources that helps them to create a life in the city. The other claim that slums constitute end-points for dwellers holding them in a position with low paid jobs in a harsh and vulnerable environment isolated from the normal society. It is this debate that the thesis at hand wish to contribute to, further fueled by observations that many dwellers are born and raised in these so-called slums, which highlights the fact that urban dwelling must be understood as more than a mere consequence and outcome. Through the continuing occupation and existence in Calcutta's public spaces, dwelling has construct specific forms of informal settlements and livelihoods. The quest thereby goes on to provide a qualified account of the building stones behind such a construction.

THE FIELD

The thesis at hand, wish to contribute to the regional literature on the subject by offering an ethnographic account of spaces of dwelling in Calcutta city in India. This will, as aforementioned, be done through fieldwork. Thus, the 'field' of this fieldwork, will be explicated in the following, to understand the empirical data obtained in order to answer the research question put forth. By the use of statements from scholars and newspapers, the presence of NGOs and own observation, this chapter hereby seeks to contest how Sealdah Station, the second biggest railway station in Calcutta, can and will function as an example of a urban space of dwelling in the city.

Calcutta is the capital of the State of West Bengal, it has a high population density of 24,000 people per square kilometer. Further it qualifies as a megacity because of it incredible surface of

79.150 square miles (world population review, 2019). It hereby became clear that my research could not grasp over the entire city in the 45 days I was there, especially not if I wanted a deep and thorough examination of the field.

A consideration in limiting my field of study therefore became to find a site in the city that could function as an example of urban dwelling in the city. The criteria for the field site was therefore that it should be a space were a lot of urban dwellers reside and have a strong connection to. The search for such a site was helped forth by previous work within the city, hence offering a great insight in such locations within the city. From this it became fairly obvious that railway stations in Calcutta presents clear focal points for urban dwellers; if they did not live right at the platforms of the stations they resided in slums always located near to stations or along the railway tracks. A tendency general across India and frequently addressed in the local news papers (TimesofIndia, 2016; Rediff, 2011; The Guardian,2017). Many NGOs, such as Gadens Børn (Gadens Børn Homepage, 2019) and Little big help (LittleBigHelp Homepage, 2019) likewise have their resources and project located at the different stations in Calcutta city. Stations, as a place where homeless people reside has further been addressed by scholars, however without any further account or examination of this fact. Thus, Wayne Shand , researcher in poverty and development, highlights how urban dwellers repurpose railway platforms to become urban spaces of habitation offering temporary security and shelter (Shand, 2018: 263).

The reason behind dwellers residing at or close to the railway stations may be found in the fact that these areas are government owned and therefore no private owner will come and remove the dwellers. A further fact may be the great amount of people everyday going with the trains which offers a huge amount of potential customers for different sort of small businesses and shops. The reasonings will be elaborated further during the thesis, for the moment it is enough to state that train stations can be argued to offer a clear example of a site within the city where many urban dwellers reside and live. One of the slums located next to the station could have been chosen, but the station may show new and different perspectives to the literature on urban dwelling and thus offer an interesting and unexplored space of dwelling to account for.

Thus, Sealdah Railway Station, the next biggest railway station in Calcutta, has been chosen as field of study. The reason behind this particular station is again linked to my previous work with a local NGO in the city. Through this I had a daily interaction with dwellers living at this specific station, offering me an advantage point in relation to access to informants. Even though I limit the field to focus on Sealdah station, I followed the dwellers to other sites as well, as not to make a false account of their everyday life and actions. A limitation of one's field always present some weaknesses and some opportunities. A weakness in this regard may be the fact that there can be some structures important in understanding urban dwelling in Calcutta that may not be present within the chosen field. On the other hand, the opportunity is that one can give a thorough and detailed account of Sealdah Station in relation to its dwellers.

Concluding Remarks

The field of study chosen for the thesis is Sealdah Station, The second biggest railway station in Calcutta. The reasoning behind this choice is observations from previous engagement in Calcutta alongside statements from Scholars such as Wayne Shand(2018), news papers such as Rediff, Times of India and The Guardian and NGOs present in Calcutta, all arguing that railway stations in general acts as focal points and homes for a great amount of urban dwellers in the city. Thus, Sealdah Station will function as the field by which this thesis seek to understand urban dwelling in Calcutta.

METHODOLOGY

From the above chapter we have established the field of study to one of the public spaces occupied by dwellers in Calcutta; Sealdah Railway Station. Onwards, we are going inside and in depth with this field to examine an answer subquestion one; *what structures the everyday life of the dwellers living at the station.* A question that will be answered by an ethnographic account of the structures and relations that constitutes these people's everyday activities. Thus, ethnographic fieldwork, with its simple idea of understanding a specific group by following and engaging with

them (Emerson et al., 2001), therefore constitutes the overarching approach, hereunder the use of participant observation and semi structured interviews. This methodology strongly relies on the researcher, which requires one to undertake some specific considerations and responsibilities in relation to personal participation (Scheyvens et al., 2003: 139). Thus, these considerations alongside a concrete description of the fieldwork will be outlined in the following. The central argument in this chapter is hereto, that fieldwork offers a unique understanding and data of the specific field, where the embodied experience may be understood as a positive feature offering own behind the scenes details on the field. Nevertheless, this embodiment requires one to make clear to other participants in the field of one's agenda and to acknowledge the partiality that any gained knowledge must always be seen as.

Following Their Footsteps - Fieldwork

As the field of research are the space of Sealdah Station, my approach and interest towards the field resembles that of a geographer's: "[a] geographer's primary interest is in the study of the inter-relationships between people and their habitats (...) [cities] are products of man (sic) and environment interacting in a heuristic process of adaptation and response" (Ramachandran, 1989 in Bose, 2006: 29). It is to be mistaken as that of an anthropologist, with one small but significant difference; a geographer's aim is to understand and explain the habitat whereas the aim for anthropologists are more focus on understanding and portraying the people within the habitat (Emerson et al., 2001: 3). Alternatively, the aim of the fieldwork in this thesis is to unite these two aims to gain a relational understanding and insight into the field of urban dwelling at Sealdah Station. Within the fieldwork it hereby becomes a dual aim of understanding and examine the physicality of the station as well as the practices of the urban dwellers within this space. Such a multifaceted approach may be argued to open up for examining and understanding how different environmental parts such as slums, sidewalks or in this case railway stations interact with more social processes such as city governance, creative businesses and informal networks.

The fieldwork conducted for this thesis spans over a period of eight weeks. Furthermore, it draws on knowledge from a previous period of three months, were I worked as an intern in an NGO within the field at hand. The collected data hereby consists of knowledge and data obtained during four and half month in total. By the fact that some of this knowledge and data is obtained through a work relation, some specific consideration must be dealt with according to positionality. This addressing of one's positionality relates to Donna haraway's terminology of understanding any fieldwork as situated knowledge. Knowledge should by this terminology be understood as always being a partial embodied knowledge, contrary to the idea of the ability to see everything from nowhere, which she calls the god trick (Haraway 1988: 579). She claims that accepting the partiality and embodiment of ourselves within the field allows one to "(...) construct a usable, but not an innocent, doctrine of objectivity" (ibid. 582). It may be difficult to account for the complexity that construct one's way to view and engage in a field, nevertheless Haraway argue that one has to try to account for this body; "Only the god trick is forbidden" (ibid: 589). In accepting this embodiment and partiality of my knowledge, an explanation of my embodiment in the field hereby helps to understand and frame the data collected. Likewise, Regina Scheyvens and John Storey (2003) argue that to reject hierarchical or ethical insensitive understandings of fieldwork we have to "move beyond positivist assumptions about the neutral role of the researcher to more nuanced understandings of ways in which one's positionality, relationships and personality affect the research process" (Scheyvens & Storey 2003: 8 in Bose, 2006: 52-53). My positionality and relationships will hereby be addressed in the following with elaborations on how it may have affected my research process and data.

My relation to the field stems as aforementioned from an internship within a local NGO that works with street children in Calcutta. I was hereby a part of their outreach team, that every day went to different slums and homeless areas in the city and talked to the resident and supported them in different ways with school, health care and wellbeing in general. Through this internship I formed a strong interest for understanding these areas, but I further gained a lot of close relations to the residents within these areas. The choice of topic therefore has a clear connection to my previous work with these people as well as my access to informants. Thus, it springs from

a curiosity developed during my work with the NGO, and a wish to understand in depth the background of these people we engaged with on a daily basis. An engagement that expanded my understanding of being homeless, hence offering an interesting subject to examine further to understand these new perspectives they prevailed.

Moreover, the previous work offers me a special behind-the-scenes access to information on the structures that constitute these people's everyday life as well as connections to NGOs and governmental institution working within the field of urban dwellers. My previous work hereby gave me an advanged in knowing which institutions and structures that play a part in these people's lives at the station, but not the actual influence of these in constructing the space of the station for the dwellers. Thus, presenting another interesting layer of the field to be examined.

Even though the actual fieldwork of this thesis is not conducted through this work relation, it is important to bear in mind during the fieldwork, as it is the foundation for my relations and access within the field. How this may have affected my research process and data is slightly different in relation to the specific methods used within the fieldwork. In my fieldwork I used two different methodological tools to gather data; participant observation and semi structured interview. The specific opportunities and challenges in relation to my positionality in the process of using these two methods will therefore be addressed separately in the following.

Participant Observation

The primary research method within the fieldwork has been participant observation, which is characterized as; "(...) establishing a place in some natural setting on a relatively long-term basis in order to investigate, experience, and represent the social life and social processes that occur in that setting"(Emerson et al., 2001, 352). This method constitutes the core of fieldwork, opening up to an unspoken knowledge only accessible by being in the field (Haraway, 1988), as one gets the opportunity to feel and experience the field first hand. In my participant observation I chose to follow one dweller at a time for 12 hours during the day, focusing on how he conduct his day and who and what he came in contact with to gain a comprehensive insight into the different aspects of life at the station. For this purpose, I went around with a translator known by the

dwellers, as he works for the NGO I previous was an intern at. We went around, explaining the aim and focus of my fieldwork, and further my interest in them on the basis of this. This is a part of the ethical procedure of fieldwork, to obtain what is often referred to as informed consent (Scheyvens et al., 2003: 142). We asked seven different dwellers, chosen on the grounds of previous knowledge of them having lived at the station for a long time and the connection I had established with them there. This was all grown-ups in an age scale from 26 to 40 with the exception of one boy that was 14 years old. I choose to follow this boy as he has lived alone on the station for several years, and actually is born there. Further he has different interesting and alternative jobs at the station that provides an insight into some interesting parts of urban dwelling at the station. Interesting in the way, that they gave him certain privileges at the station and further showed some surprising relations and regulations present at the station, in need to be examined and understood further in connection the livelihood it creates at the station. All of the dwellers, that were asked agreed, even though they found it a bit strange. They were honored that I wanted to be with them for a whole day, as my interaction with them normally was in relation to their children. They did not really understand the aim of my participation, the translator tried to simplify it by saying I was writing a book, even though this may be given me too much credit. Thus, they asked the translator a few times, what they needed to do, as they found it strange that I was asking to be with them for a whole day, without asking for anything more than that. Nevertheless in the end they agreed completely, finding it kind of funny that I thought I needed to ask permission to 'hang out' with them. Two out of the seven informants ended up being too difficult to follow because of personal issues which caused them both to go back to their original villages. I therefore ended up following five persons; two men, two women and a teenage boy. Two of them I was able to communicate with as they spoke english, but with the rest communication consisted of the small amount of bengali I had assured me and body language. Nevertheless, I choose to follow them on my own, without a translator, to avoid too much attention and disturbance to their everyday routines.

In regard to my aforementioned positionality within the field, it was important for me to make clear for the informants that the fieldwork was not related to the work of the NGO, both to secure the NGO's aim and work but also to secure the informants, which was mostly parents to children

involved in the NGO. I here had a responsibility to inform and assure the dwellers that my data would not be shared or affect their children and the support they got from the NGO. This was an ethical choice that proven to be important for especially one of the informants, as he had some drug and alcohol problems, that he did not want the NGO to know about, and hereby only agreed to let me follow him if I kept my findings for myself. I likewise assured them that they would be anonymes to make them as safe and relaxed as possible with this unusual request to follow them a whole day (For a similar discussion: Scheyvens et al., 2003: 146).

Another important consideration in this regard, is of the power relation between the researcher and the informants; in this scenario me and the urban dwellers:

> Whether we like it or not, the nature of much Development Studies research means that we will be in positions of power in relation to most of our participants, a fact which can and should make us engage in some awkward self-reflection about the value of our research (Scheyvens et al., 2003: 149).

In regard to this power relation, I had previously in relation to my work, been the one to offer them support and help, hereby establishing a relation with me as the giver of help and them in the other end as the receiver. The fieldwork at hand made the table turn; the urban dwellers became the ones with something to give and I became the receiver. A consideration and challenge in this regard, was that my informants may be eager to provide me with information and answers as they fell like they owe me or simple just wants to please me because of our relation. To overcome or at least to minimize this issue I choose not to change my position within the field too much be still meeting the informants as a part of the outreach team on occasions with the local NGO, making observations of the field but not putting too much emphasizes on the thesis at hand. This does not mean not telling the informants of the purpose of my presence, this was essential to make clear to the informants, but simple not making this a changing factor for the relation between us but merely another aspect of the already established relation. We hereby both have something in the relation to give and receive, creating a new dimension to our relation instead of changing it. Thus, it has been important to make my question and research process become an integrated part of our establish relation and casually ask simple question about their livelihoods when it seemed natural in our conversations. When this is said,

my presence for a whole day surely influenced the informants and their behaviour to some extent, as they are not used to have someone following them, let alone a white women. Ethnicity or racial colour, as a part of my embodiment in the field, thus played a significant challenge in my participant observation both in regard to the dwellers but also bypassers. The challenge in this regard was to blend in as much as possible, not causing to many nossy indians, to stop on their way to the train. Nevertheless, this frames my partial knowledge gained in the field (Haraway, 1988). With the dwellers, the 12 hour participation time helped to overcome this barrier for the fieldwork, as they got used to my presence after some hours and was forced by the mere fact of time to get moving with their plans for the day. Nevertheless, my positionality caused some difficulties in the beginning of the days, as the dwellers were used to me having a plan when I visit them, normally concerning their children. Even so, it made them surprisingly happy, that they were in charge and became the interesting topic of the day. Thus, it made them open up for many aspects of their everyday life as well as made them keen to show me all in a day, which helped me get a lot of interesting data. In relation to the bypassers I as well as the dwellers simply manage to ignore it, but it still created some awkward tension when to many gathered around us. In these situation, the dwellers actually stood up for me, telling the bypassers not to take pictures and move along. My relation to and with the people in the field may hereby be argued to have offered some unique opportunities in relation to my participant observations but also some complicated challenges. Furthermore, it is necessary to remember that the informants likewise are multidimensional people, not only homeless. This has to be remembered in the relationship and conversations with them, respecting them as whole and active actors. It further enables one to grasp the internal differences and not oversimplifying causality linkages and in this way makes the data more nuanced.

One last consideration when conducting participant observations, Relates to the use of field notes. As noted by Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw (2001) in their book *Handbook of Ethnography*: "But participant observation involves not only gaining access to and immersing oneself in new social worlds, but also producing *written accounts and descriptions* that bring versions of these worlds to others"(Emerson et al., 2001: 352). As pointed out by Thomas Szulevicz, professor in communication and psychology, the suitable timing for taking

field notes may vary according to the context in which the researcher finds him/herself (Szulevicz, 2015: 91). In relation to this consideration, all field notes was made in the evening when returning from the field. This was chosen not to change the aim and procedure of outreach and further to participate fully and naturally in the days spend with the dwellers. Only a few times would I scribble some notes down on my phone, not to forget, but the dwellers saw this as just me texting someone. In this regard, one have to remember the partiality of fieldwork that further becomes evident in one's account of the field: "As representations, fieldnote texts are inevitably *selective*" (Emerson et al., 2001: 353). The fieldnotes are hereby reflections of my embodiment in the field and the accounts and circumstances I found characteristic and interesting to address and thereby frames the following analysis.

Semi Structured Interview

The second method used in the fieldwork is semi structured interviews (Rogers et al., 2013). The aim was to conducted semi structured interviews with some of the authorities that govern urban dwelling at Sealdah station. It proved to be difficult to get to speak to these, but I manage to get in contact with the station manager at Sealdah Station and Childline, a government institution that takes care of street children at the station. These interviews was conducted to provide a wider understanding of the rules and regulations that handle and affect urban dwellers at the station. Thus these interviews offers information about some of the more official actors and actions that directly and indirectly influence the urban dwellers livelihood. The semi structured interview is chosen as it allows for an open ended and changeable frame for an interview, making possible for new interesting angles to occur within the interview (ibid.). The interviews was not recorded, as I was told that this was not allowed.

Furthermore, the present of a translator was of great consideration. On one hand, a translator would help to avoid language barriers and misunderstandings, but on the other hand it would create a more formal atmosphere around the interviews. This was not my wish, as I knew that the government authorities in India are known to give very little information about their work. An alternative approach was hereby chosen; I first went alone, feeling the field, and hereafter would

decide if a translator was needed and thus schedule an actual meeting. This was the case with Childline, where a second meeting with a translator present was held for the interview. This interview further provided me with a copy the regulations and procedures of the station in relation to street children, which provided a crucial source of information as these regulations are not publicly available (Appendix 2).

My first meeting with the station manager did not go as smoothly, and the interview hereby became short questions he answered on the shot before asking me to leave. He seemed open to explain about the station and how he governed it until I asked into the dwellers sleeping there and what they did in this regard. He suddenly and firmly finished the interview by stating that I needed a permission from the indian government to talk to him. A permission he did not mention anything about before my questions about the governance related to the dwellers. This was clearly a sensitive topic that he did not want to answer, which may be argued to be because of the somewhat complex governance that prevailed itself during my fieldwork. Thus, the interview with the station manager fueled my interest to understand and examine this unspoken but existing everyday life at the station by dwellers and what connection it had to governance at the station.

The interview guide for these interviews was mostly concerned with stating the institution or organization's role and commitment in relation to urban dwellers as well as any laws or regulation on the subject that they were to follow (Appendix 1). The relation within the interviews may have included some tension as the relation between the interviewer and interviewee can resembles that of an interrogation (Heyl, 2001:379). An awareness in this regard, was from the start of the interviews to make the intention and use of the information and answers they gave very clear and furthermore to assure complete anonymity to respect and protect the work they do and keep a clear focus on the views and information they gave about the field instead of it being an assessment of them. In the interview with the station manager this approach may have been the reason why the interview was caught short, as the station manager objected to speak further to me when he understood my interest in the urban dwellers at the station. It can hereby be argued that the transparency of one's fieldwork not always helps one to get the most

data, but it is still an ethical point that one have to ophold when conducting interviews and fieldwork in general. Not wanting to answer my questions may furthermore prove to be fruitful data in it self. Thus, these two interview gave some useful data on the subject, but mostly they fueled my interest of examining and understanding all that was between the lines of these interviews.

Concluding Remarks

In the above the methodological tools chosen for gathering data has been addressed and elaborated. As the project at hand seek to contribute with an ethnographic account of urban dwellers at Sealdah Railway Station, the chosen methodology is fieldwork with the underlying use of participant observations and semi structured interview. This approach has been chosen as it offers unique on-site understandings and knowledges of the field of study one can only obtain by being there. The fieldwork spans over eight weeks and further knowledge obtained in previous engagement with the field for three months. The knowledge obtained must thus be understood as situated knowledge, foregrounding its embodiment and partiality (Haraway, 1988: 579). Thus, all obtained knowledge are always obtained by someone from somewhere. Some considerations in accordance to the partial embodied knowledge generated by this fieldwork has been discussed. Hereto, consideration according to positionality within the field, power relations between researcher and informants and the production of field notes and interviews have been elaborated. Furthermore, ethical issues such as consent from informants, anonymity and the use of translator and own impact on the field has been considered. Thus, it can generally be stated that the methodology chosen for this thesis offers a unique, hands on, partial, embodied ethnographic account of Sealdah Station and the everyday life of dwellers residing here.

THEORETICAL FRAME

To Convert obtained data into analytical findings requires a way, a sort of lens, to look at the data. Thus, this chapter seek to outline the lens the data at hand has been examined through. As

the thesis aims to understand and examine dwelling in Calcutta and especially the structures within the city that affect and interplay in this dwelling, the analytical lens has to be directed at grasping and extracting this from the field. The theoretical frame hereby is strongly connected to the choice of methodology as these two go hand in hand to obtain the relevant data for the specific aim of the study. On these grounds, Assemblage Thinking articulated by Manuel Delanda (2006), Ben Sellar (2011), Wayne Shand (2018) and Helen Briassoulis (2019) has been selected as the theoretical lens, as it offers a 'thick description' and deconstruction of the structures and practises that produce spaces of dwelling (Shand, 2018: 257). The pointe of the chapter is thus that assemblage thinking offers a way to step back and look at all the scales of interactions and actions that create the station as an assembly of multiple actors and components that interplay and affect the structures and livelihood of dwellers. Furthermore, certain concepts such as *marginalization* (Grabska, 2006) *agency* (Shand 2018, Sellar, 2011), *networks* (Kihato, 2011), *urban governance* (Kihato, 2011) *informal economies* (Huang et al., 2017) and *informality* (Roy, 2005, 2009) has been integrated in the theoretical frame to discuss, how this production may be conceptualized in the broader field of urban studies of dwelling.

Often studies of urban dwellers look at this group as a contrast to the general society. They are often addressed with the use of binaries such as formal/informal, public/private and legal/illegal to analyze and understand this group operating outside or between the established systems that make people citizens to a sovereign power - elsewhere referred to as the natural order of things (Mallki, 1992). Nevertheless, in practice these binaries showed to be complicated to distinguish, challenging this division in analysing the field. The dwellers' existence seemed to be something in between these binaries, making the distinction tough and somewhat misleading. What the structures and governance in Calcutta implied during the fieldwork, was that trying to seperate what was legal or illegal, what was the rule and what was the exception, was a waste of time, the governance and live at the station was structured by other more soft forms of regulation. A thought that occurred hereto, was that this maybe was a western understanding of how spaces are structured and governed, and I hereby needed something to bring me out of this line of thought (for a similar discussion: Roy, 2005: 147). Thus, Assemblage Thinking has become prominent in

urban studies recently to examine socio-spatial relations and the processes shaping cities; "Urban assemblage is used to articulate a 'thick description' of the practices of coping with extreme poverty and marginalisation and to identify the effects of these actions on the construction of both young lives and the city" (Shand, 2018: 257). Thus, assemblage thinking is argued to offer a way to deconstruct issues of urban development (ibid: 259), bringing one past the binaries.

Assemblage Thinking

Assemblage Thinking (AT) has emerged since 2000s, using a form of relational, poststructuralist thinking, rooted in the works of the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari on Assemblage Theory, to understand the production of any given entity (Briassoulis, 2019: 3; Shand, 2018: 258-259). Assemblage can thus be understood as an ontology of becoming, whereby the latter interpretations and uses of the theory in critical urban studies has been captured under the umbrella-term Assemblage Thinking. Assemblage thinking offers a way to take a step back and stay open to what actually constitute a particular space or entity without presumption. Deleuze and Guattari's theory was in this regard used by the philosopher Manuel Delanda, to capture and understand the construction of social entities. He explains the importance of understanding such construction as:

> The most critical question which a philosophical analysis of social ontology must answer is the linkage between the micro and the macro. Whether one conceives of these levels as 'the individual and society' or as 'agency and structure' or even 'choice and order', an answer to the question of their mutual relations basically determines the kind of social entities whose existence one is committed to believe (Delanda, 2006: 250).

In this search, Delanda claims that studies often limits itself to either micro reductionism, macro reductionism or the emergent social practise of these two, which he calls mesoreduction (ibid: 251). These are all attempts to solve the micro-macro problem, which he states are failing as they reduce and simplify the complexity of the linkage. In this regard, he presents assemblage theory

as the ideal approach to examine and capture the complexity of the linkage between the micro and the macro. By using Assemblage Theory you abandon the idea that there are only these two or three levels and that one have to make a choice between and instead bridge small entities such as persons with large scale entities such as governments with many intermediate levels. These levels will be sketch out in the following section. Thus, the analysis at hand is not a philosophical study, nevertheless the aim of the analysis is to address Sealdah Station as such a social entity and through this understand the linkage between levels such as agency and structure at the station. Thus, Assemblage Thinking will function as a theoretical frame to open up the data and capture the complex linkage between micro and macro level of urban dwelling.

Helpful additions and perspectives to the use of Assemblage Thinking from scholars such as lecture and researcher in occupational science Ben Sellar, scholar in development policy and management Wayne Shand and Professor in geography Helen Briassoulis, will further be integrated to gain concrete descriptions on the application of Assemblage Thinking in urban studies. The analysis will thus not take the form of a theoretical account of assemblage theory seen in practise, but simply use assemblage thinking as an underlying approach to unfold and structure the analysis. The following will outline the particular elements of this approach that are relevant in accordance with the analysis at hand.

Heterogeneous Parts Producing a Whole

Sellar and Briassoulis describe assemblage theory as an attempt to account for the processes by which the historical identity of any whole is formed, focusing on the multiplicity of heterogeneous parts and acts that form contingent relations across time to produce an emergent whole (Sellar, 2011: 69; Briassoulis, 2019: 7), hence seeing an entity as an assemblage. All entities can thus be seen as an assemblage, even an individual can be seen as an assemblage of sub-personal components (Delanda, 2006: 253).

Delanda outlines different scales of these parts to understand how they interrelate and create the emergent whole. He roughly sketches 5 different scales; at the bottom there is a population of interacting individual persons. From these interactions a new scale emerges which he calls interpersonal networks. From relations between these networks institutional organisations emerge creating a third scale of parts of an assemblage. He continues to describe how interactions between the institutional organisation and networks create urban centres that further interact and create specific territorial entities such as countries. Furthermore Delanda highlights how these scales are interrelated in such manner that the interrelations constitutes mediating scales of its own (ibid: 251). The assemblage that Delanda scales seek to address, is an assemblage of greater proportion than the one in the analysis at hand. As the aim is not examine the construction of India but merely the station and to some extent parts of Calcutta, the three first scales of parts are of most interests in accordance to the analysis at hand. Nevertheless Delanda's rough sketch of the different scales helps to structure the analytical levels to describe the process of production of the structure and livelihood at the station. Furthermore, Briassoulis highlights how parts or components within an assemblage are of multiple forms such as persons, plants, organizations, documents and even beliefs and opinions (Briassoulis, 2019: 7). This hereby must be added to Delanda's different scales as parts that likewise acts within and produces the assemblage as a whole.

Alternatively, Deleuze and Guattari originally characterized assemblages along two axis. One on axe they distinguish the role the component play in the assemblage, which can either be a material or expressive role. On the other axe the focus is on the process within the assemblage in accordance to the components, which either stabilises the assemblage sharpening its structure or destabilize it hereby open it up for change. These are called processes of territorialization and deterritorialization (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 88 in Delanda, 2006: 253). Delanda argues that his division of the different scales even though not being outlined by Deleuze himself may be understood as deleuzian and play together with Deleuze and Guattari's axis, as he argues their axis is the perfect conceptualization of each part present at the different scales (Delanda, 2006: 252).

Thus both schemes will be used as tools within the analysis as they work at different levels; Delanda's scales offers a sort of pathway to understand the journey of producing an assemblage while Deleuze and Guattari's axis provides a concrete way to address the function and affect specific parts and relations have along this journey. Assemblage Thinking in this manner challenges one to look at what and how multiple parts interplay within a field, keeping one alert and addressing all the parts one come across from the materiality and people within the field to the actions and opinions flourishing here. Thus, With the lens of assemblage thinking much data is gained from mere observations of the field; its physicality, the people, their interactions, the networks, the routines, the rules etc. All these parts are thus producing the station as a social entity in an interrelated manner. Hereto, Delanda ads that "assemblages are not Heligian totalities in which the parts are mutually constituted and fused into a seamless whole. In an assemblage components have a certain autonomy from the whole they compose" (ibid: 253), emphasizing the parts as being something more and other than simply a constructing part of the assemblage.

Wayne Shand claims that the emphasizes on heterogeneity within Assemblage Theory is particularly beneficial when examining urban poor as it: "(...) offers a framework to recognise the urban experience as fragmented, where people have partial access to employment, services and legal rights and create patchworks of provision to meet their needs through their own efforts" (Shand, 2018: 259). He argues that assemblages help to connect the processes and products of the everyday thus highlighting configurations which may be incongruous but are brought together to have a function and meaning in the lives of urban dwellers (Shand, 2018: 259). An essential benefit as the analysis seek to examine the station to subtract and understand the fragmented experience of the city by urban dwellers.

A Never Ending Process of Becoming

Furthermore, the capacity of any assemblage must be understood as open ended, only limited by the potential relations through which it can exercised: "Capacities emerge only when one part comes into contact with another part with which it can interact, and until this relation is formed

the capacity is only merely possible"(Delanda, 2006 in Sellar, 2011: 69). An interesting perspective, that highlights the importance of looking actual relations and interactions constituted within a field and further opens up for understanding how an entity changes.

Furthermore as the aim of assemblage theory is to describe processes of emergence rather than the emerged form, it is stated by Sellar that it seems contradictory to remain attached to ideas of boundaries which imply stasis and fixity (Sellar, 2011: 70). Thus an assemblage is not limited by spacial boundaries as components such as family relations and industries that may stretch far and wide still are a part of the constructed assemblage nor can one separate one assemblage from other assemblages as every component within an assemblage can be seen as a assemblage of its own (Delanda, 2006: 252). Assemblage Theory and Assemblage Thinking can in this regard be criticized for being somewhat abstract and missing the step of actually accounting for the produced entities and their actual forms and functions.

Conceptualizations

Thus, concepts such as *marginalization* (Grabska, 2006) *agency* (Shand 2018, Sellar, 2011), *networks* (Kihato, 2011), *urban governance* (Kihato, 2011) *informal economies* (Huang et al., 2017) and *informality* (Roy, 2005, 2009), will play an additional part to the theoretical frame as tools to conceptualize these forms and functions. These concepts will be outlined in the following analysis when they become relevant, to keep a progressive flow within the analysis. Thus, the concepts provide ways of understanding different parts of the station, raising the analysis to a more general conceptual level that enable one to discuss the findings in relation to general understandings within the field of urban studies.

These scholars and their conceptualization are not all in line with the ontology of Assemblage Thinking thus may hereby be argued to contest a challenge in application. Accordingly, marginalization and informality may operate within a more structural ontology, nevertheless these concepts thus provide a comparative frame to understand how dwellers and spaces may be understood. Thus, the thesis at hand may not be seen as completely adopting the ontology of

Assemblage Thinking but merely as a new way to view the field of dwellers, complimented and discussed in relation to other perspectives with other ontologies.

Concluding Remarks

Studies of urban dwellers often look at this group as a contrast to the general society, thus they are often addressed with the use of binaries such as formal/informal, public/private and legal/illegal. Nevertheless, in practice these binaries showed to be complicated to distinguish, the dwellers' existence seemed to be something in between these binaries, another lens was hereby needed to bring one out of this line of thought. Thus, assemblage Thinking provide this alternative, by using a form of relational, poststructuralist thinking, rooted in the works of the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari on Assemblage Theory (Briassoulis, 2019: 3, Shand, 2018: 258-259). Assemblage Thinking, thus seek to bridge small entities such as persons with large scale entities such as governments with many intermediate levels to understand the process of producing any emergent whole (Sellar, 2011: 69, Briassoulis, 2019: 7), hence seeing such an entity as an assemblage. The capacity of an assemblage is argued to be understood as open ended, only limited by the potential relations through which it can exercised (Sellar, 2011: 69). Delanda sketches different scales of these constructing parts. He roughly sketches 5 different scales; from a population of interacting individual persons, to interpersonal networks, to institutional organisations, to urban centres and lastly ends out in producing specific territorial entities such as countries. Thus the three first scales are of most relevance to the aim of the analysis. Alternatively, Deleuze and Guattari originally characterized assemblages along two axis; one describing if the component is material or expressive and the other if it stabilize or destabilize the assemblage. Thus, Delanda argues that their axis may go well together with his scales, as their axis offers a conceptualization of each parts at the different scales (Delanda, 2006: 252).

Nevertheless, Assemblage Theory and thus Assemblage Thinking may be criticized for being focused solely on the process of becoming and missing the step of conceptualizing the different parts and productions. Hence, specific concepts such as *marginalization, agency*, *networks*,

urban governance, informal economies and *informality*, has been integrated to conceptualize and discuss what may be argued to structure the livelihood and space of the station.

ANALYSIS

The analysis at hand, seeks to investigate what structures the everyday life of dwellers, hence answering the first part of the research question focused on understanding what underpin the livelihood of dwellers in urban spaces in Calcutta. Thus the analysis devotes itself to describe and examine obtained data concerning the livelihoods of dwellers at Sealdah Station. This will be done through the theoretical frame of Assemblage Thinking described in the above. To further examine these livelihoods and the space that underpin them, abovementioned concepts such as marginalization, agency, networks, urban governance, informal economies and informality will be integrated to discuss the space in some conceptual terms thus, making it comparable with other spaces and studies of such. Thereby, the analysis aims to go from a description of the particularities seen within the field, to more general conceptualizations. It will thereby take us on a journey going from particularizing the first subquestion; *what structures everyday life at the station* to end up discussing the second subquestion; *What kind of space does this create?*

The analysis is structured into three parts, which are meant to address different scales of actors and actions that support dwellers' livelihoods at the station, in a progressional manner. This division is inspired by Delanda's scales, described in the previous chapter, as a way to grasp the different steps to the production of a social entity such as the station. The scales will be elaborated upon in the beginning of each specific part. Thus the aim of the analysis is scale by scale to examine what actors and practises underpin and structure livelihoods at the station and furthermore how this space may be conceptualized.

Dwelling, Agency and Livelihood

This analysis part seeks to examine the first scale of parts of any produced entity; the population of interacting individuals. Physical components are furthermore located and addressed as part of this scale. Thus, this section intent to sketch out the individual actors and physical components

structuring the everyday life of dwellers. Furthermore, with the use of concepts such as marginalization and agency it will discuss how this process may be conceptualized. The chapter displays how the station as a space have specific physicalities and individuals that interact by what may be conceptualized as purposeful action, agency, which transforms the space and generates homes and livelihoods for the dwellers. Thus, the concept of marginalization seem to simplify the complexity of the interactions asserted at the station by overlooking the possibilities that the space of the station offers the dwellers.

Sealdah Station look like most other major railway stations in India; it has 12 platforms connected by a main hall which has three big entrances. It has facilities connected to its customers needs; ticket counters, help desks, small snack shops, waiting benches, public water taps with drinking water, parking area for taxis, a station manager office, a specific railway police department (GRP) and even a jail for people caught without tickets. Two of the dwellers I followed live together at a bench at the end of platform two at this station. The reason behind the wage description of 'at a bench' is because they use the whole area of and around the bench. The seat works mostly as sitting area for them, a sort of living room, when people going with the trains are not using it. The back of the bench works as a wall and outliner of their kitchen where they sit and eat. The floor in front of the back of the bench is covered with a carton box that is folded flat, which works as an outlining of their spot; their 'home'. Most of their belongings are stored under the bench, only less important stuff are stored close by under some big building rocks constituting a secret storage room. Other people and families like them, live next to them at other benches further down the platform, while small vendors reside in the first part of the platform, which is the most crowded part of the platform, with many customers waiting for the trains. This is the scene apparent at most of the platforms at the station. When looking at the platforms, they resemble a picture of roads with busy shopping areas in the beginning of the road and a more quiet villa area further down the road.

Moreover, the train tracks are used as dumpsites for garbage, which makes hungry dwellers walk on the train tracks to find leftovers or plastic they can earn some money of. Some of the children living at station even uses the tracks as toilets. Accordingly, dwellers use the public water taps as bathrooms, where they brush teeth, take showers and wash their clothes. Small roofs outside the

station made for shadow areas for traveling customers are used as drying spots for their clothes and blankets as well as hiding spots for their belongings:
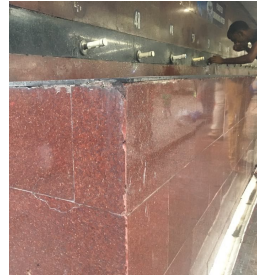
Thus the space of the station may be argued to be constructed by multiple actors using and acting within this space, and these actors form and integrate various material features to the station. The actors and material components present at the station, hereby may be seen as an assemblage of heterogeneous parts producing an emergent social space at the station, as described in Assemblage Thinking (Sellar, 2011: 69; Briassoulis, 2019: 7). The actors operating within this particular assemblage may be divided in three main groups. There is the primary group of individuals; the costumers. I call this the primary group, as this is the intended target group for building the station. They use the station for travel, thus their engagement with the space is taking the trains, waiting at the platforms and maybe buying small snacks during the wait. Hence, these actions within the space create the appearance of trains, benches and small vendors at the station. This group has indirectly another group connected to them; the station workers. This group of people at the station maintain and keep the station running in accordance to the use and satisfaction of the travellers, bringing material components such as wagons to carry people's luggage on and brooms to clean the station with. Nevertheless there is a third group present at the station as illustrated above; the dwellers. An unintended group that occupy and conduct their daily life at the station and through this transform certain uses and appearances of the established material parts. Thus, in relation to Deleuze and Guattari's axis characterizing components function within an assemblage, the dwellers may be seen as a component that has destabilise the assembly and opened it up for change (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987: 88 in Delanda, 2006: 253). They have destabilised the assembly to revolve around travel and transporting people and goods

from one place to another and opened it up to have a dual aim of further supporting the livelihood of the dwellers.

Often, unintended groups, like these dwellers at the station, are collectively described as 'The floating social clusters' (Bayat, 2004 in Grabska, 2006: 289), referring to their position outside the general society of citizens surrounding them. Because of this position, they have restricted rights and privileges, and are thus often described as being marginalized. Marginalization generally refers to " (...) economic, cultural, legal, political, and social inequality and exclusion, a process causing a state of 'being underprivileged and excluded'" (Grabska, 2006: 290). Katarzyna Grabska, Professor at The International Institute of Social Studies in Rotterdam, has through her research with displacement, migration and development issues in urban spaces (academia, 2019), outlined three steps or dynamics to the process of marginalization: "1) being marginalized legally in terms of access to rights and services by the host government and the singling out (...) by organizations providing assistance; 2) being discriminated against by the host society; and 3) excluding oneself from the host society" (Grabska, 2006: 290). From this description of marginalization, the dwellers at the station may be argued to problematize the concept and the way it portrays the practises constituting their everyday life at the station. To understand this claim, we may look at the three dynamics one by one. The dwellers at the station are limited in terms of access to rights and assistance. They are not being housed, are often denied contracts or insurances in accordance to jobs. Moreover, the government hospitals deny them their right to treatment. Hereto, NGOs at the station single these individuals out to provide them with assistance, even I went to the hospital during one of my observations as the dweller had a bad infection that the hospital denied to help her with until I went with her. Thus, this singles out the dwellers in relation to the general society(ibid. 300). Nevertheless, the other two dynamics are a bit more complex. I saw some displeasure from travellers walking by when the dwellers and I was sitting at the bench at platform two. This could be as a sign of exclusion from the host society. Furthermore, the dwellers are sometimes accused of theft or other crimes at the station. Nevertheless, some observations complicates this view. Once, while one of the dwellers I followed was working with unloading goods from a train, I went down the platform to say hi to

another dweller and her small boy that I knew from before. When I came to 'their' bench the boy was eating with his mother and another man. The man was good at english and explained that he was a friend of the family always bringing some food when he went with the train for work. He came with food everyday for them and played with the small boy before going to work. This was not atypical behaviour at the station. Other dwellers I encountered had become friends with travellers, that would sit with them and drink chai or play with their kids before going about their normal day. This challenges the notion of exclusion and marginalization of dwellers by the host society. In some situations dwellers are being discriminated by the general society but they also have interactions and relations with people in this society. These individuals does not discriminate the dwellers but engage with them. They hereby construct a bridge between these two groups, that works against the claim of marginalization. It is the same complication arising when tending to the third dynamic. One may argue that the dwellers exclude themselves by clustering together. But the dwellers at the station has chosen a space for such a cluster that could not be more exposed and entangled with the general society. The dwellers at the station is in this manner different from the dwellers in the slums, as the slums are often situated in abandoned areas in the outskirts of cities (Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018). The reasons for choosing the station may be multiple nevertheless, it creates an engagement and contact between the dwellers and the general society in Calcutta, that works against the whole idea of excluding oneself from this society. Hence, the dwellers everyday life at the station may be argued not to be grasp fully by the concept of marginalization, as it creates a very clear and simplified division of being a part of the society or being outside it, that is not found within the specific field at hand.

Along this line of thought, Him Chung (2018) argues in an article about rural migrants in China, that the continuity of dwellers in cities begs for some new questions such as how these migrants negotiate their everyday lives from an institutionally disadvantaged position (Chung, 2018: 2246). He further states, in a sort of answer to this question by drawing on Zhang (2001) that migrants must be seen: "(...)as 'active agents' with their own dynamics, desires and identities (...) both being shaped and are shaping themselves during the migration process" (ibid.). Thus, the process of being in a limited and restricted position in society isn't solely something that

happens to urban dwellers, one have to see these people as active agents in this position that *make* alternative routes, jobs and communities within and together with the city. Thus, Chung argues that instead of seeing rural migrants as powerless, displaced and 'losers', they show to have the ability to reshape themselves and direct their own lives in the city (ibid: 2257). Thus, marginalization may be argued to be a problematic concept when trying to grasp this type of urban dwelling, as it simplifies the position of the dwellers in relation to its surroundings to only the excluding processes. On the contrary, what comes forth in the above observations from the station, is a shared space structured by interactions more than exclusions by active actors, especially the dwellers. All three actors are active agents interacting through their everyday practises at the station; filling up the trains or loading them of, buying and selling snacks at the vendor shops or simple sitting together at the benches waiting. Thus, their practises revolves around shared interests and aims that fuel interaction more than exclusion.

Alternatively, to understand the everyday life generated at the station, Sellar's conceptualization of agency may be of more use. Agency in Sellar's conceptualization is slightly different from others, as it incorporates the assemblage view. He argues that agency has been misunderstood as something ascribed only to humans (Sellar, 2009: 72). Alternatively, he argues that to understand interaction between human and non-human parts as well as interaction in general one have to look at the general definition of agency, which simply refers to "(...)the capacity for purposeful action" (ibid.). By this general definition and in compliance with Assemblage Thinking, he argues that purposeful action as a capacity thus only can be elicited through relation (ibid.). Agency must hereby be understood as a capacity not related to the human or the non-human object, but to the relation in which they create something. As an example the bench at the platform is thus only a bench before it interacts with the dweller and are transformed to a bench *and* a home. Nevertheless, the dweller cannot create this without the bench, thus the agency is only ecilited when the two interact and produce a home together. Thus, the structures and livelihoods at the station can be argued to be better understood in terms of such relational agency than in terms of marginalization. What construct everyday life at the station is thus the presence of non-human objects such as benches, roofs and platforms and humans such as travellers,

station workers and dwellers and their relational agency. Through purposeful action these actors together create homes and relations at the station, that further support and structures the everyday life and livelihood of the dwellers there. In addition to this, in Wayne Shand's study of street youth in sub-saharan cities, he argues that the collection and transformation of waste materials is a primary livelihood and survival strategy for young people and adults in poverty across the global South (Shand, 2018: 262). Accordingly, at Sealdah Station certain materials such as cartoon boxes and plastics are being transformed as a part of the dwellers livelihood and survival strategy. These transformation are made by the interaction between the dwellers and their environment. Thus, Colin McFarlane (2011) argues that people "(...)learn urban space by seeing not just materials, but the possibilities of those materials through particular contexts" (Mcfarlane, 2011:38 in Shand, 2018: 262). This is further argued by Assemblage Theory where it states that the capacity of any assemblage is only limited by its possible interactions (Delanda, 2006 in Sellar, 2011: 69). The context of needing a home, may hereby be argued to make the dwellers see opportunities and possible interactions within the station not obvious to others, but through such interaction expands the capacity of the station to become a home for them. Hence, the way they learn and experience the station may be different than the travellers at the station. Nevertheless, the two groups seem to interact and generate relations that support the everyday life of dwellers at the station by providing them with food, company and friendships.

Concluding Remarks

The station may be viewed as an assemblage of customers, workers and dwellers acting within this space which has generated the appearance of certain material components such as trains, benches and vendors to the assembly. The dwellers may in this regard be seen as a destabilizing component that has opened up the station to have the dual function of both supporting transportation of people and goods *and* supporting the everyday life of dwellers occupying the station.

Groups such as the dwellers at the station are often characterized by being outside the general society and having restricted rights and privileges and are thus claimed to be marginalized. Nevertheless, the dwellers at the station may be argued not to be fully grasped by the concept of marginalization, as it creates a clear and simplified division of being a part of the society or being outside this, that is not found in the specific field at hand. Accordingly, Sellar's conceptualization of agency may be more suitable for conceptualizing the practises and structures of everyday life seen at the station. Sellar argue, that agency must be understood as a capacity not related to the human or the non-human object, but to the relation in which they create something, described as purposeful action. Thus, through such purposeful action the dwellers in relation to the materialities present at the station together transform these to create homes at benches on the different platforms and more over relations with customers that support the dwellers everyday life. The space may hereby be understood as a shared space characterized by interactions more than exclusions.

Networks, Exchanges and Informal Economies

The interactions at the station between the three groups generate specific interpersonal networks, which may be argued to constitute a second scale of producing parts to the space of the station that further influence and support the everyday life of dwellers there. These will be described in the following, highlighting specific relations and networks linked to exchanges and small jobs at the station. These networks will be examined and elaborated on by including other studies of networks of exchange and informal economies set forth by Caroline Wanjiku Kihato (2011) and Gengzhi Huang, Hong-ou Zhang and Desheng Xue (2017). The section shows how interactions at the station creates networks between the dwellers and other actors at the station, whereby they through everyday practises of exchanges and informal economies provides jobs and relations that all included parts gain from, especially the dwellers.

Sujoy, another dweller at platform two, stays with a family of three; a mother, a father and a baby boy. He sleeps at a bench here with them, as a sort of uncle to the family. It is also at this

platform that he works. Sujoy has different small jobs here; his primary job is to go around with a wagon he gets in the morning from a train manager and help out with unloading the goods from the trains. But during the day Sujoy further interact with vendors along the platform and help them out by collecting spices and chai at Sealdah Market located next to the station. Sometimes money is exchanged between them, but in a weird unorderly system I never got the hang of. Another dweller, the teenage boy I followed, helps out in a small phone shop down at the market, getting a bit of money and food to take their broken telephones to some other shop to get fixed. The system of exchanges hereto was as blurred as with Sujoy.

Nevertheless, the day I followed Sujoy he was attending all these small jobs, and all at ones. When it was time for lunch we went to one of the small vendors, and I choose what I wanted. We did not pay, the vendor just nodded at Sujoy like this was a part of his benefits for helping the vendor. Suddenly while we ate, a train manager yelled at him that a train was coming, and he got up and instantly took the wagon and was ready to unload what the train was bringing.

Interactions at the station hereby seem to have created networks for the dwellers that offers them jobs at the station. Various people engage with the dwellers for assistance and company such as travellers, vendors and even the train managers. These individuals have needs that the dwellers can cover and in this way networks between the different parts are formed. The pictures illustrate some of the jobs at the station that these interactions and relations has produced, which includes luggage and goods carriers, shoe polishers, vendors and runners for the vendors:

Different jobs and businesses presented are present at the station, which the dwellers are either directly or indirectly connected to. Many dwellers rent wagons and earn money by helping with carrying goods from the trains. Other set up small shoe polisher shops, which the travellers use to look smart at their jobs. Other, like Sujoy, helps out the vendors at the platforms and some even have their own little foodstore at the platforms serving both the travellers and dwellers at the station. These relations established at the station may be argued to be divided into two networks; One network is established to support the station as a place for travel, the intended function of the space. The other revolves around the dwellers livelihood at the station, where it helps to uphold and support this livelihood. These two networks are though extremely interconnected, as the financial part of the dwellers livelihood as well as the physicalities of their homes are made for and by the existence of customers taking the trains and the dwellers likewise uphold facilities such as baggage carriers and food vendors for the customers. The two networks hereby constantly fuel and interact with each other.

In a study by Caroline Wanjiku Kihato (2011) on everyday life of migrant women in Johannesburg, she argues that the same sort of networks is generated there. Kihato conceptualises this as everyday practices of exchange, and further argues that it shows how urban living are produced and structured by multiple regimes of authority and moral codes and social norms, creating new urban social orders (Kihato, 2011: 356). The networks constituted at Sealdah Station may hereby be argued to be established by such everyday practises of exchange. The space of the station has jobs and needs which creates an opening for the dwellers to offer their workforce to cover these needs in exchange for things such as money and food that in turn cover their needs in relation to uphold a livelihood. These practise of exchange overtime becomes integrated networks at the station with specific moral codes and orders. These codes and orders was complex and tricky to pinpoint, but it was clear that the vendors had some power, as they assured safety for the dwellers, thus to help the vendors often seem to be more important than attending the incoming trains. Hereto, there seemed to be a moral code between the dwellers and vendors, that they do not steal from each other but are sort of allies at the station. The dwellers and their homes are put on displays, whereby they are more vulnerable to theft and

other violations thus, vendors help to safeguard dwellers belongings when they have to work or go other places. The vendors hereby becomes the unofficial eyes and ears at the station creating a safety for the dwellers, why the dwellers have clear rules of not stealing from the vendors to insure this safety. Well-established networks are hereby formed at the station, covering everybody's needs at the station through everyday practises of exchange. These networks may be seen as stabilizing the assembly by forming and sharpening its social order and moral codes.

Moreover, these everyday practices of exchange has led to the establishment of different types of small informal businesses and economies at the station. Vendors is a clear example of such an informal economy but also shoe polisher shops flourishes at the station, generated by the large number of people using the station to go to work and creative thinking by dwellers. Accordingly, street vending is argued to have become a remarkable part of informal economies generally in contemporary cities in the Global South (Brown et al., 2010; Crossa, 2016 in Huang et al., 2017: 2744). Different circumstances, such as unemployment and deteriorated working conditions makes people seek street vending to optimize their livelihood (Huang et al., 2017: 2758). Thus, street vending and other small informal business work as a creative way of gaining more autonomy and flexibility in relation to insuring one's livelihood. These informal economies are formed at the station either by dwellers or other poor, that can relate to the dwellers, as they have the same aim and interests at heart - securing their livelihood with the help of the space generate at the station. Thus, the informal economies create jobs and relations that benefits all parts present at the station, and mutually uphold and support each others livelihoods.

Concluding Remarks

Interactions at the station seem to have created networks for the dwellers that offers them jobs at the station. The space of the station has jobs and needs which creates an opening for the dwellers to offer their workforce to cover these needs in exchange for things such as money and food that in turn supports their livelihood. Kihato conceptualises this as everyday practices of exchange, and further argues that it shows how urban living are produced and structured by multiple

regimes of authority and moral codes and social norms (Kihato, 2011: 356). Hence, well-established networks are formed and form the station. Moreover, these everyday practise of exchange has led to the establishment of different types of small informal businesses and economies at the station such as vendors and shoe polisher shops. these informal economies are formed either by dwellers or other poor that can relate to the dwellers and therefore have same aim and interest at heart - securing their livelihood with the help of the space generate at the station. Thus, these informal economies create jobs and relations that benefits all parts present at the station, making it a lucrative business model further supporting the dwellers livelihood.

Informality

The last part of the analysis seek to examine the institutional system running the station. This constitute a third scale, which is argued to be produced through the networks circulating at the station by Assemblage Thinking (Delanda, 2006: 251). Hereby, this section aims to examine what structures and affects the general system of the station, and what sort of governance that rules here. Roy's (2009) conceptualization of informality is outlined and debated in accordance to understand the system that rule at the station. Hereto the general argument of the section is that a complex system is created at the station that may be conceptualized by what Roy calls informality. Nevertheless, in line with Assemblage Thinking, the system of informality seem to be established interrelational by all actors present the station thus, not simply by a sovereign power as stated by Roy.

Nynia and her family sleeps at the last stairway going into the station. She can sleep here all night, even though not many dwellers are allowed to stay insight the station at night, as they clean the station from 11 pm to 4 am, and it is hereby a rule that the station has to be empty in this time period. Therefore, the majority of the dwellers move out to the parking area in front of the station in this period and sleep here. Nynia does not have to do this, she can sleep a whole night undisturbed. The reason behind this is to be found with Nynia's brother. Her brother lives at the station but moreover he works here as one of the sweepers that clean at night. He is

therefore one of the few that govern this time period where all have to leave the station, but as it is his family, he does not ask them to move. The brother sleeps at the station too, but not with his family, the sweepers have their own rooms inside the station, where they can sleep. Same system showed itself with the young teenage dweller, that I followed at the station. He was allowed to sleep inside the station all night too, just next to the police office. The reason behind this was somewhat troubling. The young teenage boy has an agreement with the police at the station; they have allowed him to sleep alone inside the station all night because this makes it easy for them to find him when they need him for a small job he does for them - picking up dead bodies from the tracks when someone commits suicide or dies at the station for other reasons, which proved to be fairly often. This agreement was made and kept despite the fact that all major railway stations in India has an organization called Childline with an office at the stations which are meant to take care of children living at the stations and make sure no one lives alone or gets lost (Childline, 2019; Appendix 2). I interviewed this organization during my field work and got a copy of the regulations and guidelines they have to follow, which clearly states that they have to action if a child is found alone at the station (Appendix 2.). Nevertheless, Childline did not seem to do anything to the fact that this boy sleeped without any parents often, even though their office at the station is just next to where he sleeps.

It may hereby be argued that the relations and networks that are established within the station influence and affect the general system and governance of the station by bending the rules and regulations so it fits the interests and purposes of these networks. The observations show how the dwellers has become an integrated part of the maintenance and daily work at the station in such a manner, that rules are bended to forthcome these everyday practises of exchange. My interview with the station manager, further may be argued to show that these agreements and networks at the station may be well known to him and thus tricky to account for in relation to the questions put forth in the interview. Thus, it seem that the governance of the station works in the same lines as the networks; multiple authorities generate and determines the rules and orders at the station in accordance with their interest to support needs and exchanges at the station.

The governance at Sealdah Station can hereto be argued to be seen as an example of what Roy calls the idiom of urbanization in India (Roy, 2009: 80). She states that the key feature of this idiom is informality (ibid.). Thus, she argues that when talking about the planning and governance of indian cities one can not understand this as a management of growth, instead it has to be understood as the management of resources through dynamic processes of informality. With the term informality Roy means a state of deregulation where especially the ownership, use and purpose of land cannot be seen as fixed by prescribed regulations and laws, infact here the law has to be rendered open-ended, a subject to multiple interpretations and interests (ibid.). Hereby, one have to understand the rules and the governance by its management of resource. The dwellers seem to be a great resource at the station, hence the rules and governance at the station is aimed at controlling but also securing this resource. Rules and guidelines at the station forbidding people to sleep at the station or to ensure children's safety thus, are interpret with this interest in mind.

Thereby, this view challenges the standard dichotomy of the two sectors, formal and informal, by suggesting that informality is not a separate sector but rather a series of transactions connecting different economies and spaces to one another (Roy, 2005: 148). Informality is hereby not something separate from the sovereign power of a state, but may be viewed as a apparatus within sovereignty suspending its rules and laws: "The planning and legal apparatus of the state has the power to determine when to enact this suspension, to determine what is informal and what is not, and to determine which forms of informality will thrive and which will disappear" (ibid: 149). The thriving informalities at the station all seem to have the same in common, namely that they support the networks and interactions at the station that uphold the daily system that run the station. This corresponds with Roy's argument that:

> "(...) there is an important distinction between unregulated systems and those that are deregulated. Deregulation indicates a calculated informality, one that involves purposive action and planning, and one where the seeming withdrawal of regulatory power creates a logic of resource allocation, accumulation, and authority " (Roy, 2009: 83)

Thus this sort of deregulated systems is not a sign of a breakdown of control or uncontrollable situations, it is a calculated informality chosen for the opportunities that it brings with it. Accordingly, Roy argues that the economic zones made in the outskirts of Calcutta is a clear example of this idiom of the indian governance (Roy, 2009). She claims that this informality creates a city "(...) where access to resources is acquired through various associational forms but where these associations also require obedience, tribute, contribution and can thus be a 'claustrophobic game'" (Simone, 2004: 219 in Roy, 2009: 85).

It can thus be discuss if the networks and governance at Sealdah Station is a 'claustrophobic game' and for who. Roy examines the governance of indian cities and thereby is highly focused on the Indian state and sovereign power and how it control and manage its cities. Alternatively, what has revealed itself when examining the station is that the system that run the station is linked and produced interelational by multiple actors and interests at the station. It hereby does not portray a system controlled and run solely by a sovereign power. Thus, Roy's way of looking at power and production may seem to clash with the relation lens adapted in this analysis inspired by assemblage thinking, even though her concept of informality highlights some sort of relational interaction between state and resources. Thus, the claustrophobia she claims informality may create, may include all participants acting with in the station, also the institutions meant to govern the station, such as the police and Childline. Nevertheless, this does not seem to be the case at the station. The system of informality at the station seems to be well-established and agreed by all parts. This does not mean that this is completely stable assembly, not open to any change, but merely that the different networks at the moment seem to work in compliance with each other as they all benefit from this corporation.

Concluding Remarks

In the three above sections, the structures underpinning the everyday life of urban dwellers living at the second biggest railway station in Calcutta have been analyzed.

In this regard, the station may be viewed as an assemblage of customers, workers and dwellers acting within this space which has generated the appearance of certain material components such as trains, benches and vendors to the assembly. The dwellers hereto constitute a destabilizing factor that has opened up the station to have the dual function of both supporting transportation of people and goods *and* supporting the everyday life of dwellers occupying the station. Through agency, conceptualized as purposeful action, the dwellers and the materialities present at the station, has generated homes at benches and moreover establish relations with the other actors providing the dwellers with food and company. Furthermore, these interactions at the station have created networks that offers the dwellers jobs at the station. Kihato conceptualises such networks as everyday practices of exchange. Hence, well-established networks are formed at the station, as they cover everybody's needs at the station. Moreover, these everyday practise of exchange has led to the establishment of different types of small informal businesses that further supports the dwellers livelihood by offering them small jobs, favours, food or a business of their own.

Thus to sum up, the materiality and people acting within the station offer the dwellers a space where they through purposeful action and especially interaction create and transform elements of the space to secure structure their livelihood. Benches are transformed to assure them dry shelters to call home and vendors offer them a source of food and money in exchange for a helping hand and company. These everyday practises and networks of exchange has affected the generally system and governance of the station. The system is hereby run by a form of informality as described by Roy, that bend the rules and regulations of the station to insure the dwellers wellbeing as they constitute a vital resource for the general maintenance of the station. The space of the station may thereby be characterized as shared space by multiple and diverse actors and components that are furthermore governed by a well-established system of informality that bend and interpret the rules to forthcome the needs of dwellers as they have become a helpful component to the station.

ANALYTICAL DISCUSSION

The space of Sealdah Railway Station has now been examined and conceptualized in the above. Hereto the following chapter aims at zooming out again from the station and discuss what the analytical findings may highlight about urban spaces in Calcutta and furthermore how this correlate with conventional notions of marginalized spaces. Hence, the following seek to discuss the analytical findings in relation to other academic studies on the subject. The discussion hereby makes a full circle, going back to the field of urban studies, that this thesis seek to contribute to and accordingly discuss this contribution.

The first question hereby becomes; What does the analysis say about Calcutta city and its relation to urban dwellers that reside in public spaces around the city? The analysis shows, that the relation between the station and the dwellers go both ways - the station determines the structures and physicalities that the dwellers move within nevertheless the capacity and use of these physicalities and structures is challenged and changed by the presence of dwellers, thus transforming them. One may look at the station as a space of dwelling created interrelational between the space and the dwellers that occupy and engage with it. Furthermore, the analysis shows how their homes and livelihoods are created not only by the limitations and restriction they face as homeless and often undocumented, but also by interactions and opportunities that present itself in this particular space. Thus, the dwellers at the station provides a perspective on dwelling in the city where they are a part of both society and the economic market and hereby does not figure as a floating cluster of undefined and overlooked individuals. A perspective reappearing when glancing over the rest of the city. Slums in Calcutta are located in industrial hotspots around the city, where most of the residents are working with recycling of waste materials. Some collect these materials themselves, but often it is big trucks from industrial companies that work together with the urban slum residents, dropping the materials off and picking them up again when they have been sorted. Thus, another creative informal economy is created between dwellers and surrounding actors. This may hereby be argued to be an expression of urban dwellers in Calcutta generally being an integrated part of economic structures within the city. Another reappearing image when zooming out from the station to the rest of the city, is the transformation of public space to incorporate new functions and practises often ascribed to

private spaces such as households. This include features such as a booming amount of public urinals and public bathing spots all over the city. The reasoning behind the many public water spots around the city is unknown, nevertheless it is part of the structure of the city intentionally or unintentionally incorporating the streets into people's everyday lives and practises thus, changing streets from being somewhat anonymous spaces to become meeting spot and melting pots for the city's various inhabitants:

Public spaces in Calcutta hereby share features correlating with the structures seen at the station, characterized by integrating and supporting urban dwellers presence and everyday needs.

Public spaces of dwelling in Calcutta, may in this regard be argued to slightly differentiate from previous studies of marginalized urban spaces. As aforementioned, regional literature on the subject, have used slums as clear illustrations of urban marginalization (Roy, 2011; Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018). These are described as closed enclaves, a cluster of floating people staying in informal settlements around the city because of an unsatisfactory integration by the government (Turok & Borel-Saladin, 2018:769). They may be rural migrants seeking their luck in the city or urban poor pushed aside in the new economic zones of Calcutta to make room for development. Nevertheless, these urban dwellers are argued to have difficulties assimilating or even integrating into the society surrounding them, thus ending up living in these closed enclaves around the city. A strong image of life in the margins is thus portrayed. The nature of life in these margins is debate. Some argue they are 'cul-de-sac', while others alternatively have argued that the clusters may provide connections and resources for the dwellers to construct their own

survival strategy within the cities (ibid.). A debate argued to create two poles, but is this two opposing poles or may they be argued to be grounded in the same understanding of the nature and structure of informal clusters and settlements? In this debate, it may be argued that clusters are generally characterized in terms of isolation and separation from the society surrounding them. The debate is hereby more a discussion about this isolation being solely bad for the dwellers or not. It is this conventional notion of the nature of urban clusters, that the analytical findings challenge. They show how dwellers livelihood strategies and everyday practises may include the general society and even depend on it. The analysis further shows, step by step how interrelated and complex the production of any space is by multiple actors, hence challenging the simplified notion that dwellers alone construct their own survival and livelihood strategies. What comes clear by the analysis, is that dwellers possibilities and agency only are fulfilled and evident, when it is manifested by interactions with others, this being human or non-human components. It may thus be discussed if these previous studies overemphasize the exclusional structures of being homeless to such an extent that they overlook other important structures that underpin dwellers. The thesis at hand, provide and alternative picture of other structures that underpin dwelling, structures deeply embedded and generated by the society surrounding the dwellers.

The notion of urban dwellers as isolated and apart of the general society is furthermore articulated in studies of western cities using concepts such as criminalization, marginalization and sanitization when talking about spaces of dwelling and how they are handled by governments (Amster 2003). Hence, Roy argues that: "the study of cities is today marked by a paradox: much of the urban growth of the 21st century is taking place in the developing world, but many of the theories of how cities function remain rooted in the developed world" (Roy, 2005: 147). The thesis at hand may hereby be said to illustrate this paradox, challenging these theories rooted in the developed world with an alternative way of examining and understanding urban dwellers in cities by using Assemblage Thinking and through this show how government institutions may handle dwellers differently and even support these livelihoods. It can hereby be discussed if urban dwelling in the Global South is different from dwelling in western cities. More

ethnographic accounts of dwelling in cities in the Global South is thus needed, to understand this particular dwelling and how it may differentiate from that of western cities. Nevertheless, what may be implied from the thesis at hand, is that Calcutta is structured and governed by softer forms of regulation than seen in most western cities. It can thus be discussed how this deregulated system has been established, nevertheless this deregulated system changes the way dwellers are positioned and act within the city.

Assemblage Thinking has hereby helped to deconstruct these conventional notions of urban dwelling and hereby see how dwellers may be an integrated part of society and city structures. It is thus important to remember that ss any theoretical frame, Assemblage Thinking highlights some aspects of urban dwelling at the cost of others. Nevertheless, Assemblage Thinking may be said to generate an interesting new perspective to urban dwelling that deconstruct the conventional notions and challenge the grounds for such notions. Thus, it provides another way of understanding and looking at urban spaces of dwelling, that focuses on the relations instead of separations between dwellers and citizens. This change of perspective further may be argued to turn the relation around and ask other questions in the search of unfolding the nature of urban dwelling such as; How do dwellers interplay in the construction of cities and city governance? Thus, the analytical findings spears a discussion about the function and effect of clusters within cities, grounded in an interrelational view on urban dwelling that sees dwellers as a producing actor and not only as a product of urban governance. The analytical findings hereto claim, that urban dwellers in Calcutta are a producing part of shaping the city to include and integrate urban dwelling.

CONCLUSION

On the grounds of puzzling facts and practises encountered in Calcutta city in relation to urban dwellers sleeping rough in the city, the aim of the thesis at hand has been to examine what underpin the livelihood of people living in public spaces in Calcutta, and how this may challenge conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces.

Urban studies of homeless people living in cities often focuses on the causes and inducers behind people ending up as urban dwellers. There are the often debated reasons such as war, poverty and climate change, but in relation to Calcutta issues such as development-induced displacement and rural-urban migration has been highlighted as major catalysts. Other literature highlights slums, as a product of these displacement factors. In this literature two poles have been created when debating the nature of such urban informal settlements; the first one argue that slums are a sign of dwellers ability to create networks and resources that help them to form a survival strategy in the city. The latter, claim that slums constitute end-points for dwellers holding them in a position with only the lowest paid jobs and in a harsh and vulnerable environment isolated from the general society surrounding them.

Nevertheless, through eight weeks of fieldwork at Sealdah Railway Station, the thesis at hand provides an ethnographic account of dwellers everyday life, that contributes with a new perspective with the help of Assemblage Thinking. The analysis shows how the the station can be viewed as an assemblage of customers, workers and dwellers acting within this space which in turn generate certain material components such as trains, benches and vendors to the assembly. Through agency, conceptualized by Sellar as purposeful action, the dwellers interact with the materialities present at the station as well as the customers and vendors, whereby benches as homes and relations providing food and safety is generated. Thus, these dwellers livelihood is structured by interaction with surrounding actors which generates a dual function of the space of the station, both supporting transportation of people and goods *and* supporting the everyday life of dwellers occupying the station. Furthermore, these interactions at the station have created networks that offer the dwellers jobs at the station. Kihato conceptualises such networks as everyday practices of exchange, as they work to mutual cover everyone's needs; dwellers help vendors with getting supplies and the vendors give food and protection in exchange. Dwellers let customers play with their children, the costumers give food in exchange. Everyday exchanges like these, generate networks that insures the livelihood of dwellers at the station. The general governance and regulation of the station is hereto argued to be affected by

these networks of exchanges, as rules are bended to insure and uphold such networks. Roy conceptualizes such governance under the term informality, and claim that this is a key feature indian governance focused on managing resources. Thus, the dwellers may be seen as vital resource at the station, whereby the governance of the station seek to control but likewise insure this resource by making agreements and bending rules.

What may hereby be claimed to underpin the livelihoods of dwellers at the station as a public space of dwelling in Calcutta, is a shared space that has integrated the dwellers in its everyday practises to such an extent that the station supports the livelihood of dwellers by giving them shelter, food, jobs and personal relations that provides them with safety and company. The same features are evident when zooming out from the station, hereby challenge the conventional notions that urban dwellers are isolated enclaves marginalized and discriminated by the general society. Such notions may be accused of overemphasizing the exclusional aspects of urban dwelling and hereby overlooking other important structures that underpin dwelling in cities. Thus it is discussed if such notions are rooted in the developed world and that there hereby seems to be a need of more ethnographic accounts of urban dwelling in the Global South, to understand the more soft regulations structures that shape dwelling in these parts. Thus, the thesis at hand challenge the conventional notions of urban marginalized spaces, by claiming that these may be features of the western world overemphasizing exclusional structures and hereby not fully grasping the complex and interrelated nature of urban dwelling in Calcutta.

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