Informalizing and privatizing social reproduction: The case of waste collection services in Cape Town, South Africa

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This paper focuses on waste collection strategies in Black townships of Cape Town, South Africa during the first phase of local government restructuring (1997-2001). Despite the "one city, one tax base" aspirations of the antiapartheid struggle (see Robinson, 1998), in 1996, shortly after the political transition, the postapartheid government enthusiastically adopted the neoliberal GEAR policies that have led to continued stratification of urban services and growing inequalities[1] (Terreblanche, 2002; McDonald and Smith, 2004; Bond, 2000; Miraftab, 2004; Cheru, 2001). The community-based and women-only strategies used by the Cape Town local government in this period exemplify the interwoven nature of labor in the realms of production and reproduction[2] and how the interests of capitalism are served by dominations established through race and gender.

This paper examines the Cape Town municipality's treatment of waste collection services in black townships as an example of a neoliberalizing local government providing items of collective consumption:[3] to wit, a municipal government restructured as a market actor and pressured by financial constraints to recover the costs of expanding municipal services to a new constituency (the newly incorporated black townships). The case study reveals two aspects of local government's provisioning social reproduction within a neoliberal policy framework: (1) A public good, and hence presumably a public responsibility, is privatized by being moved both to private sector subcontractors (in this case, Tedcor Ltd.) and to the private sphere of households and women's domestic responsibilities (in this case, women-only Masicoce and volunteer groups). (2) The privatizing local government participates in labor flexibilization for providing public services. Most research has examined labor flexibilization and informalization in production and

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[1] The studies on poverty and inequality reveal that these inequalities have indeed grown in the last decade. The share of income for the poorest 40 percent of households, for example, has steadily declined from 1991 to 2001; from 1996 to 2001 alone the decline was at a rate of -3 percent. For the households with the highest 20 percent of income, however, the share of income grew from 71.8 percent in 1991 to 72.2 percent in 2001 (Terreblanche, 2002: 33).

[2] Here reproduction is defined as activities at both the household and the state levels that maintain "the labor force through provision of basic needs and through broader processes of social reproduction" (Klak and Lawson, 1990: 305). In stressing the links between production and reproduction, Bakker and Gill (2003: 22) state the importance of seeing social reproduction as both a productive potential and a condition of existence for the expanded reproduction of capital and social formation—not simply equate reproduction with care economy, important as that is.

[3] Castells (1983) defines collective consumption as the social processes in consumption of the services produced and managed collectively. Production of collective consumption items—i.e., public services— is necessary to reproduction of labor power and/or to the reproduction of social relations.

profit-maximizing behavior of private sector companies[4] or the income-generating strategies of the poor; this paper, however, focuses on social reproduction and the behavior of the public sector.

By revealing the role of the local government in the privatization and informalization of social reproduction, the paper also sheds light on the fluidity of realms constructed as production and reproduction. In this case a municipal government, whose constitutional laws make access to municipal services a public responsibility and citizenship right, met the pressure to recover operating costs from service fees by associating those services with the domestic sphere and justifying the use of women's unpaid work through volunteer or other community-based groups. The paper argues that this case exposes the fallacy in binary constructs of production/reproduction public/private and underlines their contested social construction.

The paper relies on both secondary information and the field information obtained in Cape Town in the summers of 2001 and 2002.[5] The first-hand information comprises a series of open-ended and semistructured interviews with the city officials at the unicity (the term used for unified municipality), private company operators, and individuals contracted for waste removal in the informal sector townships, in addition to the community members of various waste collection schemes described here. An important secondary source of information is an earlier investigation by the International Labor Research and Information Group (ILRIG) into partnership schemes for waste removal in Khayelitsha (see Xali, 2001; Qotole and Xali, 2001).

The organization of this paper is as follows: Section I explores the current financial framework of the Cape Town municipal government, as groundwork for understanding the environment that increasingly constrains local governments to operate as private sector entities and to adopt market principles of full cost recovery. Section II outlines the strategies used by the government to serve the black townships of Cape Town during 1997-2001. Those strategies include a public-private partnership hiring nonunionized male and female workers from among the township's unemployed, and two campaigns that rely exclusively on the labor of local women, as volunteers or as casual workers with no job security or employment benefits. Section III, the interpretive framework, stresses the state's privatization and flexibilization of labor for social reproduction. Drawing on feminist scholarship that articulates the relationship among gender, production, and reproduction, this section discusses the gendered nature of global neoliberal policies in both conceptualization and effect, and how those policies privatize the public interest and dissolve the public realm. Section IV tries to answer the salient question of how the South African state, in its postapartheid moment, can justify exploiting impoverished women's casual and unpaid labor. In that regard, the section discusses the significance of (1) the patriarchal gender values that ascribe "municipal housekeeping" to

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[4] The Confederation of Employers of South Africa (COFESA) offers a good example of industries' labor flexibilization practices. COFESA "advises employers on restructuring their production such that employment contracts are converted into service contracts, and employees become independent contractors. The firm is then run as a network of contractors. While the activities of COFESA and similar organizations are aimed mainly at bypassing minimum standards labor legislation and collective bargaining agreements, the organization has been able to use arguments of empowerment and microenterprise development to justify its activities. The organization claims to have restructured employment contracts in over 13,000 companies, thereby creating a network of over 700,000 'independent contractors,' who were previously employees in the restructured companies" (Valodia, 2001: 877, citing Jones, 1999).

[5] The interviews for this project were conducted in the summer of 2001 by the author and were followed up by her student assistant, Nicole Lamers, in the summer of 2002.

women's "motherly" and moral duty; and (2) the rhetoric of voluntarism and black empowerment that misconstrues labor as skills training. The concluding section stresses the gendered nature of the neoliberal state's privatization agenda for public services, in its resilience on the free and casual labor of women. Also noted is the way in which the public sector actively participates in labor flexibilization, and how the distinctions between established public/private, production/reproduction are subservient to the interests of capital accumulation.

I. CASE STUDY

Local Government's Financial Environment

Postapartheid South Africa set out to integrate segregated areas and reduce the disparities in access to urban services and decision making through restructurings of government and basic services. Across the nation, local governments were established to decentralize government decision making and give localities more responsibilities. In the Cape Town metropolitan area, the process had two phases. In the first phase (1995/96–2000), administrative units were redemarcated to form a reduced number of local governments spanning the racialized areas; the second phase (2000 to present) created one municipal government (the unicity), which unified all the local governments in Cape Town into a single financial unit with a common system of taxation and one budgetary environment. To facilitate direct input on development by community groups through the local government, Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) were called for; Reconstruction and Development Program Forums (RDP forums) were also created in every community and township for community participation and communal decision making. Local governments were to work closely with RDP forums to come up with IDPs setting development priorities for their communities.

Subsequently, however, local governments have found themselves with only a limited ability to fulfill the IDPs and to deliver basic shelter and services to the poor. The reasons are clear: the government restructuring increased the mandate of local municipalities; yet, according to the Financial and Fiscal Commission in 2001, the amounts of intergovernmental grants from the central to the local levels fell in real terms to 85 percent less than those in 1991 (ILRIG, 2001: 26). With so little intergovernmental transfer of funds (4 percent) (Coopoo, 2000: 6), 90 percent of the unicity's budget comes from local revenues. Those revenues include the sale of bulk services such as water, sanitation, and electricity (85 percent) and, to a limited extent, property rates and levies (Watson, 2002: 77, citing Ministry of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, 1998).

Thus since 1994 local governments have been caught between a rock and a hard place, working with limited budgets, yet responsible for enlarged constituencies. To manage, local governments restructured their delivery of municipal services. One strategy was "ring fencing" the budgets for specific services, meaning that each service had to recover its own cost. Another strategy was to shift the provision of public services to the private sector; that was facilitated by the Municipal Infrastructure Investment Unit

(MIIU), based at the Development Bank of South Africa with funding from international donors and the central government. MIIU promotes the outsourcing of municipal services and helps municipalities form partnerships with private companies.[6]

Unicity's Waste Collection Strategies

Today the Cape Town unicity covers an extended area with a population of over 3.5 million. A combination of municipal (i.e., council) and private or community-based (i.e., noncouncil) waste collection services covers this population's almost 832,000 service points. Service ranges from full coverage by the municipality and/or private companies regularly collecting waste at each residence, to the rudimentary service in which the municipality or private companies collect waste periodically at communal skips. In between those levels of services are several community-based schemes in which both private companies and residents collect and sometimes also remove waste; those schemes are found particularly in the areas newly incorporated into the unicity's service responsibility, namely black townships and informal settlements.

The noble rationale for restructuring the waste collection services in Cape Town was to ensure service to all areas of the city, including the newly incorporated black townships and those informal areas that had receive(d) no or minimal services. The city officials and planners involved in formulating these strategies were interviewed for this research and for the most part had the interest of the communities in mind. The outcome, I argue, nevertheless failed their expectations in that it promoted not only labor casualization, but also differing levels of services that reproduce apartheid's spatialized hierarchies. Elsewhere, I substantiate this assertion and depict the present structure of waste collection services for Cape Town residents; I refer readers to that article for full documentation (Miraftab, 2004).

This paper examines only the early phase of the waste services restructuring (1997–2001), and a series of pilot projects that were the basis for the unicity's official schemes adopted in 2001. In those projects the use of gendered discourse justified treatment of waste collection as an activity belonging to the realm of social reproduction performed by the unpaid or low-paid labor of women. That, I argue, constituted the direct participation of the state in labor flexibilization and blurred the distinction between the public and private sectors.

During the study's time frame, three community-based waste collection strategies were operating in recently incorporated townships. They are discussed below: a partnership scheme (Tedcor) that embraced the private sector; the community and the municipality; and two women-only strategies that the unicity called campaigns (Masicoce and volunteer groups).

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[6] Established in 1998, MIIU in its first three years launched partnerships with a value of over ZAR 5.6 billion. At the 1998 exchange rate this equals a bit less than one billion U.S. dollars. For more on MIIU, see their website at **http://www.miiu.org.za/**

Partnership Scheme

The partnership scheme was implemented in Cape Town in 1997. The local authorities subcontracted a private company (Billy Hattingh Co.—BH later sold to The Entrepreneurial Development Corporation—Tedcor) to perform garbage collection. BH in turn subcontracted unemployed members of the local community, referred to as local entrepreneurs, who were responsible for daily management of the scheme. Entrepreneurs supervised waste collection by local laborers and had valid driving licenses to operate the garbage trucks and carry waste to designated dumpsites. The local laborers, too, were recruited amongst unemployed members of the community. Their work consisted of collecting and removing waste from the contracted area's 50,000 service points (approximately 300 to 700 shacks and dwellings per worker, per week), sweeping streets and sidewalks and collecting illegal dumping from public spaces. At the time of the fieldwork, under this scheme in Khayelitsha, 9 jobs were created for entrepreneurs (seven men and two women), and 100 jobs were created for local laborers (split male and female). BH workers, with five-year contracts at the official minimum wage of South African rands (ZAR) 1,300,[7] earned less than two-thirds of the wages for formal municipal workers.[8]

Masicoce, or One-Person Contract (OPC)

This is one of the two women-only, community-based waste collection strategies of interest here. Masicoce, or one-person contracts, started in Cape Town in 1997 originally as the Clean and Green project, initiated under the auspices of Keep South Africa Beautiful (KSAB)[9] and promoted by an NGO called The Fairest Cape.[10] During 2000–2001, before local governments' unification and as part of a larger campaign to promote voluntarism and community-based action, the Clean and Green project was taken over by the Cape Town municipality and changed its name to Masicoce ("Let's clean up!" in the Xhosa language). Masicoce, in its original formulations as Clean and Green and as one-person contracts (1997–2000 and 2000–2001) involved women only. The scheme used one contractor (hence its name) within the community to oversee the recruitment, firing, and performance of local unemployed women. For the 2000–2001 period, the scheme hired 105 women (one for every 350 dwellings) full time, but on nonrenewable, one-year contracts with no benefits, at a fixed monthly wage of ZAR 800 (not quite one-third of what formal municipal employees received). They were provided with brooms and plastic bags, and carried the bagged public waste to specific points for deposit into skips. However, the periodic removal of the skips to the dumpsite by other contracted private companies often lapsed, leaving workers with the additional burden of rebagging trash that had built up around the overflowed skips and been torn by animals.

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[7] Based on exchange rates of July 2002, this equals approximately U.S.$130.

[8] Monthly wages of Tedor workers are about ZAR 1,300 (U.S. $130), versus those of ZAR 2,200 (U.S. $220) for unionized municipal workers. Based on the exchange rates of July 2002.

[9] This movement had been inspired by the Keep America Beautiful movement. In South Africa, as a movement to promote voluntarism, KSAB has operated in other regions of the country since 1995.

[10] It was funded by South African breweries (supplying plastic bags and brooms) and also by the Public Works Department, which at the time was in charge of the waste collection services for the newly integrated areas.

Volunteer Women's Group

The second women-only strategy operating in black townships of Cape Town was comprised of volunteer groups. These groups were promoted by local councilors as part of a larger campaign launched in 2000, the Mess Action Campaign (MAC)—a play on the famed ANC Mass Action Campaign during the years of antiapartheid struggle—to encourage voluntarism and community-based action.[11] The volunteer women sweep the streets and collect trash from public spaces. These groups work mostly in areas of the city with no services other than periodic removal of waste from communal skips. For the women volunteers, incentives vary from improved hygiene of the neighborhood streets and protection of their children from, e.g., broken glass, used condoms and syringes, to an enhanced possibility of employment in the paid, community-based waste collection schemes. At the time of the field research (July 2002), about a dozen volunteer groups operated in Cape Town.

Many of the volunteer women interviewed in Khayelitsha, Boys Town, and Onati did not know how the various programs differed. Some were disappointed, to say the least, when given only plastic bags, but no pay. Others were aware of the voluntary nature of their work, yet hoped that it would improve their chances of work with the Masicoce or Tedcor schemes. Hard-working and desperate to find a source of income the women continue their free work, cleaning at home and also in the neighborhood, with hopes that their efforts will eventually lead to "real" jobs. They also have the moral satisfaction that in this way they are carrying out their responsibility of caring for their children and the community they live in.

Volunteer women waste collectors. Cape Town, South Africa. Photo by the author 2001.

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[11] It is important to keep in mind the ways in which local party politics play into both the rhetoric of waste collection and the strategic choices of elected city officials. Western Cape and Cape Town constitute the strongholds of parties in opposition to the ANC. Indeed, in the national elections of both 1994 and 1999, the ANC did not win majorities in this region. In the local government elections of 1999, the Democratic Alliance, the alliance of Democratic Party (DP), and National Party (NP) won the local elections and constituted the city officials. Cost recovery strategies discussed in this paper should not, however, be interpreted as particular to Cape Town or the local opposition parties; the ANC-dominated national government has also spearheaded the neoliberal GEAR agenda within the national government.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Informalizing and Privatizing Social Reproduction

The literature examining neoliberal globalization finds one consequence of it to be the feminization of poverty (Kingfisher, 2002; Mittleman, 2000). Whether called restructuring and liberalization, in the first world, or structural adjustment and debt management in the third world neoliberal policies, by withdrawing public support for basic and social services, have intensified the exploitation of women's labor and have furthered their impoverishment. The policies assume the availability of women's infinite and elastic labor; they bank on women's free and underpaid work at home and in the community to compensate for the erosion of the public realm and the abandonment of its responsibilities.

Socialist feminist scholarship of the 1970s, which demonstrated that domestic work is as much a part of the productive process as manufacturing is, made a significant breakthrough in tracing the connection between housework and waged work for the capitalist processes of accumulation (McDowell, 1991). An emerging scholarship pushes that revelation further through an expanded notion of labor that rearticulates formal-informal linkages (Benería, 2003) and the production-reproduction nexus (Bakker and Gill, 2003) in the context of neliberal globalization.

With a focus on the industrial, postwelfare societies, Bakker and Gill (2003) hypothesize "the contradiction between global accumulation of capital and the provisioning of stable conditions for social reproduction" (ibid.: 27) or what Lawson and Klak (1990) call the current crisis of reproduction. In their compelling analysis Bakker and Gill (2003: 18) argue that the ontology of neoliberalism entails "not only multiple forms of commodification, but also new patterns of exploitation and control of labor in the production-reproduction relationship." Following Bordie (1994), they assert that accumulation of capital in its current crisis has had to reprivatize social reproduction. That process moves social reproduction to the family, where it "naturally belongs," and to the market, where women's traditional caring activities are commodified.

Feminist empirical scholarship in third world cities has contributed to those insights by further opening the category of labor and expanding the scale of analysis that considers the provisioning of social reproduction. Such studies reveal that women's labor force participation through the informal economy is significant for both the national and the global economy (Benería, 2003) and that women's subordinated labor force contributes significantly to the informal production of urban space and the development of urban neighborhoods (Miraftab, 1998; Moser and Peake, 1995). Furthermore, this scholarship shows how the privatization of social reproduction in third-world cities also occurs at the community level through women's informal labor on neighborhood care. As in postwelfare societies the household is the primary site of privatizing social risk and social reproduction (Kingfisher, 2002), so in third-world societies,

neighborhood and community constitute a prominent site for such a process. Women's community care through their affective labor, though it does not generate income, produces relationships that gives them access to services and resources.[12] Women's unpaid community management in unserviced, periurban neighborhoods organizes for self-help provision of the services that are missing (Miraftab, 2001; Chant, 1996; Moser, 1993; 1987). Elsewhere (Miraftab, 1998) I refer to these processes as feminization of informal urban development, whereby in many third-world cities women are "unpaid urbanizers."

Third-world states' budget cuts have eliminated much of the intended development in cities, including infrastructure and such collective consumption items for informal settlements and poor populations as schools, roads, water, shelter, electricity, and health clinics. Similarly, privatization of public services or strategies of cost recovery for them have led to evictions and service cut-offs for the poor (Miraftab and Wills, 2005). Those policies also have expanded the range, scope, and depth of women's labor exploitation in poor households and informal settlements. The absence or inadequacy of urban services in poor neighborhoods has generated additional and new ways of exploiting women's work in social reproduction (Elson, 1992; Benería 1992; Gonzales de la Rocha, 1989). One example, as discussed in this paper, is the unpaid or poorly paid performance of municipal waste collection services by women.

The present study of the waste collection strategies of Cape Town's municipal government contributes to the scholarship articulating the conjuncture of capitalism and patriarchy in dissolving and depoliticizing the public realm (Bakker, 2003; Kingfisher, 2002; Clark, 2004). As the crisis of capital accumulation requires conquering new markets, marketizing new realms, and commodifying new terrains, the state itself comes to think and act like a market actor (Brown, 2003). Cape Town is a case in point: the municipal government cost recovery policies privatize and flexibilize the labor in its collection of waste, a service that is in the interest of the public and hence clearly a public responsibility. But the local government moves that responsibility to private firms and to the private sphere of women's responsibilities for household and community care (Samson, 2005). It further promotes labor flexibilization by disassociating itself from the labor that is providing social reproduction service, and allowing others (subcontracting firms or individuals) to use women's unpaid or underpaid labor in precarious conditions. That process in poor black townships simultaneously depoliticizes the public realm and intensifies women's burden.

Discursive justification plays a critical role in that process, as analyzed below. In failing to deliver public services, an inherently legitimizing activity for a state, the Cape Town municipality seeks legitimacy for that strategy by using the discourses of gender empowerment and job training.

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[12] For example, in low-income townships of Cape Town, South Africa, Pointer and van Heusden 's ethnographic study (2005) reveals that for households whose services have been cut off for nonpayment, women's affective labor in building a strong relationship with the wider community is the key to their access to water and other services they have been deprived of by the municipality's cost recovery policies.

III. ANALYSIS

Gender and Municipal Housekeeping

Conjoined motivations of poverty—dire need for some source or hope of income and "morality," doing something to better things for their children and community as "good women/mothers"—drive the participation of poor women in the low-paid or unpaid programs described in this paper. As breadwinners of their households in an environment with no prospects of jobs, the township women who work in the community-based waste collection schemes are desperate for any source of income, no matter how little or insecure. At the same time, as caregivers of their families, they also are concerned with their children's health and safety. Thus, they join the Masicoce for minimal pay or a volunteer group for no pay in hopes that their work will eventually lead to a "real" job. But they also feel moral satisfaction that they are thus carrying out their responsibility to care for their families and for their neighborhoods. The mingled rationalizations emerge as one group of volunteer women interviewed explain their activity:

> We are the volunteer group, we started from last year [2001], May 7th, we were 150 members at that time. We were supposed to clean the street area….That is our purpose. We are sweeping from 8AM to 3PM, but when it is raining we don't sweep….We are using our own brooms….[the councilor] says to us that he will get us something. He said he will go to the minister to get us something, but he hasn't yet….our streets were so dirty, and we were not working, doing nothing at home—so we decided to collect garbage to clean our area. And there were so many condoms everywhere and the children would play with them and it is so dirty and also there is HIV….we also want something for us….They should give us something—we are hungry. I have no money to pay for food or school for the children—they should give us some work (Interview, 2002).

These women, who spend all day sweeping the streets of their neighborhoods without pay, cling to hope for a job in the future as well as valuing the immediate reward of protecting their children from cutting their bare feet or playing with used condoms. Khayelitsha men, who stand all day along the shoulder of the entrance to the nearby N2 highway, also often end their day without pay but have only the hope of being picked up to sell their labor the next day. Gender values shape the distinction between the women's and the men's days spent without pay in hope of a future job. The gender codes justify time spent in unpaid labor by women as something more than an economic activity in that it contributes to their other area of responsibility, as caregivers. The desperate conditions of poverty combined with gender codes and values are what neoliberalism taps into to finance governments' cost recovery agenda.

Here one may note McGurty's (1998) historical account of waste collection in turn-of-the-century Chicago. In the absence of any acknowledged state role in urban services for the growing city, waste

collection was in the hands of private sector contractors. In response to the great public health risks thus imposed on the city's inhabitants, women through their women's clubs and associations, worked to have waste collection recognized as a responsibility of the state. But to do so they had first to justify their activism in a public realm that the patriarchal society defined as the realm of men. The women used "municipal housekeeping" as the banner under which they asserted their involvement in such an issue as collection of waste. They proclaimed their "womanly duty to provide a clean and nurturing home" and hence their moral obligation to extend "their domestic caretaking into the neighborhood streets"[13] (McGurty, 1998: 27, 30).

A century later, as neoliberal urban policies urge the state's abdication from providing basic services in favor of the private sector doing so, the rhetoric of gender roles is again invoked to justify women's involvement with public waste collection. This time, however, the women are not well-off but poor, and it is not their ability to change policy, but their poorly compensated or even unpaid manual labor that is at issue. And it is the city officials and the private sector contractors undertaking waste collection who are using gender-specific rhetoric—in their own interest.

The significant role of Cape Town women in waste and garbage collection is not coincidental, but entrenched in patriarchal gender relations that extend women's domestic responsibilities to municipal housekeeping. Patriarchal gender ideologies that see chores as solely women's responsibility go on to assign them the cleaning of neighborhood spaces as well, as an extension of women's duties to protect their families from filth and harm (Beall, 1997; Samson, 2003). This ideology when internalized by women lends itself to capitalism's cost-cutting logic, particularly in its neoliberal version, by justifying the underpaid and casual labor of women, e.g., in collecting municipal waste.

This case example exposes the interwoven interests of the neoliberal state and patriarchal gender hierarchies, and how privatizing local governments, as well as private sector firms, furthers the casualization of labor, especially among poor women. Also noteworthy here is the fluidity with which provision of waste collection services shifts between the conceptual realms of production and reproduction. Gender ideologies and beliefs support the shift of activities to provide basic public services from the realm of production, where it is assumed that men perform them for pay, to the realm of reproduction, where it is assumed that they will be performed unpaid by women.

Labor Misconstrued as Skills Training and Empowerment

Claiming kinship with the analogy of "teaching people how to fish rather than giving them a fish," a senior Cape Town official interviewed tries to present these waste collection schemes as opportunities for women's job training, giving them skills to enhance their employment eligibility elsewhere. That official also explicitly disavowed the state's role in the employment of municipal workers: "As local government we do not employ, we empower others to employ people from disadvantaged backgrounds."

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[13] Ironically, women and trash have historically been connected. Research undertaken in different parts of the world underline a strong gender dimension in waste collection strategies (see Assaad, 1996; Beall 1997; Ali et al., 1998; SEWA, 1988).

Using the rhetoric of training enables the municipality to obscure its responsibilities to its formal work force, allowing private individuals or firms to hire casual labor at lower wages for the work of providing municipal services. In none of the three waste collection strategies examined in this paper does the local government recruit, supervise, pay, or dismiss workers. Rather it contracts services to private sector firms such as BH/Tedcor. Those firms then sidestep the formal municipal workers, hiring unemployed local labor at half the cost and double the workload. Or the private firm subcontracts to an individual, e.g., Masicoce, who then hires women for casual labor at less than minimum wage and with no job security. Whether the work is shifted to a private firm (Tedcor), an individual (Masicoce), or a volunteer community group, the Cape Town municipality avoids responsibility for labor conditions in the provision of municipal services. Labor casualization among the unicity's unemployed, disadvantaged population is thus relied on to reduce local government's costs for services.

Furthermore, by calling its Masicoce strategy a "*campaign*," the unicity tries to present it as a voluntary action. That ploy takes away a significant right from the workers. Referring to the scheme as a campaign identifies the women working in it not as *employees* but as *campaign members*. Consequently, their payment cannot be considered a wage to be measured by the criteria of fair labor compensation. The Masicoce women's remuneration at less than the official minimum wage (ZAR 800 versus the ZAR 1,300 official minimum wage)[14] and with no benefits is represented as simply an amount the government offers to support their campaign participation, "job training," and acquisition of "new skills." It therefore escapes assessment as the compensation of labor.

Two main arguments used by city officials to justify the schemes using temporary and below minimum-wage labor are (1) black empowerment, for Tedcor entrepreneurs; and (2) skill training, for Masicoce women. A review of the programs, however, finds only negligible returns for the workers. The Tedcor scheme hires only nine individuals as local entrepreneurs, of whom only two are women. In the Masicoce scheme, the actuality is that sweeping streets and picking up litter develops no new skills leading to other employment. Keeping the Masicoce contracts as temporary does spread the year's income among more women, but the City's argument that it also spreads an opportunity to "acquire skills" is transparently specious. The scheme has no long-term benefit for its women workers. After one year, their incomes and chances for employment are as bleak as before. Moreover, as one of the residents state, the one year with a source of income leaves them in difficulty later because they start credit and financial commitments that soon have to be interrupted.

The examination of these schemes reveals how, within a neoliberal policy framework of cost recovery, municipal governments participate in the flexibilization of labor just as the private sector corporations do. Empowerment of blacks and women, and skill training for disadvantaged township women are the spurious discourses used to legitimize dissolution of the public realm and public responsibilities. Patriarchal gendered interests and neoliberal accumulationist interests conjoin to reduce the public interest to the sum

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[14] ZAR 10 equals U.S.$1, based on exchange rates of July 2002.

of individuals' interests. Any political notion of public realm and common good is stripped of legitimacy (Kamat, 2004).

IV. CONCLUSION

The case analyzed in this paper contributes to several debates within the feminist and urban scholarship. First, the analysis here reveals the gendered nature of neoliberal urban policies of cost recovery, which rely on investing the free labor of women to provide collective consumption items. In the third world the use of female casual labor is part and parcel of the governmental project of minimizing expenditures for basic public services. These policies, gendered in nature, are also gendered in effect: they pile on women's burdens of free labor for home, for community, and then for the municipality.

Second, the analysis shows the resiliency of capital, in managing its crisis of accumulation by shifting capital's burden from public to private and from production to reproduction. The current global neoliberalism restructures the realms of production and reproduction, redefining the responsibilities of the public and private sectors and blurring the distinctions between them. As in the waste collection case studied here, shrinking the public sector's responsibilities ultimately privatizes the public realm. The public sector's responsibility is moved to private subcontracting firms and to the private sphere of household and community care for social reproduction. What emerges clearly is the deception in constructing realms of production/reproduction, public/ private, and informal/formal in polar relations.

Third, the paper demonstrates how labor flexibilization is not unique to the private sector. As local governments increasingly embrace the private sector's mantra of cost recovery and treat their citizens as no more than customers, they abandon the distinction between government and the private sector in addressing the public good. As illustrated by the privatizing of local government in Cape Town, the public sector is increasingly responsible for labor informalization and flexibilization. This public sector trend calls for attention in the ongoing debate on globalization and labor casualization; most of the relevant literature has focused only on the behavior of private sector companies. The present study brings to light how local governments, as well, promote casual and flexible labor to manage their costs for providing services.

The neoliberal South African government, in its postapartheid moment, uses gender beliefs and values to justify the use of women's free or cheap labor in the black townships, and to disguise its participation in labor flexibilization. In the Cape Town case studied here, gender ideology intertwined with the rhetoric of voluntarism and empowerment obscures the actual nature of women's labor in the waste collection schemes and the state's furthering of precarious and casual conditions of labor in the black townships.

John Pape for his field support and feedback on an earlier draft of this paper. I have also benefited from pertinent input and comments by participants in the Rethinking Labor Market Informalization Conference at Cornell University, where this paper was first presented in 2002 and participants in the Illinois Program in Humanities Conference on Reproduction at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign same year. I also thank Ken Salo, Mildred Warner, and Melanie Samson for their comments and suggestions. Responsibility for any shortcomings of the paper remains with the author.

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Informality in urban space:
Spatial implications and political challenges

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This brief essay seeks to bring together two discursive realms that exist in parallel research universes: the first is concerned with the processes and impacts of the increasing informalization of labor markets with globalization (the subject of this volume) and the second is concerned with understanding the processes and impacts of urban spatial growth in the global South. In doing so, the essay raises questions about the political challenges that increasing informality in urban space presents for both social mobilization that is seen as desirable by those who seek change, and episodic collective violence that effective governance seeks to prevent.

The two discursive realms have intersected earlier, mostly in studies of informal shelter provision and territorial claim making in urban areas. However, little attention has been paid to debates that seek to understand the relationship between the workplace and living spaces, one notable exception being feminist scholarship that focuses on home-based work. There is also another tradition, summarized by Asef Bayat (1997; 2000) that has explored the nature of "marginality"—the current equivalent of which can arguably be seen as informality—and its influence on the structure and politics of urban life. A slightly different argument will be made here: that *space* and our understanding of the spatial growth of cities must be brought into the informalization debates if we are to understand the full implications of increasing informalization of labor markets on cities and the attendant political challenges that it poses. Increasing informalization combined with the increasing nesting of work in living[1] produces particular patterns of urban growth that reflect deepening social segregation. These spaces restrict mobility by first restricting and then intensifying inequity of access to employment, material resources, and safe employment contributing, in turn, to further informalization and entrenched cycles of poverty. One result is the etching of sociospatial inequities into the urban landscape, shaping contentious politics—from collective mobilizing to episodic violence—in specific ways.[2] The term "contentious politics" is used intentionally.[3] By bringing together

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[1] As David Harvey pointed out in an early essay on the ideology of planning: "the organization of work is predicated on a separation between work and living" (Harvey, 1995: 189). This principle of separation pervades planning and public policy. However, various factors from changes in employment relationships, and decline in manufacturing and increase in service-oriented industry in a globalizing world, to significant technological change have contributed to the erosion of barriers between work and living. This is truer of those at the extremes of the income scale.

[2] There is a large literature on the politics of violence in urban settings, to which I cannot do full justice in this essay. The intention here is to show that entrenched and increasing informality, whether in spatial or labor market realms, creates inequitable and unjust conditions that intersect favorably with the politics of caste, religion, and nation to explain the construction of episodes of violence. Other writers have written extensively about the role of the state and violence specialists (Tilly, 2003; Brass, 2003), or the role of associational ties in promoting or diminishing violence in civil society (Varshney, 2002; Beissinger, 2002).

[3] See Aminzade et al., 2001; McAdam et al., 2001; Tilly, 2003

"macro- and micro-level approaches, structure and intentionality, under a single rubric" contentious politics allows us to analyze the construction of a range of social movements and organizing processes (King, 2004: 438).

The arguments made will rest on evidence from two Indian cities, Delhi and Ahmedabad, where the growing informal economy and the politics of informal labor have been studied extensively. The primary focus will be on the politics of "informals," Cathy Rakowski's (1994: 3) term for the men, women, and children who work in the informal sector, to which I will add: particularly those who remain poor, and are forced to live in informal/illegal settlements in urban neighborhoods or "localities," a term that better describes the sites of enmeshed networks of labor, employment, and shelter. The Delhi and Ahmedabad cases are similar in that they demonstrate the construction and rearrangement of urban space as a patchwork of deeply segregated localities in cities and along urban peripheries, driven by a politics of informality that is both the everyday politics of stealth, survival, and encroachment, as well as the seemingly sporadic episodes of collective violence and the politics of redress. The cases differ in that they demonstrate the construction and rearrangement of urban space taking place under somewhat different conditions. Ahmedabad is a globalizing city undergoing massive shifts in its economic manufacturing base, where the political economy of increasing informalization of labor and its intersection with the politics of caste and nation are crucial. In contrast, the Delhi case demonstrates how environmentalism and elite-led pressures to modernize and sanitize the city by the expulsion of certain forms of industry construct the urban periphery and the politics of informals. The essay is in two parts the first discusses the discursive realms mentioned in this introduction to clarify conceptual categories and their relationships, and the second looks closely at the cases of Delhi and Ahmedabad to draw out the spatial implications and political challenges of increasing informalization of labor markets in particular local contexts.

TWO REALMS: INFORMALIZATION OF LABOR MARKETS / INFORMAL URBAN SPATIAL GROWTH

Informality—which was named and began to be defined in the early 1970s following the ILO report on Kenya and Keith Hart's study of the Ghanaian economy—is here to stay.[4] Our understanding of the informal economy is gaining depth, even as it is becoming clear that there is still a lot to learn. The early debates, summarized by Caroline Moser in an article (1984) and a book chapter (1994), centered on employment, work, and poverty, with much of the research focusing on concept clarification, in both definitional and operational terms, as well as on the linkages between the informal and formal sectors. Policy recommendations included appropriate macroeconomic interventions to promote investment and growth as well as the best means to promote microenterprise development and other services for informal workers. However, as industrial restructuring, liberalization, and globalization intensified through the last two decades of the twentieth century, other issues came to the forefront, including the effects of

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[4] See, ILO. 1970. Towards Full Employment: A Programme for Columbia. Geneva: ILO
   ILO. 1972. Employment, Incomes and Equality: A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya. Geneva: ILO
   Hart, Keith. 1973. "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana" Journal of Modern African Studies 11, 1: 61-89.

labor standards and regulatory structures on informal sector workers, and the role of nongovernmental organizations in both apolitical microenterprise development, and intensely politicized organizing for change (Rakowski, 1994).

In reviewing research on the informal sector, Rakowski (1994) proposed a typology that broadly divided the structuralists from the legalists. The structuralists' perspectives were rooted in the initial ILO studies on labor markets and were informed by Marxist and dependency theorists, who linked work in the informal economy to the uneven nature of capitalist development. The structuralists noted the absence of the state, and projected it as the crucial regulatory and policy setting actor that could enforce equity of labor conditions, wages, and status of workers. In contrast, the legalists, emphasized informality as a rational economic strategy, and repositioned informals as entrepreneurs whose spirit of enterprise was stifled by state imposed institutional constraints. For both structuralists and legalists, however, a central concern was to understand the relationship between poverty and informalization. The modalities of employment, sector, gender, and age were shown to be important, and policy formulations emerged from our understandings of these modalities.

Attention also began to be paid to the political challenges attendant in the informalization of work in the current age of hyperglobalization. Researchers portray the informal economy as either the fictive space of last resort, where the poor lacking any other means of survival gather to seek refuge, or as a collection of individual and occasionally collective, acts of resistance, deliberate ingenious responses to hostile and adverse economic conditions. Rakowski's classification of structuralists and legalists is less applicable, as both the state and the ingenious informals—whose every action is often interpreted as a form of political resistance to the formalized spaces being created by modernizing and exclusionary structures of global capital and development—are present. Aili Marii Tripp's (1997) study of women working in the informal economy in Tanzania and John Cross's (1998) work on street vending and taxi services seek to demonstrate these positions. Researchers like Jan Breman (2001; 2002), however, shifted the focus from the openings for collective mobilization to the ways in which the struggle to improve living conditions in the landscape of informal sector labor is hampered by the weak articulation of collective action (2001: 30-37, electronic edition). In following the politics of "footloose labor" in the western state of rural Gujarat, and the fortunes of millworkers who got thrown out of formal sector employment and into work in the informal sector in Ahmedabad, Breman also made, amongst other points, specific connections between increasing informalization of the labor system, and the trends toward spatial segregation, as well as escalating social violence. He sought to show the ways in which the deterioration of work and labor conditions and the weakening of unions that had bridged intercommunal divides in a variety of ways, combined with the politics of caste, religion, and nation to lead the urban poor to become the grist of the communal violence mill. The work of people like Tripp or Breman, however, remains somewhat distant from the literature on the politics of informality rooted in territorial formations—the slums and squatter settlements where many informals live.

Like the debates on the informal economy, early research on informal housing first focused on definitional and conceptual issues, before moving into prescribing interventions in housing and land markets. As mentioned earlier, the two realms that we are looking at here—one focusing on work and employment in

the informal sector, and the other on urban spatial issues, especially through the lens of shelter and informal housing—remained largely separate, with some exceptions, particularly in research and activism, structured around gender and home-based work as the crucial organizing principle.[5] One result of this separation was that space rarely became an important variable in the informal sector debates, and our understanding of the relationships between labor markets in the informal sector, policy responses to it and the spaces in which urban residents live and work remains poor.

The informal housing literature (in which most of the spatial references to informality are embedded) emerged initially from studies of settlements in Latin American cities. Innovative early work sought to redefine squatting and slums by exploding "myths of marginality" (Perlman, 1976) and exposing it as an elite instrument of social control over a laboring class that was the product of particular capitalist structures (Castells, 1983). Squatting and land acquisition helped explain the politics of informality as a politics of protest, of collective mobilization for survival, and a fighting economic chance. Several major works followed and over time, the policy world too began to respond to the shift in perspectives on who squatters were and what they could do by promoting upgrading, legalization, and land titling programs (Rodwin, 1987). The location of settlements, from the occupation of state-owned marginal lands to the development of settlements on the urban periphery also came to be studied.

The majority of the urban poor however, did not mobilize and seek redress for blatant injustices, and Scott's (1985) landmark work on the everyday modes of resistance of Javanese peasants helped elaborate the survival strategies of those who were perceived as powerless. While adherents to the survival thesis "undoubtedly contributed to recovering the Third World poor from 'passivity,' 'fatalism' and 'hopelessness'... 'their overemphasis on the language of survival strategies maintained the poor as victims, as lacking agency" (Bayat, 1997: 56). Bayat's own work in Tehran and Cairo provided another perspective on the everyday politics of informality in the face of increasing informalization of work amidst spreading informal settlements. He emphasized a "street politics" that signifies an articulation of discontent, a politics of redress, not protest, where noncollective but prolonged direct action to achieve gains is interspersed with episodic collective action in defense of gains. *Pace* Scott, Bayat's work emphasizes not just quiet everyday resistance and creeping encroachments in urban space, but also focuses on the episodic moments of open protest that mark the point when encroachments have spilled over the tacit agreement between the state and poor. The state's regulatory apparatus then kicks into gear, and retaliation can be swift.

As important to understanding this mix of the everyday and the episodic in the politics of informality is the emergence of historical work, such as Nandini Gooptu's (2001) expansive study of the politics of the urban poor in early twentieth century northern India. Gooptu examines "the emergence of a casual, informal, urban workforce in the interwar period, and illuminate[s] its momentous political and social consequences in arena's far outside the workplace" (2001: 429) to highlight the significance of the social construction of

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[5] Methodology is another reason for the separation (also see footnote #1). Labor market literature tends to focus on the worker and the workplace as the unit of analysis, while the literature on informal housing focuses on the housing unit, the household, and more recently, the individual, as the unit of analysis. However, as the essay's introduction emphasized, feminist theorists who sought to understand women's work did explicitly address this issue. Organizations like SEWA also spanned this divide through mobilization strategies that focused on work, gender, and locality.

the poor and of poverty. In the process, she demonstrates the ways in which these constructions shaped both public policy and political relations in late-colonial India. Two issues raised by Gooptu are germane to this essay: the ways in which local planning policies shaped sharply divided urban localities, and the forms of contentious politics—response, protest, and violence—that resulted from the intersections of the politics of informality, caste, religion, and nation. Through careful archival work on the effects of local policies, and the study of vernacular cultural responses like the *nautanki* and the *akharas*, Gooptu's work addresses an important gap in the informalization literature.[6] What is striking is the resonance of her observations on late-colonial northern India with the situation in contemporary Delhi and Ahmedabad, where space and territory intersect with work and laboring practices to shape a range of political responses from collective mobilization to violence.

Breman, Bayat, Gooptu and the work of organizations like the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)[7] in Ahmedabad, lend support to the central argument of this essay: that urban space must be explicitly brought into the debates around informalization of work and labor. Research that is emerging out of India on urbanization trends, city growth, industrial clusters, and increasing informalization of the labor force in the face of restructuring pushed by liberalization and market-friendly economic policies can also be drawn on to support this claim. As a planner focused as much on planning processes and the design of local level institutions as on the spatial realm within which they take place, I wish to make the case for having *space*—not just modalities of employment, sector, gender, or age—be an organizing principle in thinking about the processes and impacts of increasing informalization, and how we build collective struggles for change in vibrant but fractured urban environments. This is not a new or revolutionary idea. Lefebvre (1991), Castells (1983), Harvey (1989), Massey (1992), Swyngedouw et al., (2003) amongst others, have explored the relationship between power, sociospatial relations and their expression in the production of space(s). However, the discursive realms of informalization—particularly in labor markets— and the impacts of spatial planning have had the tendency to remain somewhat separate. This essay will bring these realms together by examining two relationships that will help draw out the spatial implications and political challenges of increasing informalization of labor markets, in particular local contexts.

The first relationship to be examined in the context of the two cases is that between the informal economy and the work of informals at the scale of the local, so as to understand its relationship to the production of urban space. Supporting this argument is the notion that space underpins livelihood, as Lefebvre (1991) argued, and that work is nested in the larger structure of livelihood.[8] Space is not a neutral backdrop, an empty abstraction, or a field existing in the social sense only

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[6] The nautanki is a genre of folk play or popular vernacular theatre and the akharas are local gymnasiums or wrestling dens which served as a site for training a specialized group of wrestlers and as a center of a physical culture.

[7] SEWA is a well-known trade union started by Ela Bhatt.

[8] Consider, for example, this passage on the embeddedness of women's lives from Tripp's study of the informal economy in Tanzania:

"Women's entrepreneurial activities are heavily embedded in their daily lives and are part of a whole array of day-to-day activities. Women's involvement in the market takes place within the context of all of these life-sustaining activities and is not separate from the many other dimensions of life. These activities include childcare, family care, buying and cooking food, housecleaning, keeping the home and its surroundings tidy, physically building houses, clothing the children, fetching fuel and water, taking care of the health of the family, taking care of the disabled, elderly and sick, cultivating, tending cows and goats, helping neighbors with needs, taking care of the poor in the community, organizing celebrations, helping raise funds for the community, helping with extended family needs, assisting other women in childbirth, assisting in funeral preparations, helping in the husband's business, and many other such activities. These alternative logics are revealed in a number of ways (1997: 120)."

for an activity to take place. It simultaneously defines activity, even as it acts to reinforce inequities in power and resource allocation, and the formation of identities. The urban spaces thus produced are sometimes physically bound in the larger context of the city and the region; but more crucially, they serve to further circumscribe work and the movement of workers in the informal economy, as will be discussed in more detail later.

Related to this issue of a dialectical relationship between the informal economy and space, is the second question: does the very nature of urban space production shape responses to the political challenges of informality? John Cross (1998, 2000) has made the point that both extent of visibility and territoriality of forms of informal work (street vending, taxi services, and land invasions being his three examples) are important conditions in shaping forms of protest and social movement organization in the informal sector. But what if the urban spaces in which informal activity takes place, the spatial life world of informals, are as important a condition? Bayat (1997, 2000) has shown that urban streets, public space *par excellence*, are crucial to the episodic nature of the politics of informality. The street provides the space where passive networks can be activated for contentious collective action. This essay will focus however, on the ways in which urban space *restricts* mobility and in doing so, plays a role in increasing informalization of work, which then shapes the possibilities for the exercise of power or protest, collective organizing, and governance.

These are some of the questions that occupy researchers such as Breman (2001, 2002) and Mahadevia (2001) on Ahmedabad, and Benjamin (1996), Baviskar (2001) and Bentinck and Chikara (2001) among others, on Delhi. Building on their work and Bayat's insights, this essay will focus on the periodic sudden outbursts of protest and violence that can be linked both to the swelling ranks of workers in precarious informal work settings and to the divided inequitable urban settings that mark contemporary cities in the global South. These outbreaks mark extreme disruptions in everyday sociospatial power relations in cities; but, in doing so, they throw into relief our lack of understanding of the ways in which spatial life-worlds of the urban poor are articulated and the impact of public policy and planning on the lives of the majority of city residents. The implicit question, of course, is how informality in these fractured urban settings affects the arduous process of urban governance and the maintenance of social order. It must be emphasized that the intention is not to demonize the poor or to say that poverty drives people to violence. Neither poverty nor primordial loyalties are seen here as causal factors in urban violence. They do, however, lead to forms of sociospatial segregation and inequality, which this essay does argue are fundamental to the construction of forms of contentious politics.

INFORMALIZATION, THE WORK OF INFORMALS, AND THE PRODUCTION OF URBAN SPACE

The two case cities are Delhi, capital of India—parts of which pay tribute to formal Master Planning,[9] and Ahmedabad, often likened to Manchester in the UK for its once prominent role, second only to Mumbai, in the Indian textile industry. Ahmedabad is also the largest city in Gujarat, currently India's second most industrialized state, and in the news since 2001 as a site of violent Hindu-Muslim riots. The city has seen communal rioting before, but it is the changing nature of the riots and the responses to it that are crucial to the argument being made here.[10] Studies of Delhi and Ahmedabad have been conducted by scholars from a range of disciplines—economists, sociologists, planners, demographers, anthropologists—and by some activists who are interested in explaining various aspects of the working of the informal economy.

Delhi is India's third largest metropolis with a population of about 9.8 million within its municipal boundaries in 2001.[11] The metropolitan area is estimated to have a population of about 13.8 million (Dhar Chakrabarti, 2001: 1). The city sits on land that has been continuously settled for about 2,500 years, and

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[9] There have been two Master Plans for Delhi (MPDs) implemented in 1962 and 1990. Designed to be classic comprehensive plan documents, the MPDs are routinely flouted by politicians, administrators, and well-connected elites with other priorities (a well-known example being the time that the city hosted the Asiad Games in 1982) and have also been criticized for their lack of attention to Delhi's real issues, including the fact that the majority of residents live in settlements that are deemed illegal and work in the informal economy, a sector that the plan prefers to ignore. The ways in which Master Plans, a crucial tool of modernist planning, have routinely excluded the poor and ignored their needs is a subject of several studies, including James Holston's (1989) classic critique of Brasilia. For recent critiques of Delhi's master plan see Dhar Chakrabarti (2001), Benjamin (1996, 2000), Baviskar (2001), and Roy (2000).

[10] Communal riots have occurred in 1969, 1985, 1986, 1990, and 1992-93.

[11] Population figures from provisional tables released on the Census of India website [http://www.censusofindia.net/results/ slum1_m_plus.html]. Accessed July 2003.

as India's capital and showcase city, its infrastructure and housing needs have received more attention than almost any other urban area. It is also India's fastest growing metropolitan area, drawing immigrants from both rural areas and the smaller towns and cities of northern India. Ahmedabad, in contrast, is a smaller city with a population of about 3.5 million, within its municipal boundaries, and while it shows physical growth amidst suburban sprawl, its economy has seriously stagnated with the decline of its manufacturing base and the periodic episodes of communal clashes between Hindus and Muslims. Like Delhi, it too has a historic walled city, established in 1546 AC, at its core. Both cities have large administrative infrastructures and well-established bureaucracies for municipal governance. However, like most Indian cities more than half their population lives in informal settlements and works in the informal sector. Places of residence are in, around, or close to places of work. Slums, shantytowns, and localities with an intense mix of small-scale industry and businesses are as pervasive as modern skyscrapers, gleaming corporate offices, malls, large factories, and individual bungalows behind high walls.

The case of Delhi and Ahmedabad illustrates both the similarity and the differences in the ways in which particular patterns of urban space are produced. In Delhi, the focus is on the impact of the expulsion of small-scale industry employing large numbers of informals following enforcement of environmental and land use planning principles, while in Ahmedabad, the focus will be on the impact of a two-decade-long restructuring of the textile industry amidst globalization.

Delhi

What is the nature of the relationship between the informal economy, the work of informals, and the production of urban space in Delhi? Brief descriptions of three economically vibrant lower-income localities in the city provide a glimpse into these relationships. The housing in these localities has been variously classified as slum and squatter settlements or *jhuggi-jhompris*, which have a population of about 2.5 million; as *unauthorized colonies* with a population of about 1 million, which may look somewhat more formal in terms of the construction materials used but have a similar environment and lack legal status like squatter settlements; or as *urban villages* that have been absorbed into the city, but due to their lack of basic urban services exist much like slums. Not included here are approximately 70,000 *pavement dwellers* and the 2 million people who live in *Legally Notified Slum Areas*, mostly in the severely overcrowded, old walled city of Delhi, an area originally meant to accommodate about 60,000 residents (Dhar Chakrabarti, 2001: 4-8).

Networks of labor, employment, and shelter are thickly intertwined in many lower-income localities. The first locality to be described, for our argument here, is Vishwasnagar in East Delhi, a mixed-use cluster where housing does not fit easily into any one of the categories in the previous paragraph. Vishwasnagar has over 2,000 mostly home-based enterprises which in 1995, produced about 40 percent of the total domestic market for cables and conductors—both for the high-end industrial market and on the low-end, for TV and cable. Economic activity in Vishwasnagar is not just centered around a range of manufacturing enterprises of various scales, it also generates other economic activity like a parallel trading environment, the local manufacture of capital machinery, a number of transportation options, an array of local retail services, and—this is important given the partly illegal nature of the settlement—a sophisticated local real

estate market that provides a range of production settings through a variety of contractual arrangements. Solomon Benjamin (1996, 2000), from whose work this description is drawn, estimated that in 1995 Vishwasnagar produced about 25,000 jobs in direct employment and about 35,000 indirect jobs. In the 1991 electoral rolls, there were 21,000 voters living in the neighborhood.

A second locality, Gopalpur, surveyed and described by Johan Bentinck and Shilpa Chikara (2001), is a small village of about a thousand residents that was absorbed into the city in 1991 and over a period of two decades, saw itself get transformed into an urban informal industrial cluster and settlement. It too has a range of small enterprises, mostly dealing with plastic waste and metal fabrication and a substantial number of households participating in piece rate contractual work, putting together cassette tapes for example.

The third locality, Samaipur, is large like Vishwasnagar but more spatially heterogenous: it consists of the original urban village, an adjoining squatter settlement, the unauthorized Sanjay Colony thriving through carefully cultivated ties with local political patrons, as well as a formal "industrial estate" established by the government. Bentinck and Chikara (2001: 5) write, "when visiting Samaipur the smoke, the garbage, the filthy water in the open drains and stagnant pools, the noise level, and the enormous number of people can overwhelm the outsider. But first impressions do not tell the whole story." The entire area contains about 1,200 enterprises. Of these about 500 smaller units are located in Samaipur, which follows the locational patterns of Gopalpur fairly closely. The residents of Sanjay Colony tend to have factory jobs in both the industrial estate and the village. In both villages, Gopalpur and Samaipur,[12] much of the land continues to be held by the original residents who then lease it out to entrepreneurs who come in from the city. The workers, mostly migrants from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, live in the vicinity. The degraded living conditions in Gopalpur and Samaipur amidst the belching smoke from factories and high noise levels coexist with a thriving, vibrant economy.

Such localities house over half of the Delhi metropolitan area's 13.8 million residents. The government estimates that about 63 percent of employment in Delhi is generated in the informal sector mainly, in manufacturing, transportation, and retail trade activities (Dhar Chakrabarti, 2001). This is much lower than the oft quoted estimate that more than 90 percent of India's employment—which accounts for about 50 percent of total GDP—is in the informal sector (Kundu and Sharma, 2001: 10). The continued growth and vitality of Vishwasnagar, Gopalpur, and Samaipur is through encroachment and quiet expansion where everyday transactions make for a politics of stealth, survival, and patronage. Even the naming of "Sanjay Colony" in Samaipur after Indira Gandhi's second son signifies the careful attention given to these issues.

To continue with the story, in November 2000, responding to a long-standing public interest writ petition originally filed in 1985, and the government's lack of response to an 1996 order asking for compliance by December 31, 1999, the Supreme Court of India issued a contempt notice on the Delhi administration. The notice ordered the immediate closure and subsequent relocation of all industries in nonconforming (mostly residential) areas of the Master Plan.[13] The petition was originally filed by a well-known

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[12]   This pattern is not common and outsiders generally hold land. There are a total of 106 urban villages in Delhi.
[13]   On July 8, 1996, 11 years after the first filing, an activist judge, Justice Kuldeep Singh, took action and ordered the closure of 168 hazardous industries located in contravention of the MPD. In three months between September and November of the same year, another 823 units were ordered closed,

lawyer/environmentalist, M.C. Mehta, in response to the contradictions between the Master Plan's prescriptions and ground realities. The original filing was a response to air pollution caused by stone crushing units that ignored the locational and zoning provisions of the Master Plan.[14] However, 11 years later when the petition was finally acted upon by the Supreme Court, the focus of action had shifted to what had begun to be perceived as the main culprit in Delhi's worsening air pollution problem: industrial units, mostly small-scale industries in nonconforming areas. As a number of commentators have noted, a combination of elite environmentalist and consumer action groups shaped by

upper-class concerns about health, safety, aesthetics, and leisure in concert with the state drove this process (Baviskar, 2001; Roy, 2000).[15] The process reads like a reiteration of the earlier sanitization and cleanliness drives documented by Gooptu (2001) in the towns of late-colonial northern India.

The impact of the November 2000 court order was enormous. If enforced fully, it could have thrown close to 2 million people out of work, and potentially closed about 98,000 industrial units. One immediate result was large-scale violence and rioting. Schools closed, eight buses were burnt and all trade unions struck work in support of an all Delhi *Bandh*[16] called by the Small-Scale Industries Action Front. A national weekly reported,

> As was to be expected, the owners and workers of the SSIs [small-scale industries], who faced the prospect of loss of livelihood, took to the streets, bringing traffic to a halt. As the rampaging mob began burning government-owned buses, the police resorted to several rounds of firing. Three persons were killed and several others injured. There was no let-up in the fury for some days (*Frontline* 17, 25, December 9-22, 2000).

Delhi's laboring poor's minimal gains were threatened and the swift violent response—in marked contrast to the stealthy manner in which the settlements grew and flourished—is reminiscent of Bayat's descriptions of informal settlements in Tehran and Cairo.

Another result (in response to a previous court order passed in 1996 that had shut down about 823 industrial units, of which 168 subsequently moved out of Delhi) was the government's acquisition of 1,903 acres of land in the town of Bawana, about ten miles north of Delhi, to relocate non-water-polluting industry. Water-polluting industry was to be relocated to another town in the north, Narela. The government planned to offer incentives to move industry to outlying areas in the adjoining states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan. About a year after the riots, the industries minister announced that

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affecting about 50,000 workers. The Court ordered that compensation be paid to workers but only one industry owned by the State Government complied. The Court also asked the Delhi Government to create a list of polluting units and implement the provisions of the MPD. Four years later, angered by the continued noncompliance of the state, the Court passed the historic November 17, 2000, order requiring all polluting industries in residential areas to be shut down and subsequently relocated.

[14] See Interview with M.C. Mehta in the journal Frontline 17, 25. December 9-22, 2000 [http://www.flonnet.com/fl1725/index.html]. Accessed July 2003

[15] This becomes even clearer when a government study has noted that industrial units are not the biggest pollution source, which have been identified as emissions from 3 million registered vehicles (70%), emissions from power plants (13%), and from industrial units (12%) (Dhar Chakrabarti 2001: 18, quoting White Paper on Pollution in Delhi with an Action Plan, Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests, 1997: 6).

[16] A bandh (in Hindi, closure) is a lightening strike that shuts a city down.

2,900 plots (out of an estimated total of 16,000) were ready for possession in Bawana. By April 2002, the government expected 14,000 industrial units employing about 133,000 workers to relocate.[17] The experience of the 168 big industrial units that had moved out of the city in 1996, and failed to reemploy the vast majority of their workers, was ignored.[18]

What was the effect of this Court order on the localities that were described earlier? Bentinck and Chikara (2001) report that after the city returned to its everyday rhythms, Samaipur residents used their political connections to get large parts of their village declared an industrial area. Polluting factories are allowed to operate in such areas. Most of the factories in Gopalpur, in contrast, have closed. People have begun to move away. Some factories run illegally at night, others try and pay off inspectors to get their designation changed. The general thinking seems to be that factories will shut down or move further away from the city, into the neighboring states of Rajashtan and Haryana, for example, since they will not be unable to meet any new standards of pollution control that the Delhi government may require, and still remain economically viable.

Across Delhi, a diverse set of responses has been observed. Many large owners with factories closer to the city center have chosen to convert industrial land to commercial and retail or office space that often fetches higher returns. Some have moved investments into other areas. A number have chosen to move further out into Rajashtan like the factory owners of Gopalpur.[19] To quote Baviskar, "the ability to weather displacement varies with the capital, material and symbolic, at one's command" (2001: 11).

But what have we learned about the relationship between the informal economy and the production of urban space? *First*, that dynamic, informal economy industrial clusters, such as Vishwasnagar, Gopalpur, or Samaipur, establish clearly demarcated mixed use settlements, that often fall under the rubric of slums and squatter settlements and which rely on particular patterns of political patronage and the everyday politics of stealth and encroachment to circumvent the legal system and the zoning functions laid down by the Master Plan. The Master Plan seeks to establish state authority through standardization, and the separation and regulation of the spaces, in which Delhi's residents may reside, work, labor, play, or shop. Using James Holston's terminology,[20] these settlements are usurpative spatial formations where government authority

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[17]   Plans to build 50 lakh (5 million) low-income housing units were also announced, though little has happened since. See news story "2,900 Plots Ready for Possession in Bawana Industrial Estate," in Times of India, November 13, 2001,
[http://www.timesofindia.indiatimes.com]. Accessed July 2003

[18]   A number of reasons contributed to workers' refusal to move to new locations including the distances which the units moved from workers' places of residence (often around the original location of the factory itself) and the lower minimum wages in the areas they moved to. The large factory owners, who had convinced the Court to agree that they could move anywhere in the country, chose to move hundreds of miles away to other States and benefited both from the sale of their industrial land in Delhi, and additional incentives from other State Governments looking to attract industry.

[19]   A report titled, Things Fall Apart – Voices of Women Affected by the Closure of 168 Units by the Janwadi Adhikar Manch showed that families of workers in the big units that moved were severely impacted. Of the 53 households interviewed, only 16 had a stable source of income and women and children had taken to piece-work to support the family. Some workers had been employed for up to 20 years in the factories but could still not afford to relocate when factories moved far away as in the case of G.D. Rathi Steel Ltd. that moved to the city of Alwar in Rajasthan. Workers who refused reemployment at the new location were eligible for only six months of wages as compensation, in contrast to compensation of six years wages in the case of closure (Rajalakshmi, 2000).

[20]   Describing usurpative settlements on Brasilia's periphery, Holston writes, "This formation usurped government authority in the sense that it encroached upon its sole right in the Federal District to found settlements, distribute residential rights, regulate property relations, authorize

has been gradually encroached on by those who lack rights to productive lands and legal residence. The location and clustering of work and shelter is crucial to their residents' survival and livelihood strategies. *Second*, as the settlement flourishes, it draws more workers who know they can find itinerant work, casual or semiregular wage labor, or more established work in factories or piece rate work, all without an expensive commute or a search for formal housing that can cut deeply into their meager wages. *Third*, when the state moved to shut down polluting factories, it displaced nonconforming land uses, which when deprived of productive land then relocated further out, creating yet another cluster around which the economy could grow. The process is iterative. Samaipur and Gopalpur, for example, were once villages on the urban periphery. The exemption of villages from zoning regulations initially attracted Delhi-based entrepreneurs, which then lead to the intensification of informal sector enterprises and so on. This process of displacement of industrial clusters to the periphery is abetted by the outward push of low-income residential areas due, in part, to differential land rates specified in the Second Master Plan (1982-2001): commercially zoned Delhi Development Authority land is worth 100 times the land that is demarcated for lower income residential purposes (Roy, 2000). [21]

It is also important to note who the informal workers are and where many of them come from. In Delhi, about 92 percent are migrants from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajashtan, and Bihar: three of which rank very low on all development indices. There is little information on their exact moment of arrival into the city, but research indicates that the majority of migrants are unskilled, illiterate, and often seeking to escape the poverty and oppression of the countryside.[22] Their move into Delhi "either through desire or violence" to imperfectly quote Malkki (1992: 24), swells the ranks of workers in the informal economy (85% come from rural areas and another 15% from small towns). There is thus a rearrangement of regional and even national space on an urban/small town/rural axis, turning on the issue of work in the informal sector. The cities, and particular localities in them, then become the spaces of subsistence work and survival on a grand scale.

What we have in Delhi then, is a city of fractured localities shaped by economic necessity. We also have patterns of urban growth shaped by the location of work and residence of informals and by the expulsion of work under problematic principles of environmental and land use planning. The episodic violence and riots that followed the November order died down almost as quickly as they started. Petitions were submitted to both the local and the Union government, but at the time of writing this paper little had happened to secure the rights of the displaced workers. The political challenge for organizing remains acute. As Roy points out, "traditional organizing methods" based on fordist production models are failing the needs of the workers in the informal economy. Instead, he suggests that

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constructions, and the like … [leading to] a recurrent pattern of urban development: those who lacked the rights to settle organized to usurp" (1989:270)

[21] Land rates are as follows: Rs. 140 for housing for economically weaker sections; Rs. 1000 for public and semi-public lands; Rs. 3,000 for industrial plots and about Rs. 6,000 for commercial uses (this has gone up to Rs. 16,000 in current projects).

[22] Illiteracy rates were high (total 71.2%, amongst men 51% versus women 83.4%); for the first 1-3 years mostly single male households, longer duration families had an average size of 4.6 persons (average for city 5.2 persons). Migrants come from UP/Haryana/Rahjashtan (80%), Bihar (12%), and other states (8%).

[o]rganisation at the place of residence … provides a strong supplementary force to the strength of labour. It not only draws the worker's family into the larger social arena, it also provides the potential for sustaining the struggle for a better life, not just a better job. Within the context of globalisation and privatisation as an answer to upper middle-class aspirations, there is an emerging possibility of emphasizing the right to safe livelihoods for workers in a democratic society (2000, electronic edition).

Ahmedabad

The expulsion of informal work to the urban periphery is seen under different conditions in Ahmedabad. Here the production of urban space is linked to the fortunes of the textile industry. In 1960, at the height of its vitality, composite spinning and weaving textile mills and allied industries accounted for about two-thirds of the industrial production of Gujarat and about half of total employment. A quarter of the working factories were based in the eastern areas of Ahmedabad and about 83 percent of total industrial employment in the city was in composite textile mills, the backbone of the state's economy. The textile workers with their relatively stable jobs and strong unions formed the "labor aristocracy" (Breman, 2001).

The importance of the textile mills to the economy declined as the economic base began to diversify.[23] Jan Breman has argued that the policies of economic liberalization implemented across India starting in 1991, was seen in Gujarat from the late 1960s onwards. Few rules were implemented to formally regulate industry and when owners shut down mills (in the face of increased unionization and costs for technological upgrading) to seek higher return on capital elsewhere, they met little opposition from the state. Meanwhile, the emerging industries of cement and petrochemicals, among others, located in Surat, Vadodara, and Baruch districts, and Ahmedabad continued to decline. In the decade between 1982-83 and 1992-93, the share of total industrial output of the textile industry dropped from 36 to 15 percent and the share of total employment was reduced from 69 to 30 percent (Mahadevia, 2001: 146).

The decline of the composite textile industry led to large numbers of textile workers being retrenched starting with 6,552 workers in 1982. As the industry continued to shrink, the retrenchments increased with another wave of closures in 1988 when over 20,000 workers lost their jobs. The final figures vary: Mahadevia (quoting Patel, 1997) estimates that 67,541 workers were retrenched between 1982 and 1997 while the Textile Labor Association estimates that a total of 100,000 workers (about 18 percent of the city's population) were retrenched between 1982 and 1995 (Jhabvala, 1995, quoted in Mahadevia, 2001: 148). The vast majority of these workers got little or no compensation. Where did these retrenched workers go? Very few left the city, and both Mahadevia (1998, 2001) and Breman (2001) demonstrate that the majority moved into the informal sector.

Through a careful analysis of changing workforce structures and economic census data, Mahadevia shows that larger numbers of workers were entering the informal sector workforce in Ahmedabad city as

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[23]   Within the textile industry, small powerloom units where pay is mostly by piece-work have become the norm. The exception (in terms of large mills) is those producing synthetic fabrics or fabric (like denim) for export markets.

compared to the rest of the state. The rates of growth of women workers is higher than that of men leading her to conclude that falling household incomes were forcing more household members, especially women, into the workforce on a full-time basis. By analyzing employment growth rates for the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, separately from that for the Ahmedabad Urban Agglomeration, Mahadevia also shows that more men workers were absorbed in nonhousehold sectors in the peripheral areas of the city[24] while growth rates for women workers were greater within city limits. Women tended to stay closer to their places of residence and to obtain jobs in the household manufacturing informal sector. Mahadevia's analysis of census and economic data is supported by several surveys and case studies.[25] Retrenched millworkers did find lower-wage employment in other sectors, but as household incomes continued to fall and living standards declined, women's participation in the informal sector labor force—particularly in lower-income households—increased. SEWA's 1993 survey of its members (22 percent of whom still had husbands working in the textile industry) indicated that two-thirds of them lived below the poverty line. It also showed that there was a substantial over supply of labor leading to wages being pushed down to below 50 percent of minimum wage. A more recent survey of 600 households by Breman and Patel supported by anthropological fieldwork with 60 households in 1999-2000, also supports these findings (Breman, 2001). Incomes of millworkers who had lost their jobs were typically about half to four-fifths of their previous earnings, and were well below minimum wage. In addition most of these workers did not enjoy the job security or stability that they had before and their living standards had seriously deteriorated.

Spatially, the localities where the mills were concentrated began to decline as the mills closed, and jobs were lost. As the eastern peripheries began to draw more workers, increasing tensions between Hindus and Muslims drove the Muslim minority away from the older mill neighborhoods into contained slums and settlements on the other side of the river. In roughly the same period (between 1981 and 1996-97) the numbers of people living in slum areas almost doubled (Breman, 2001, quoting Dutta and Batley, 1999: 39-42), even as the middle- and upper-class neighborhoods of high rises, shopping malls, and sleek buildings continued to expand in the west (Patel, 1995; Spodek, 2001). In its quest to keep urban spaces as planned modern places for the elite of a global city, the city government became more stringent both in its planning and management of the city and in the implementation of various tax collection laws and other public policies. One example being major antiencroachment drives in the city that were lead by an active and often, over zealous Municipal Commissioner, in response to the increase in the number of hawkers in the city, "an activity to which many displaced workers had resorted to" (Mahadevia, 1998: 258). Mahadevia's work clearly indicates that the pattern of centrifugal urban growth in Ahmedabad under the logic of globalization was supported and many ways even led by increased informalization in labor markets.

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[24] Industries in the peripheries (mostly in the eastern areas) included diamond cutting and polishing ateliers, small-scale powerloom units, and other manufacturing establishments with low-capital intensity and fluctuating production capacity that resulted in unstable informal sector employment. Male workers remained mostly in nonhousehold manufacturing, and as participation in the sector declined (from 46 percent in 1981 to 38 percent in 1991) tended to move into trade and commerce (from 20 percent in 1981 to 26 percent in 1991) and construction (3 percent in 1981 to almost 5 percent in 1991) (Mahadevia, 2001: 150)

[25] See Patel, B. B. (1990) Survey of Workers of Closed Textile Mills in Ahmedabad for Planning for Alternative Employment. Ahmedabad: Gandhi Labor Institute; Jhabvala, R., and Bali, N. (undated) My Life, My Work – A Sociological Study of SEWA's Urban Members. Ahmedabad: SEWA Academy. This was based on a 1993 survey of SEWA members.

Ahmedabad's fractured localities, similar to those in Delhi are made possible by the everyday politics of patronage and survival. The segregation in and between these localities was deepened by the losses experienced by the retrenched millworkers. As in Delhi, the large scale of these localities, as well as the segmented and highly volatile nature of both the spaces and structures of work and living, present huge obstacles to political organizing for change. Breman (2001) writes,

> Although strikes and other forms of militancy are common, they are usually sudden, fragmented and more or less spontaneous eruptions of dissatisfaction. Such recurrent acts of resistance are restricted to disconnected local conflicts, flaring up and dissipating again in a short time. This incapacity to express power and solidarity systematically rather than sporadically is in the first instance a consequence of the segmented and highly volatile nature of the informal labour regime.

In the city where SEWA pioneered trade union organizing amongst women street vendors, few organizing models have emerged amongst the thousands of displaced millworkers.[26] Moreover, the shift to the informal economy has served, in most cases, to accentuate the reliance and trust on ties of caste and faith in localities, further exacerbating existing divisions.[27]

Starting in February 2002, Ahmedabad saw the worst communal riots between Hindus and Muslims since independence. While rioting has taken place many times before, the violence of 2002 scaled new horrors. Breman (2002) has made the persuasive argument that it is the 85,000 millworkers forced into a downward spiral of precarious jobs in the informal sector on the urban periphery who became the grist of the communal riot mill. For him, there is no coincidence in the fact that the violence between Hindus and Muslims was greatest in the old industrial areas of the city on the eastern banks of the River Sabarmati, where the majority of retrenched millworkers now live. Earlier cycles of violence had already started the process of ghettoization of the Muslim community and over time Ahmedabad has become a city of localities segregated not just by privilege and wealth, but also by religious affiliation.

Breman also suggests that structures of trade union organization (the work of organizations like the Majdoor Mahajan Sangh) that had preached and consciously kept communal harmony in earlier riots (despite caste and faith affiliations with particular jobs and tasks in the mills) have shattered and with it any hopes of holding the urban community together (Breman, 2002). This argument echoes the findings of Ashutosh Varshney (2002) who has argued that it is the level of bridging capital—present in longer-term patterns of communal interaction between Hindus and Muslims and often established through various forms of political action—that effects the durability of communal peace. In contemporary Ahmedabad, for all the reasons outlined above, communities have increasingly split along traditional lines of religion and caste, which makes them vulnerable to manipulation by the politics of exclusion practiced by the Bharatiya

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[26] Breman and Mahadevia have both noted that caste and faith always played a major role in the organization of work in the mills and in the representation of workers in the Textile Labor Association, TLA, the major union to which about half the workers belonged. In addition, all the major unions in India (much like the rest of the world) made a colossal error in choosing to focus only on the formal sector.

[27] This is not true in the case of SEWA's members, many of whom are Muslim women. The union has emphasized gender interests and the commonality of problems women face as residents of poor localities.

Janata Party, the party of the Hindu religious right, as well as by other religious groups. The argument is a simple one: there is no associational platform left for social mobilization and collective action that bridges difference.

The story of Ahmedabad's growth is thus both similar and different from that of Delhi. Both cities are a patchwork of segregated, segmented localities where the spaces of work and living overlap to various degrees. The case of Ahmedabad illustrates the production of space as a result of the processes of deindustrialization and restructuring of the textile industry while the case of Delhi reveals the difficulties associated with imposing environmental regulations in mixed industrial clusters. Throughout, the rift between the life and image of these messy localities and the global, modern Master Planned spaces of the middle and upper classes remain clear and sharp. The imperative of statecraft, of state led policy-making and planning to regulate and standardize in the shadow of images of global modernity, widens the cleavage between the informal and the formal sectors. Illegality is an important dimension of this scenario, as is the spreading privatization of service provision, both issues that Edesio Fernandes (2002) and Faranak Miraftab (2002) have addressed in much more eloquent and detailed terms at the conference.

And what of the political challenges these localities pose? The indisputable connections between the assertion of gains through the modality of a personalized, patronage-based politics of stealth, and the sudden, episodic, disconnected nature of protest, and—to quote Breman once more, "the segmented and highly volatile nature of the informal labour regime" begs the question of how the cycle can be broken.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay sought to bring space into the discussions on the processes and impacts of increasing informalization of labor markets. It argued that space, not just modalities of employment, sector, gender, or age, but also *space* needs to be an organizing principle in thinking about the processes and impacts of increasing informalization and how we build collective struggles for change in vibrant but fractured urban environments.

Space here was understood not just as a backdrop to urban activity and action, but as simultaneously defining urban activity, in the process, reinforcing inequities in power and resource allocation. Related to this issue of a dialectical relationship between the informal economy and space, were the ways in which urban space *restricts* mobility and in doing so, plays a role in increasing informalization of work; thus, shaping the possibilities for the exercise of power or protest, collective organizing, and governance

The lower-income localities of Delhi and Ahmedabad described above were informal economy clusters of mixed residential and industrial uses that produced segregated urban spaces that were slowly being pushed out into the periphery, helping create cities whose metaphorical centers are state zoned and regulated spaces for the elite, empty of the people whose labor produces much of the city.

The political implications of this deepening segregation are significant. Organizing people living in segregated, mixed-use localities that seem to be the basic building blocks of the urban fabric, presents a political challenge not just in terms of articulating a collective platform for the everyday politics of informality and the livelihood related struggles of workers in the informal sector, but also in terms of creating equitable urban governance structures.

What are the ways out of this seeming impasse? Edesio Fernandes (2002) and others have pointed to one range of possible responses through the reworking of legal systems. In this we should include the ways in which planners demarcate and regulate space. Land use, zoning, and nuisance policies in the localities of Vishwasnagar or Samaipur clearly need to be defined differently from the ways in which they are currently understood and implemented. They need, for example, to reflect the complexity of enmeshed sociospatial networks of employment, work, real estate, and shelter as well as the residents' own perspectives on the priorities for change. Another important issue is the consequences of abatement of environmental hazards—a topic that we cannot do full justice to here. Equally crucial are urban policies that focus on providing equitable services and making productive land and other resources available to all groups.

But governance is more than the equitable provision of services and resources. It is also about institutional accountability and the incorporation of citizen needs and aspirations into policy. It is these issues that point to the importance of community organizing in the localities where residents both live and work as Dunu Roy and Jan Breman so accurately addressed in the context of the problems of the politics of informality in Delhi and Ahmedabad.

As important, though not the focus of this essay, is the suggestion that the cities of the global South, riven as they are by informality and its consequences, provide examples of segregated localities that are very different from the ways in which we understand racial, ethnic, or economic segregation in European or North American cities. Understanding informality in urban space, its spatial implications, and political challenges creates opportunities to shape an urban theorizing rooted in the various local contexts of Southern cities, not just the Northern global city-laboratories of London, Chicago, or Los Angeles that have produced most of our urban theories to date.

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Globalization, deep economic restructuring, and neoliberal policies have transformed the world of work and labor markets in the North and the South. Contrary to expectations of those who studied the "informal sector" in the 1970s and 80s, the informal economy keeps expanding. This collection brings together an interdisciplinary group of researchers and activists to rethink informalization and the world of work. Together they explore the processes and reasons behind the growth of informal activities and the possibilities for generating decent work and equitable labor markets under the present conditions.

Rethinking Informalization includes papers that examine the heterogeneity of informal activities, the processes that generate its growth, and the lack of concern over increasing economic and social inequalities. Some contributions focus on the need to rethink social protections for labor and the generation of decent work. Others focus on the linkages between informality and poverty, and the final essay focuses on the impacts of informality on the segmentation of urban space and politics.

The volume will be of interest to anyone concerned with the continued growth and dynamism of the informal economy, as well as its pernicious effects on workers lives everywhere.

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