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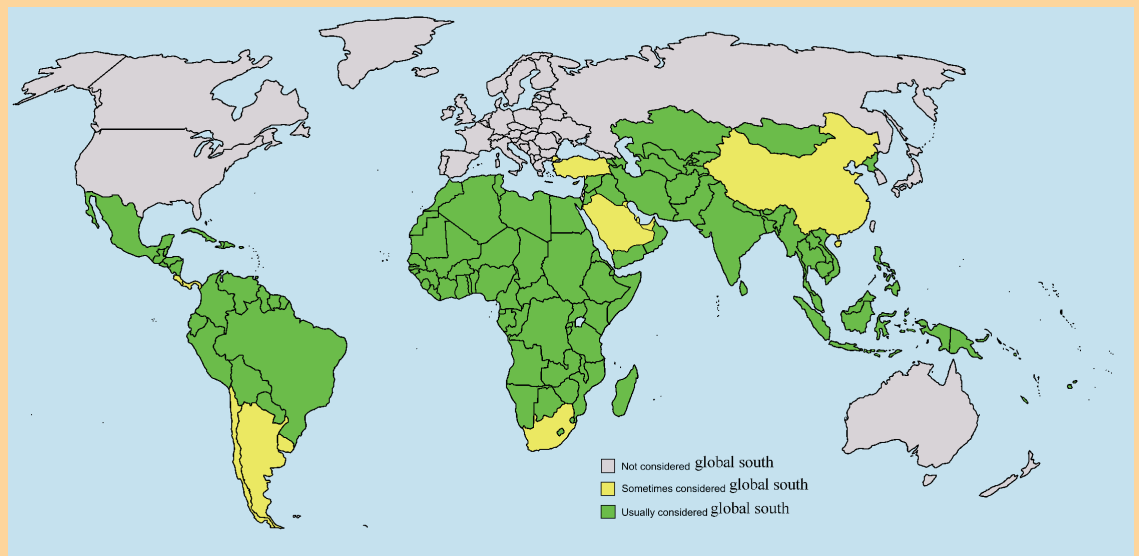
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EDITORIAL



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Editorial for Global South 6.4

The last century began with few nations of the North ruling over larger parts of the remaining world population. In course of the two world wars, Europe made way for the United States, the champion of market capitalism, and the Soviet Union, the vanguard of socialist economy, as the main players in world politics. In subsequent decades, a decolonized South struggled its way forward towards development following the path set by either of these. By the turn of the century, market and capital had won and the North looked more prosperous than ever, while many parts of the South steadily grew poorer. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, however, the tables seemed to have turned and reversed the trend of economic domination by the North. Reeling under the greatest financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s and engulfed by distrust for the current form of market capitalism, the North is now looking for alternative models of development. The South, on the contrary, has done remarkably well in these tough times. The so-called emerging economies of countries like China, Brazil, India, Mexico and Indonesia, oriented as they are towards the primary producing sectors, have seen an unprecedented economic expansion. In this economic turnaround they have emerged as the leading producing sector with major corporations and industrial houses looking towards these economies for a more cost effective deal.

However, in the long run, the constraints on the South are too structurally

embedded to be sidelined by a short-term factor like the recession. In terms of economic well being and development, countries of the South have more often found themselves at the margins, than otherwise. In spite of having a reasonable potential for growth and development, the sluggishness in terms of performance have narrowed down their chances of matching up to their more efficient North counterparts. In their attempts to address this problem, analysts have identified a lack of investment potential in key areas of economic and social development such as energy, transportation and communication. Such has been the instance in most of the South countries, where, with the decline of public investment in such key areas of a country's economy, private investment too has shied off. Although one cannot deny the specific nature of the problem with respect to individual countries, the story more or less revolves around the same plot from Colombia to Nigeria, Zimbabwe to Zanzibar, Cambodia to Venezuela and so on.

Weak economic development created a rollback effect on the agricultural sector as well, which in many South countries form the backbone of their economy. This sector has suffered failures in terms of commercial production and ability to export high value food products. The inability to prop the above areas has, in turn, limited the growth potential for the agricultural sector. With deteriorating living conditions and lower rates of development, farmers in many South countries are left to the mercy of their fate, which they are forced to determine for themselves- through the gruesome reality of death.

The community continues to suffer at the margins of a marginalized economy. One can rephrase the above statement as being at the centre of the margin. Then are we to say that communities who are placed at the margins of such an economic structure are at the centre of the margin? One needs to give the issue serious thought before embarking on any possible answers. How does one find a way out of this gloomy cycle? One witnesses individuals, and also communities, pushed to the fringes of development, chalk out their own paths in a desperate search for livelihood.

In this issue of *Global South*, one such account by Sok Serey, concerns the management of natural resources for a sustainable livelihood among the fishermen of the Tonle Sap Lake of Cambodia. Being the largest freshwater body in Southeast Asia, the Tonle Sap Lake provides sustenance to local people and fishermen, shaping their livelihood and lifestyle. In the wake of an imminent environmental crisis concerning the fresh water body, the author tries to argue for a more responsible approach by the law enforcement agencies to ensure a safe future and healthy environment for the large community of small scale fishermen who work and live by that lake. The call for public participation towards ensuring a safe future for the fishing community sounds justifiable, enabling a sustainable environment. Such collective initiatives need to be focussed towards the marginalised communities in order to ensure that they are not left high and dry in the process of development that a country or society benefits from. At the same time such measures at sharing the benefits of development should offer tangible results for all to see and analyse, rather than being just a superficial expression of earnest intentions. On occasions where mainstream

communities and social orders refuse to share the fruits of development and are rather content with subjecting marginal communities to such ills as poverty, lack of education, poor health services-it is natural that resentment would start to breed-with alarming results. Such has been the occasion in Colombia, where the country has failed to ensure a fair share of its benefits-even though paltry- to its indigenous minorities among whom are the Nasa or Paes people. Dan Tschirgi while highlighting such stark depreciation of state and public sympathy towards its marginalised community, the Nasa, draws upon the Colombian state's inadequacy to address the community's search for dignity and cultural integrity. The lacunae, for him, lies in the lack of effort on part of the larger society and state to understand the social, cultural and political world of the Nasa community, as one of their own. Rather a constant sense of antipathy, coupled with a persistent refusal to let the community enjoy their fair share of social and economic benefits aggravates the problem, thwarting any attempt to work out a possible solution for a respectable accommodation of the Nasa community within the mainstream social fabric.

Moving towards a more micro level, one of the primary instances of marginalisation within the framework of a community lies in the realm of gender. More specifically, women. Marginalisation of women, starting from a very basic instance of being excluded from the labour force to being confined to household activities of child rearing and domestic chores, has taken many forms- and with few remedies. In societies of South countries the problem looms large. With remedial measures being half-hearted and as a result ineffective, women in marginalised societies have been pushed further towards the periphery. The rising trend of globalisation-with the promised access to material resources, freedom to obtain knowledge-holds out a prospect of respite and freedom for women from the stifling control of male hierarchy. But in reality things are a disappointing let-down. As Yetunde Aluko clearly shows in her piece- on the status of women in Nigeria aspiring for freedom of control from the rigid patriarchy- that contradictions remain inherent to the Nigerian social structure inhibiting the realisation of hopes of freedom for women in Nigeria. It remains a gender-biased society which is happy to exploit the labour of women while denying her the fair share of rights. She argues for a more concerted effort on the part of the policy-makers to ensure that women are relieved from the traps of inequality and discrimination, while holding out a better prospect for Nigeria's development. Another very prominent area of exploitation for women is in the field of sexual commerce. Interestingly this area of operation is not restricted to a single city or country, but as Cristiana Schettini shows in her piece, extends across national borders. In this article, the experience of European sex workers in Brazilian and Argentinean cities have been analysed with particular attention to their life and work experiences in completely different social spaces- in cities of Latin America, a southern region. The author tries to understand the social life of these white women in South countries, as part of the sex trade flourishing in such cities.

In a rather colourful narration Jerome Teelucksingh writes on the carnival festival among the diaspora in Trinidad and Tobago together with the

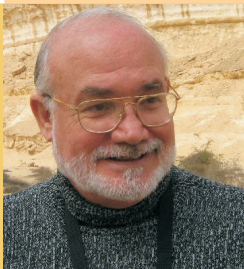
influence it has on and similarities it shares with regions outside the Caribbean. The article touches upon the various types of celebrations associated with the festival together with its impact on class, ethnicity and gender. The topic of the diaspora is a significant inclusion in the article dealing with the Indo-Trinidadians and various other ethnic groups who take part in the diaspora and increasingly identify themselves with the festival.

The consciousness of the margin has led many scholars in different South countries to engage with the subject and try to address some of the key issues that plague this area. One of the noted scholars working in this field was Papiya Ghosh in whose memory a conference was organised on marginal communities and their practices and livelihood at the CSSSC (India). Shilp Shikha Singh reports on the conference and the attempt to explore the different areas of marginality of communities together with their formation and existence. Hardik Brata Biswas reports on the International Policy Dialogue held at the University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, harping on the increasing necessity for sexuality research across regions and cultures. Ritoban Das reviews a short film portraying the life of a young lad named Omar, who, along with being a designer, dabbles with various things, while at the same time trying to enjoy his own share of life. In the Book Notices section we present to you a selection of books on various topics related directly, and also at times indirectly, to the South.

Hope you enjoy reading them all!

Colombia and the Nasa: A Potentially Successful Accommodation Between a Modernising State and Traditional People?

A preliminary exploration of the degree to which Colombia's 1991 Constitution provides a model for other polities seeking to cope with marginalised sectors of their populations, this article identifies two problematical issues. These are, first, the problem of cultural misunderstanding and, second, the resistance that members of "mainstream" society are apt to pose to social and economic benefits designed to improve the lot of marginalised sectors. The article concludes on the hopeful note that there is a school of legal thought maintaining that social change is promoted by the impact of "daily interaction between citizens and the law."



Dan Tschirgi

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Among Colombia's multifarious problems are those related to the country's efforts to deal with indigenous minorities, among whom are the Nasa, or Paez, people. With a modern history of periodic clashes with government authorities, including murderous official violence that has often been directed against them, the Nasa have long struggled to attract national and international attention to their cause. The most recent major clash between the indigenous community and Colombian officialdom came in the closing months of 2008, when Nasa activists successfully closed a stretch of the Pan American Highway for days. However, despite the wide attention given to the events of 2008, Colombia may have hit upon the road to an accommodation between the state's demands for economic development and the requirements of a traditional people's search for dignity and cultural integrity. A large part of the key to this possibility lies in the fortunes that await Colombia's 1991 Constitution.

In 2007, I published a book— *Turning Point: The Arab World's Marginalization and International Security After 9/11*¹ The work rejected simplistic explanations of the 2001 attacks on the United States and argued that centuries of marginalisation underlay the frustration and rage that eventually moved a small group of Arabs to perpetrate the 9/11 assaults. The analysis leading to this conclusion was rooted in a comparative study of a form of localised conflict that I termed Marginalised Violent Internal Conflict (MVIC). Drawing on examples of MVIC from Third World locations in Africa (Nigeria's Ogoni uprising), Latin America (Mexico's Zapatista rebellion), and the Middle East (Egypt's *Gamaa al-Islamiyya* insurrection), I argued that the ensuing model of asymmetrical conflict did much to explain the nature and dynamics of Western-Arab relations in the period that led to the events of 9/11. Moreover, in the context of globalisation, the increasing marginalisation of vast sectors of the world's population threatens to produce a syndrome of asymmetric clashes that will become a standard fare of international relations.

The optimism that greeted the 1991 Constitution in this regard has suffered seriously in the intervening years. A constant trickle of violent incidents and the reluctance of the Colombian regime to fulfil existing pledges related to land restoration, as well as the globalising economic ambitions of international corporations, have been the principle obstacles to the fulfilment of the high hopes raised by the 1991 Constitution.

The outbreak of clashes between indigenous people (primarily the Nasa) and the government of Colombia in October 2008 raised the prospect that yet another asymmetrical conflict could be developing in the Third World. While tensions between the Nasa and Colombian regimes are longstanding, they have largely been controlled for the past half century, with the last major confrontation with the Nasa (prior to the clashes of 2008) coming in 1958. Indeed, Colombia's new Constitution of 1991 appeared to hold out a promising form of national compromise: in return for a range of Constitutionally-sanctioned guaranteed rights, including regional autonomy, the Nasa would become integrated in the Colombian body politic. The optimism that greeted the 1991 Constitution in this regard has suffered seriously in the intervening years. A constant trickle of violent incidents and the reluctance of the Colombian regime to fulfil existing pledges related to land restoration, as well as the globalising economic ambitions of international corporations, have been the principle obstacles to the fulfilment of the high hopes raised by the 1991 Constitution. This paper will assess the potential resolution of Colombia's Nasa Conflict on the basis of the 1991 Constitution and the obstacles confronting that possibility today.

The events of 9/11 constituted a striking wake-up call. Quite apart from the specific grievances of the Arab world, the hijackers were also driven by a sense of intolerable marginalisation. In this, they reflected the embittered reaction of much of the world, who for much too long has seen others appropriate far too much of modernity's benefits. There are millions of marginalised people in our world. They are angry, and justifiably so, and they

represent a major threat to international peace and security, one that requires the exploration of new forms of political association. In this regard, the Colombian experiment merits attention.

Colombia's 1991 Constitution



A Tribal Family

Colombia, as historian John Coatsworth tells us, “has suffered from high levels of armed strife for most of its history.”² He goes on to point out that the country’s “current strife... is not unusual either in length or death toll.”³ Coatsworth joins other historians in citing twin causes for the country’s tragic trajectory: Colombia’s “exceptionally difficult geography”— which prevented much of rural Colombia “from being settled until well into the twentieth century”— and, second, the failure of the country’s leaders to create effective political institutions.⁴

Along with the physical fragmentation imposed by Colombia’s geography, an even more important societal fragmentation was the country’s historical lot. Beginning with the Spanish Conquest, the development of Colombian society saw the progressive erosion of indigenous societies and the ascendancy of the European newcomers. By the twenty-first century, some 84 indigenous ethnic groups existed in various degrees of marginalisation from what had developed into mainstream “Colombian” society. Comprising only a fraction of the country’s population of 42 million individuals, indigenous Colombians formed a population group that not only was on the whole marginalised but also far more linked by history and legal tradition to Colombia’s colonial past. Under the Colombian Constitution of 1886 indigenous communities were treated by the state within legal and administrative frameworks that largely derived from, and retained, practices rooted in the pre-independence colonial period. Thus, *resguardos* and *cabildos* (basically equivalent to “reservations” and the local “governing councils” of reservations) were kept and legitimised under the 1991 Constitution, albeit in terms that are strikingly different from those traditionally associated with indigenous existence in Colombia.

The new Constitution was clearly a by-product of the nearly four decades of rampant violence that had wracked the state. In the minds of Colombia’s elites, the time had now come to re-organise the state in hope of finding some relief from the armed conflicts with guerrillas and narco-traffickers. A combination of liberal/reformist forces ultimately swayed the constitutional negotiations in 1990-91 and produced the strikingly liberal new Constitution of 1991. Indigenous drafters were actively involved in the process.

The new document reorganised Colombia along refreshingly innovative principles, declaring from the outset the country to be “a social State of law, organised in the form of a unitary, decentralized Republic,” and enshrining the principles of “pluralism,” “territorial autonomy,” “democracy,” and participation.⁵ The main points of change it made in the existing 1886 Constitution included— in addition to the significant departure entailed by Article One’s declaration of Colombia to be “a social State of Law” and a “unitary decentralized Republic”—

the establishment of an adversarial judicial system by the creation of the office of a national Attorney General (*Fiscalia General de la Nacion*), and the transfer of the power of judicial review to a new body, the Constitutional Court. Additionally, the new Constitution inaugurated the practice of *Tutelage*, the right of citizens to protect their fundamental human rights by inexpensive and prompt recourse to judicial appeal.

Colombia's international obligations reinforce the country's commitment to indigenous rights. In 1983, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted a legally binding Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. Colombia was among the first states to ratify the Convention, and incorporated its provisions into domestic law in 1991.⁶ The Convention:

Protects indigenous peoples' economic, social and cultural integrity... and demands respect for these peoples' autonomy and their right to exercise control over their own process of development, including the right to be consulted in an appropriate manner on all administrative or legislative measures which may affect them....⁷

The Nasa, also known as the Paez, are one of the largest indigenous groups in Colombia, totalling somewhat over 200,000 and are found mainly in the south-western parts of the country, concentrated largely in the Andes and high plateaus.⁸ They have struggled, often violently, to preserve their culture and resist assimilation. In the process, the Nasa have emerged over the past two or three decades as what perhaps is known to non-Colombians as Colombia's most famous "ethnic cause". The Nasa will, therefore, form the central, though not sole, focus of this paper's effort to evaluate the prospect that the 1991 Constitution may ultimately point the way to resolution of the contemporary plight of marginalised groups.

The challenges to Colombia's 1991 Constitution as a guide for preventing the exclusion of the Nasa from national life fall into two main categories. On the one hand are conceptual difficulties— issues that lend themselves to different culturally-linked understandings of the same terminology embodied in the written document. As will be seen, this does not simply refer to interpretative variations of the true import of one or another constitutional article. Mere "interpretative" issues are but a pale version of the deeper problem of multiple and culturally-induced understandings of Constitutional meaning. As Joanne Rappoport puts it in her discussion of the issue,

...the translation of Nasa Yuwe of ideas originating in the national and international arenas supplements the original Spanish terminology, "improving" it by injecting it with Nasa significance.... The translation process afforded a space in which the translators could reconceptualize notions of justice and nationhood. That is they did not *translate* the constitution in a strict sense, but *reimagined* its fundamental precepts from a Nasa subject position, constructing a Nasa critique of the Colombian state.⁹

The second major category of hurdles that must be overcome prior to depending on the Constitution for a viable framework for the reorganisation of Colombia's national life has little to do with issues of interpretation or cultural misunderstanding. Instead, the operative element is one of understanding what the constitution entails, but opting to oppose the substance. A major case in point is the Constitution's handling of the territorial element of the Colombian state. Under the terms of the 1991 charter for the state's reorganisation, "1.5 percent of Colombia's population now owns 22 percent of the national territory."¹⁰ By the same token, "all Indians in Colombia today enjoy advantages not granted to other citizens: they pay no taxes, need not serve in the military, have access to free education... and receive free health care."¹¹ Not surprisingly, such benefits have provoked displeasure among elements of the country's non-Indian population. In a broader sense, many Colombians would support the view of critics of the 1991 Constitution who claim that "the constitution was written during a time of major oil discoveries, [which explains its] generosity in terms of protection of social rights and lack of

emphasis on aspects related to fiscal sustainability.”¹² Typically, such criticisms go on to charge that Colombia’s ability to avoid and rapidly correct fiscal deficits “has been severely hindered since the 1991 Constitution” as a result of the political environment “characterized by lesser presidential powers and a larger number of relevant political actors.”¹³

Other Colombians level even deeper charges against their Constitution. Andres Mejia-Vergnaud, a prominent right wing critic and Director General of the Foundation for Development Through Liberty in Bogota, stands squarely in this camp, finding the 1991 Constitution to be the product of “a legal and cultural framework that is hostile to the principles of capitalism and the open society.”¹⁴ In his view, the definition of “our political structure [is] based on the so-called ‘social rule of law.’”¹⁵ In addition to castigating the Constitution’s “long and comprehensive list of social welfare aspirations that are given the level of constitutional rights”, Mejia-Vergnaud rejects the notion of a state based on “the social rule of law,” arguing that the “idea is supposed to mean a contemporary correction of the classical idea of the Rule of Law... based on equality of opportunities before the law.” “Defenders of the new concept,” he claims, argue that:

the government must be active in the promotion of ‘effective equality’, and at the same time protect individual rights as it was meant to do in the classical conception. This idea is based on noble purposes and intentions, but it was conceived in error: first, it’s based on a naïve vision of the government and its effectiveness; second, the ideas that underlie the ‘social rule of law’ are incompatible with the classical idea of the Rule of Law. There can be no such combination. The ‘social rule of law’ opens the door to privileges, legal insecurity, and constraints to freedom, and erodes the principle of separation of powers.¹⁶

Of the two drawbacks to the effectiveness of the Colombian Constitution, one must grant primacy to the conceptual category, for it is here that the difficulties are deeper and evidently more enduring. On the other hand, the imbalance in benefits to indigenous and non-indigenous Colombians may prove a sharper and more acute problem with which the government must cope in the short-run, but it is also one that will be resolved in one way or another—precisely because the time-frame for dealing with it is so relatively short. Conceptual disagreements are more serious in part because they tend to linger for extended periods without resolution. Then too, they are by their nature more intractable, largely because at bottom they arise from differing notions of the nature of reality.

Two examples of the extent to which culturally-rooted clashes have undermined Colombian efforts to integrate its indigenous communities are, first, the Nasa’s effort to act on the constitutionally sanctioned right to enforce their customary law within the confines of Nasa *resguardos*. The second example is drawn from the well-known case of the U’wa people who live near the Venezuelan border.

Law is the collective manifestation of a people’s outlook on life, or a community’s cosmology. As such, law implicitly asserts and depends upon that community’s definition of the real. Customary law, therefore, is a community’s effort to define the most basic realities of its existence and to extend that definition in ways that seek to ensure justice according to the community’s time-honoured traditions. In Colombia—as well as in much of Latin America—the role of Cosmology in affecting traditional communities’ structures and dynamics has been subsumed under the rubric “Cosmovision,” which has been defined as

...a modern conceptual category that incorporates secular and spiritual behavior, mythic charters and historical experience into a politically effective whole.¹⁷

While the roots of Colombia’s nascent indigenous legal systems lie in the cosmologies of its native people, the tensions sparked by the constitutionally sanctioned intrusion of customary law onto the Colombian legal scene have focused on very concrete issues. Thus, “competing and

conflicting discourses used by indigenous complainants, native authorities, ethnic organisations, and the state's magistrates [have] come to the fore."¹⁸ Issues of corporeal punishment—which in traditional Nasa eyes is not seen as “punishment” but rather as a means to effect a remedial re-balancing of the universe—and of culpability (particularly through the mechanism of *tardecer*¹⁹) have involved indigenous and non-indigenous Colombians on all sides of the controversy.

The implications of this last point are very much worth stressing. Joanne Rappoport, offers a succinct but penetrating account of the 1997 case of Francisco Gembuel, who appealed the decision of a Nasa cabildo that had sentenced him to sixty lashes for *tardecer*. Gembuel's case was eventually heard by the Constitutional Court, whose president was Carlos Gaviria Diaz, a nationally known figure who later went on to the Colombian Senate.²⁰ Overruling lower court decisions, Gaviria adopted “a cultural relativist stance that broke with notions of acculturation” that had frequently figured in judicial pronouncements—

Gaviria ruled that the procedures used by the cabildo... constituted legitimate uses and customs that could not be overridden by standard legal notions of due process; he also decided that the use of the whip accorded with Nasa cosmovision and was, therefore, not an instrument of torture.²¹

“Gaviria's intervention,” Rappoport concludes, “shows us quite clearly that the appeal to native uses and customs in a pluralist system is not exclusively the prerogative of minority actor....”²² It is, instead, a major aspect of intercultural dialogue, which, in turn, provides the wellsprings of indigenous special jurisdiction.

Another type of friction is also engendered in large part by the 1991 Constitution, which not only establishes that subsoil mineral rights belong to the Colombian nation as a whole, but also stipulates that

the exploitation of natural resources in the indigenous territories will be done without damaging the cultural, social, and economic integrity of the indigenous communities. In decisions adopted with regard to such exploitation, the Government will ensure the participation of representatives of the respective communities.²³

The plight of the U'wa people, a group of about 5000 individuals living in an almost inaccessible territory near the Venezuelan border in northeast Colombia, has long captivated international attention.²⁴ In the 1990s, the U'wa struggled against plans by the U.S. oil firm, Occidental Petroleum, and the British multinational Shell Corporation to proceed with large-scale drilling on their tribal lands. Apparently swayed by the intensity of a public international campaign in support of the U'wa, the oil companies backed off, with Shell abandoning its interest in U'wa lands in 1999 and Occidental following suit in 2002.²⁵ By 2008, however, the U'wa were again deeply threatened as Ecopetrol—the partially state-owned Colombian oil concern—took up Occidental's role, hoping to exploit the oil under the U'wa's *resguardo*.

In cases involving both the U'wa People and the Nasa, as well as other indigenous groups, private and government-owned oil companies and Colombian Government officials have claimed to “consult” with indigenous interlocutors, only to find their claims questioned in terms of the representativeness of the native individuals involved. Having seen their case handled in diverse ways by different courts for nearly twenty years, the U'wa let it be known by 2008 that they would not participate in any constitutionally-mandated “consultation” on grounds that the process would “not... guarantee the respect of our rights.”

Although the Colombian Constitution reserves ownership of subsoil for the state, it also requires—as seen above—government authorities to “ensure the participation” of representatives of indigenous communities in decisions affecting the exploitation of oil deposits found in *resguardos*.²⁶ Such participation has been legally defined as requiring native communities, or their spokespersons, to be “consulted.”²⁷ Yet, this has raised a host of difficulties in the years since the country's current Constitution came into force. In cases

involving both the U'wa and the Nasa people, as well as other indigenous groups, private and government-owned oil companies and Colombian Government officials have claimed to “consult” with indigenous interlocutors, only to find their claims questioned in terms of the representativeness of the native individuals involved. Having seen their case handled in diverse ways by different courts for nearly twenty years, the U'wa let it be known by 2008 that they would not participate in any constitutionally-mandated “consultation” on grounds that the process would “not... guarantee the respect of our rights.”²⁸

Conclusion

As we have seen, the hopes placed in Colombia's 1991 Constitution for a truly pluralistic society are beset with problems. At bottom is the fact that Colombia remains a society that is much divided in terms of wealth, ethnicity, and power. Although it is true— as mentioned earlier—that under the 1991 Constitution Colombia's indigenous groups, who comprise only 1.5 per cent of the country's population, have title to some 22 per cent of the national territory, Indian leaders claim that this information is misleading because “much of the land is jungle, mountain or swamp— and protected as an environmental reserve.”²⁹ Indeed, indigenous authorities contend that nearly half a million Indians “have no land at all.”³⁰ Particularly among its rural population, Colombia exhibits gross poverty, to an extent that the country has the “second most inequitable distribution of wealth in the Western Hemisphere.”³¹ By the same token, while the overall level of poverty in the country stands at some 69 per cent of the population, “the countryside has a rate hovering around 87 percent.”³² Colombia's rural areas are not only plagued by poverty but also by a product of the state's violent internal environment: Today Colombia possesses the world's second largest number of internal refugees, perhaps ranging up to nearly 4 million persons.³³

A Map of Colombia



Against this backdrop, it seems clear that the current preliminary investigation of the degree to which the 1991 Constitution renders Colombia a model that might be usefully emulated by other states seeking to cope with marginalised sectors has revealed problematical issues that are intrinsically related to the 1991 Constitution. These are, first, the problem of cultural misunderstanding— the gap between worldviews that must be dealt with, in any effort to arrive at a common understanding of constitutional meaning; and, second, the resistance of mainstream Colombians to the various social and economic benefits assigned to minority ethnic groups under the Constitution. Moreover, it was pointed out that the first issue could manifest itself in particular problem-issues as varied as that of the Nasa's penchant for the use of corporal punishment within the legal frameworks prevailing in their own territories and the U'wa's cosmologically-inspired rejection of oil exploitation. There are, of course, many other possible manifestations that in practice could occur, and which have often done so in the recent past.³⁴

Essentially, this paper has argued that it is the first, rather than the second, problematic

issue confronting Colombia's Constitution that is key— for the crux of the matter is whether one constitution can realistically apply to all in a truly multicultural setting. Joanne Rappaport singles out the difficulty in these few words:

When [the Nasa] advocate cosmologically based legal procedures autonomous from those of the dominant society, they problematize the basis for indigenous sovereignty, which presupposes the participation of the Nasa in the political life of the Colombian nation in their capacity as ethnic citizens, and not as autonomous others.³⁵

The jury will remain out on this question for the foreseeable future. There is, however, some solace to be found in a school of legal thought that maintains that social change is promoted by the daily interaction between citizens and the law, a view that is ultimately optimistic insofar as it implies a liberalised future for Colombia.³⁶ If we are to avoid a future marred by constant and dehumanising strife between the marginalised and the mainstream elements of the human community on this planet, it is to be hoped that this outlook correctly predicts Colombia's long-term future.

- 1 Dan Tschirgi, *Turning Point: The Arab World's Marginalization and International Security After 9/11*, Praeger International Security, New York and London, 2007.
- 2 John H. Coatsworth, "The Roots of Violence in Colombia", *Revista: Harvard Review of Latin America*, Spring, 2003, p. 1, accessed on 01.08.2010 at <http://www.drclas.harvard.edu/revista/articles/view/232>.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Senado de la Republica de Colombia, *Constitucion Politica de Colombia*, Articulo 1, accessed on 01.08.2010 at <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/constitutions/colombia/col91.html#mozTocId426696>. Author's translation.
- 6 Vemund Olsen, "Legal Framework for Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Colombia", *Human Rights Everywhere*, accessed on 01.08.2010 at www.hrev.org/en/proyectos.php?idProyecto=7.
- 7 Ibid., p. 8.
- 8 Bill Weinberg, "Cauca: Autonomy Under the Gun," *World War 4 Report*, 16 September 2003, p. 3, accessed on 01.08.2010 at <http://ww4report.com/static/nasa.html>
- 9 Joanne Rappaport, *Intercultural Utopias: Public Intellectuals, Cultural Experimentation, and Ethnic Pluralism in Colombia*, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C. and London, 2005, p. 235. "Nasa Yuwe" is the language of the Nasa people.
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Picture source:

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Globalisation and the Status of Nigerian Women- An Historical Perspective

This paper examines the complexity in the historiography of Nigerian women's past— from the contradictions inherent in Nigerian patriarchal social structures, to the issue of exogenous cultures like globalisation, and its impact on women's status. The paper concludes that the New World Order as a major facilitator of social re-engineering process in the peripheries, has done very little to stimulate the realisation of the hopes of women in Nigeria. The gender-biased ideology and male-dominated social structures are still intact, and perhaps, even reinforced. It is critically important for policy-makers to listen to and work with women to improve their positions and thereby accelerate Nigeria's development.



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Introduction

The status of women is often used simultaneously in the two conceptual meanings that it has in social science. On the one hand, the term is used in Ralph Linton's sense to mean the collection of rights and duties that attach to, and define, particular positions. According to this usage, status, which refer to a particular position itself, contrasts with role, which refer to the behaviour appropriate to a given status.¹ On the other hand, the concept of the status of women is also used to refer to the position of females relative to their male counterparts in a dual-level hierarchy. In this sense, the term status connotes stratification and invites comparison with other systems of stratification. In other words, the status of women has been perceived as the position of women in relation to other persons in the society in terms of class, occupation, family position, or caste. Researchers have examined different indices which they believe provide an insight into the status of women.² Unfortunately, these indices are neither exhaustive nor expected to have the same degree of impact on the status of women across cultures. The various concepts through which the status of women have been examined include differential access to prestige, power and control of material resources, freedom to obtain knowledge, freedom from control of men (or female autonomy), social organisation of the society (patriarchy or other systems), men's situational advantage, rigidity in sex stratification, class position and gender stratification.

In treating the issue of the status of women, modernisation theory reflects a general liberal assumption about development, whereby development is viewed as a linear, cumulative process and diffusionist in nature. Thus, it dichotomises value difference into traditional and modern. Life in the traditional societies is assumed to constrain women in such a way that they lack access to the means of production, and are unable to control the products of their labour. However, the economic opportunities of modern society are supposed to free women from the fetters of custom and tradition. For example, it was assumed that Western Christianity and education would save women from the drudgeries of agricultural labour, the burden of polygyny, and marriage before puberty, and the havoc of clitoridectomy, thereby resulting in more fulfilling life chances. On the contrary, the reality of contemporary African society like Nigeria shows a commonality between 'patriarchy' and 'capitalism', that is, the exploitation of labour.³ Patriarchy exploits the labour of women, while capitalism exploits the labour of the wage-earner, whether male or female. The patriarchal relations which existed within the pre-capitalist system served as a seed bed for the emerging capitalist system.

In the light of these, this paper examines the socio-cultural environment, which has persistently been acting against the principles of social justice and equality enshrined in the Nigerian constitution. The question is not whether a woman enjoyed a better status in traditional past or not, rather, emphasis is on our understanding of gender inequality, and its persistence even in the face of national and international initiatives on the elimination of all forms of inequalities/discrimination against women. The questions posed therefore are: To what extent can we attribute the relative low position of women now to the traditional past? Were there areas of social relations where gender roles were balanced in the traditional past? Were there areas that could be described as women's preserves in traditional Nigerian social structure? to what extent are socio-cultural factors still affecting the opportunities open to women in Nigeria after independence? what are the implications of the interplay of exogenous factors like colonialism, industrialism and capitalism/globalisation for women's place in the Nigerian society? Has the lot of Nigerian women improved in any significant way since the new world order, and what are the visible changes in that regard, if any?

Theoretical perspective

Feminist theory is grounded on a moral premise that assumes the injustice of treating men and women inequitably. Women are seen to be oppressed by men through long-standing historical structural arrangements that initiate, support, and legitimate that oppression (patriarchy). Feminist theory has advanced a potent epistemological and discursive set of arguments. By placing gender front and centre, it argues that we must look at the social world through the eyes of women to see how, for example, they perceive and experience issues of sexuality, family, education, and work (where women have been omitted, they must be brought into the discourses, for these constitute canons of knowledge that have implications for power).

In the labour market, for example, the basic premise of feminist theory is that the disadvantaged position of women is a reflection of patriarchy and women's subordinate position in society and the family. In all societies, household work and childcare are seen as chiefly the responsibility of women, while being the breadwinner is perceived as men's main responsibility. The fact that these societal norms and perceptions bear little relation to the daily lives of many women, men and families does not detract from the influence on people's behaviour and their contribution to gender-based discrimination against women.⁴ Within the context of an African culture as defined by men and not herself, the woman is a second-class citizen, her labour is unremunerated, available and disposable, her rights are subject to validation, and her daughters will share her fate.⁵ She is socialised into sustaining the very structures which will oppress her throughout her lifecycle. African feminists therefore, points out that definition of Africaness (African identity) cannot be constructed outside of the personhood of African women.

Change in status of women in Nigeria: A dialectical framework of understanding



An African Woman at Work

Family and Marriage Relationship

Women and men in different societies of the world have been socially predisposed to undergo divergent experiences in development due to gender norms and ageless culture of patriarchy. Thus in many societies like Nigeria, women are taught to be submissive and manage to survive in a male dominated society, while men learn to accept challenges and adapt to changing situations.⁶ Gender norms for males are built around power and control, independence, violence, risk-taking, early sexual activity and having multiple sexual partners, while gender norms for women include submissiveness, dependence, virginity until marriage and faithfulness during marriage.⁷

Discriminatory socialisation of women and men into unequal gender power relationship is, therefore, the root cause of women's disadvantaged situations that inhibit their living standards and contributions to development. This trend has resulted into development of different values for men and women with subordination of the latter in many societies like Nigeria. Cultural and traditional concepts play significant roles in the way women are perceived

and treated in the society. Women are defined as members of a community only through their relationship with men. All through life, women are defined in relation to man either as daughter, wife or mother. The woman either as a daughter or sister has more value, authority and even in many cases right to inheritance.⁸ Immediately after she marries, she is treated as one of the possessions, voiceless, without rights, with constrained freedom and without her own identity.

In Nigeria, the family is extremely important. The rule of descent is patrilineal and gives men control over female sexuality. From the traditional past came notions of the physical control of women's body and its product.⁹ Under this also comes the issue of *Purdah*,¹⁰ genital mutilation, a woman's lack of control over her body's biology or its products such as children who are viewed to belong to the man's family. Within marriage, women have the obligation to have children. Traditionally therefore, society blames the women for a marriage without children.¹¹ There is also the general preference for a "male child". Thus, it is not unusual for marriages to break down on account of the lack of a male child, while the arrival of the first son strengthens the position of the wife in the family. The reason for the preference of the male gender is found in the general societal belief that continuity of the family lineage is achieved through the male issues. Female issues will be married into other families.

In many societies like Nigeria, women are taught to be submissive and manage to survive in a male dominated society, while men learn to accept challenges and adapt to changing situations. Gender norms for males are built around power and control, independence, violence, risk-taking, early sexual activity and having multiple sexual partners, while gender norms for women include submissiveness, dependence, virginity until marriage and faithfulness during marriage.

Polygyny is also a crucial component of many women's lives, though modern developments of mandatory education, urbanisation, and capitalism are changing this practice in the society. Modern marriage institutions are imitating western models where indigenous cultures are often overlooked. However, at the first glance, modern marriage in Nigeria would seem to offer women greater autonomy and equality. But studies such as that of D.J. Smith have revealed that gender inequality persists in powerful ways, manifested perhaps most obviously—and certainly most dangerously with regard to the risk of HIV infection—in a pronounced double standard for extramarital sexuality.¹²

In contemporary Nigeria, married men are much more likely than married women to engage in extramarital sex. The expectations of men and women are vastly different when it comes to sexual relations. While for women to engage in extramarital relationship is taboo, men who do so are considered virile. To prove their virility and power Nigerian men engage in extramarital sex in the very face of the danger of HIV/AIDS. Data from around the world, including Nigeria, suggest that the greatest risk of married women contracting HIV is through sexual intercourse with their husbands.¹³ The obvious implication is that men are acquiring HIV outside of marriage and infecting their wives.

The prevalence of participation of men in extramarital sex and the fact that women's sexuality is ironically, the target of popular discourse about sexual immorality attest to the persistence of gender inequality.¹⁴ Women cannot easily confront their husbands about infidelity or protect themselves from possible HIV infection. They are vulnerable to violence from their husbands.¹⁵ Marital rape is suffered in silence. Fear of beating and rape keeps many women from questioning their husbands' sexual escapades.

Production and Labour force participation:

It has been argued that pre-colonial Nigeria had a gendered division of labour. However, the nature and implication of such a division of labour is often misinterpreted. While male

dominance was built into the social system of some Nigerian ethnic groups, women played a significant and vital role in all aspects of the lives of their community.¹⁶ Women worked outside the home in order to meet the responsibilities placed upon them in their roles as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, members of guilds, chiefs, or citizens. In most traditional societies, farming was the major occupation with women taking a very active part. Other subsidiary occupations were trading, crafts, keeping of livestock, etc. The access of women to critical resources like land, labour and capital depended on their position in the family, lineage or community. Men, naturally gained access to land largely through lineage, while most of the time women gained access to land as wives, and sometimes as daughters and such access were often limited.

Nigerian Women and Children



The role of Nigerian women in the economic sphere is inhibited largely because of lack of access to family land and capital, and lack of control over their time and the products of their labour. Most of the time, husbands manage the family farm and keep the proceeds of export crops under their control, while wives use the earnings from food crops and trading to meet the family's daily needs. However, in traditional Yoruba setting, a woman can be fairly independent of her husband if she engages in trading. Independent economic activity is an important component in the personality of a complete woman and this has a strong influence on the nature of the Yoruba family structure.¹⁷ P.C. Lloyd has noted that the degree of jealousy and envy that exists between Yoruba men and women is dependent on two factors, one of which is women's economic independence.¹⁸ S.F. Nadel also asserts that men find women's economic independence threatening to their dominant status.¹⁹ The men view women as an obvious threat to their traditional roles as head of the family and to their super-ordinate status.

In contemporary Nigeria, the potential female labour force is fifty per cent of the population of Nigeria, but the actual value is 36.5 per cent.²⁰ The proportion of women in the formal sector is very minimal. Women are still mainly involved in petty trading. According to statistics, 78 per cent of women are mostly engaged in the informal sector, which are farming and petty trading.²¹ Despite this, their contribution is not commensurate monetarily. Women's unpaid labour is twice that of men, and its economic value is estimated to be up to thirty per cent of the nation's Gross National Product.

Self-advancement of women has been curtailed by the burden of reproduction, particularly in Nigeria as a result of the cultural roles associated with women's role of child bearing, child raising and home making. Nigerian women, like their counterparts, around the world, face a lot of discrimination that limit their opportunities to develop their full potential on the basis of equality with men. The 1999 constitution forbids discrimination on the basis of sex and the employment rights of women are further protected under the Labour Act. Nevertheless, the reality is that Nigerian women are far from enjoying equal rights in the labour market, due mainly to their domestic burden, low level of education, biases against women's employment in certain branches of the economy and discriminatory salary practices. In some establishments

women are not allowed to get married or pregnant because it is thought that it will reduce their productivity and of course profit.²²

With the prevailing socio-economic crises in Nigeria as a result of the IMF/World Bank-dictated neo-liberal policies, jobs are lost at an increasing rate. Expectedly women are the worse hit. In some cases, women can retain their job if they do not mind becoming the objects of sexual satisfaction of their bosses. Some women, particularly the young ones are only employed as long as they are ready to use their bodies to woo customers for their business organisations. This has been called “corporate prostitution” by Salaam.²³

Politics

The Nigerian society being a patriarchal one, clearly manifests the social categorisation of women implicit in femininity, as being inferior to men and, therefore, not capable of, or suitable for political leadership. This was the situation even before the incursion of colonialism, when women had token representation in Oba’s council in Yorubaland, with the Erelu or Iyalode representing women’s interests in council comprising mainly of male titled chiefs although the Onu and Ada as women groups in Igbo land wield some political and religious influence.²⁴ Unfortunately, the western influences restricted women’s participation. Cultural discourses on power run counter to colonial representations of women’s access to power and suggest that structuring African democracies after the Western patterns may in fact continue to curtail female representation in governance and decision making. There is enough support for the thesis that women’s sphere of influence and power before colonisation were eroded by restructuring the state.²⁵

Nevertheless, in nearly all African societies, women occupy a position, which belies their often critical role in the crystallisation of political and social order. This reality is doubly so in the case of Nigeria where women have played significant roles in the pre-colonial kingdoms of Kanuri, Oyo, Kano, Benin, etc. Women also played visible roles in the nationalist struggles, which culminated in the attainment of independence by Nigeria in 1960. The most frequently cited examples in this regard remain the Aba demonstration of 1929 in which women protested against the imposition of taxes and warrant chiefs;²⁶ and the important milestone was in 1944 with the formation of the Women’s party by Oyinkan Abayomi. Later, pro-women’s societies and organisations were formed; the Nigerian Women’s Society was established in 1963 and led by Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti. The National Council of Women’s Societies (NCWS) formed in 1958, certainly drew some inspiration from these pioneering efforts.²⁷

The past ten years of democracy in Nigeria can only boast of few women in politics. Different reasons are adduced for the low level of the involvement of women in politics, ranging from the inability of women to muster the required strength to weather the storm of politics, to the unwillingness of political parties to field women candidates. This view is an expression of the bias of the society against women. Most religions and traditions tenaciously hold the belief that women must not occupy leadership positions in society, but can only play second fiddle.

However, the present status of Nigerian women negates these heroic antecedents, as women continue to receive short shrift in political matters. Although many women in the country are today active in politics, their number is still “tokenish.” The past ten years of democracy in Nigeria can only boast of few women in politics. Different reasons are adduced for the low level of the involvement of women in politics, ranging from the inability of women to muster the required strength to weather the storm of politics, to the unwillingness of political parties to field women candidates. This view is an expression of the bias of the society against women. Most religions and traditions tenaciously hold the belief that women must not occupy leadership positions in society, but can only play second fiddle. And, everybody, men and women, is expected to be a conformist.²⁸ Worst still, any woman who attempts to break the

“rule” is seen as a non-conformist and treated with scorn even by women.

Apart from the religious traditions and other societal beliefs that restrict women’s participation in politics, the socio-economic arrangement called capitalism is the worst fetter. Nigerian politics is often heavily “monetised” and women are always economically disadvantaged. Women seeking election have been hampered by a national political culture dominated by money, corruption and power wielded by local political barons and overlords.²⁹

Globalisation and Nigerian Women

The ways in which women and gender concerns intersect with globalisation is complex and often contradictory, compelled by the driving force of neoliberal economic policies and practices, and propelled forward by global production designed to meet the ever-increasing demands for popular consumption. The implementation of economic policies such as Structural Adjustment Programs in Nigeria has also compounded the feminisation of poverty. This has manifested itself in the loss of livelihoods, unemployment, increases in the number of commercial sex workers, trafficking in women, street children and a total rupturing of the social fabric which bind communities together.

However, in a way, one can say that the current wave of globalisation has greatly improved the lives of women world-wide, particularly the developing world. In Nigeria for instance, one can be tempted to attest at this stage, that Nigerian women are really cashing in on the post cold war ‘dividends’ based on the recent developments in contemporary Nigeria. As the wind of democracy and a just civil society are blowing through the nation, women are creating vibrant and committed women’s groups and NGOs in numbers. Most women NGOs are vigorously involved in advocacy and capacity-building programmes aimed at making national development programmes sensitive to gender concerns and imperatives.³⁰ Most of them have become driving forces for change in favour of women.

However, according to the United Nations, the indicators of gender equality are at the level of enrolment in schools, participation in the workplace, and representation in decision making positions.³¹ In Nigeria today, although, the progress made so far is commendable, the question remains: Are these initiatives sufficient both for effective women’s empowerment and as yardsticks for predicting their fortunes in the future? As we can see, the high profile given to women’s issues, significant as they are, remain largely misdirected and grossly inadequate. The question that then readily comes to mind is: How has the status of women improved in terms of education, health, employment, and political participation?

Women and Education

Education has the potentials to bring about important changes in the status of women by enhancing their productivity not only in the market work but also in the household work and childcare. According to the United Nation Human Development Review in Nigeria, female combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratios as percentage of men is 83 per cent.³² Gender inequality in education deprives girls with innate abilities similar to those of boys of opportunities to develop their human capital and participate in a series of growth-supporting economic activities. Y.A. Aluko, in her study identified some social factors underlying persistent gender disparities in education, part of which are macro-societal factors like socio-cultural values, political-economic factors, religious and geographical factors.³³

Women and Health

Sub-Saharan Africa has the largest problem with maternal mortality. Reasons include delays in seeking medical help, transporting pregnant women to health centres, and receiving medical

assistance, and may be attributable to social, cultural, religious, and economic factors. In Nigeria, after overcoming the problem of inadequate supply of health care centre, the next hurdle to cross is the utilisation of these health care facilities. Situations abound where women's economic, political and social powers are minimal, their health status is poor, because they are not even in a position to adopt the health care services to suit their needs.

Women and Labour Force Participation

Changing economic patterns in Nigeria have made changes in role stereotypes inevitable. Both men and women have found it necessary to move into the labour market in search of a means of livelihood. Available data show that women now participate actively in the labour force in Nigeria. Nevertheless, while the number and types of women who work have changed dramatically, numerous other aspects of women's work have remained impervious to change. Like the clustering of women into gendered jobs, the disproportionate number of women in low-ranking positions and their comparatively low earnings in comparison to men, as well as the overall under-utilisation (unemployment and underemployment) of women workers. The explosive growth in the female workforce has not been accompanied by true socio-economic empowerment for women.³⁴ This is because, despite their increased economic activity rates, women are still concentrated in low-paid service sector or agricultural work, their work in unprotected and low remunerated informal sector has increased, and their share of unpaid labour in the home has also increased as many states have undertaken cuts in the public funding of health, education and social services, including state run child care services.

Women and Political Participation

There is no realm of human activity that is completely devoid of politics whether religious, social or economic. An important area where gender inequality has been observed all over the world is political participation. The political world is essentially male-dominated inspite of the increased participation of women in politics in recent years. A score of women contested at the April 2007 elections in Nigeria. Looking at the results, it can be safely concluded that women did not perform significantly better than the 2003 elections. In the 2003 elections, women could only muster 6.1 per cent in the lower house of parliament and 3.7 per cent seats in the Upper House.³⁵ Different reasons have been given for negligible visibility and leadership opportunities of women in politics, which developed out of gender-biased ideology and male dominated social structures that globalisation has left intact, and perhaps even reinforced. This explains why the prevailing social barrier facing women in Nigeria and elsewhere, are yet to collapse in spite of the monumental changes at the global systemic level. The so called thirty per cent or 35 per cent Affirmative Action only treats the cause of women in isolation of the struggle for liberation of the society (poverty). Having women in public offices does not imply automatic improvement in the status of women in the society and their standard of living. The question of women and politics is about more than numbers.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, it can be established that globalisation offers women unprecedented opportunities, but equally new and unique challenges. Gender inequality springs from many sources, and it is often difficult to determine which forms of inequality are being eliminated by the effects of globalisation, and which are being exacerbated. Progress towards eliminating gender inequality in the future depends on finding and embracing the occasions, mostly in the political and legal realm, where the global approach strengthens women's security and welfare, and fighting the issues, mostly in the economic realm, where women are made worse off by the

new global system.

Also at the local level, societal obstacles of religion and beliefs from the traditional past must be broken, women should not be domesticated, they have to enjoy right to work and associated benefits as men. They along with men have to have access to free and functional education and health care, electoral process and contest must not be a preserve of the rich. A fundamental change of attitude rather than affirmative action should be incorporated in public politics and enforced by the Nigerian State. In achieving this, there is the need to change men's perceptions about the true worth of their women folk. Men still view women's role as limited to the home front. They also feel that women have no business competing with them for limited socio-economic and political resources. Given this it is difficult for women to pursue this struggle for empowerment.

It is necessary to sensitise men to the significant contributions women have made, and will continue to make, to national development. For women, on the other hand, empowerment is a "multidimensional process involving the transformation of the economic, social, psychological, political and legal circumstances of the powerless".³⁶ This transformation can only be realised when women concertedly go beyond the current rhetoric about their legitimate grievances. Women have for long limited themselves mainly to the manifestations of their marginalisation rather than its root causes. They should realise that issues such as government's neglect of their reproductive, productive and other social roles are all linked to women's lack of "access to power, prime responsibilities, and decision-making".³⁷ Consequently, they should consciously, collectively and deliberately support each other in resisting the pervasive conformity to gender stereotypes prevalent in society. It is high time we expose the so-called liberators of women who are making their fortunes out of oppression of women or peddling illusions or wrong ideas.

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Participatory Management of Small-Scale Fishing in the Tonle Sap Lake: A Case Study in Kompong Learnng District of Kompong Chhnang Province, Cambodia

The study mainly aims to explore the participatory process involved and capacity building obtained; and to gain feedbacks on the enabling environment from small-scale fishermen. Finally, an appropriate approach is developed to effectively manage a sustainable small-scale fishing in the Tonle Sap Lake. The study was conducted in Kompong Hav Commune of Kompong Learnng District, Kompong Chhnang Province, Cambodia. The primary data was basically obtained from a household survey with 333 sample size stratified by poor (PHHs) and non-poor households (NPHHs). The primary data collection methods were applied by using social tools and participatory approaches including field observation, key informants, focus group discussion and social mapping.



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Introduction

The Tonle Sap Lake is the largest freshwater body in Southeast Asia and is often referred to as a unique hydrological phenomenon, where local people fish and farm its rich fishing grounds, floodplains and overwhelming forests in seasonal cycles. Importantly, the Tonle Sap Lake is the breeding ground and flood mediator for the Mekong River. So the significance of the Lake reaches far beyond Cambodia.³ The inland fisheries from the Tonle Sap Lake immensely contribute to Cambodian livelihoods and lifestyles. Also, the fisheries and other aquatic resources have long been depicted as a centre of food security to around 1.25 million Cambodian people who live around the Tonle Sap Lake.⁴ The fisheries resources of the Tonle Sap Lake rank first in the world in terms of productivity⁵ and fourth in terms of catch.⁶ Additionally, it is suggested that fisheries from the Tonle Sap Lake constituted sixty per cent of total Cambodian fisheries production.⁷

The study was significantly linked with the participatory management of the natural resources to the sustainable livelihood of the fishermen along the Tonle Sap Lake of Cambodia.⁸ The concept is anchored with public participation in order to establish a good enabling environment for the management and conservation of fisheries resources jointly engaged by representatives of the government, NGOs and local fishermen. A sustainable livelihood for small-scale fishermen may be endangered unless all stakeholders work together to establish a good enabling environment with alignment and harmonisation between them. The existing law requires to be properly enforced for sustainable management of the resources with transparency and accountability. There has been a significant empowerment of the local fishermen and the Provincial Office of Fisheries (POF) towards jointly managing and owning resources, which can then be sustainably used.

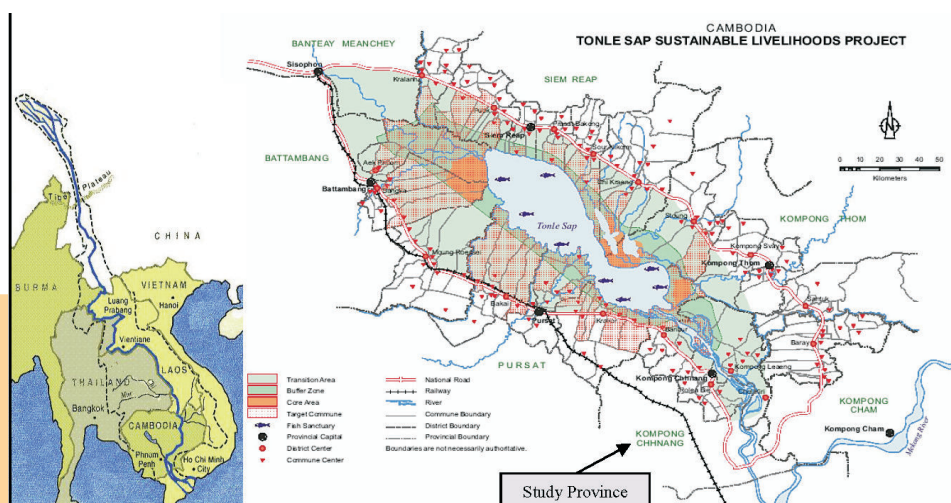
Kompong Chhnang Province is located in the central part of Cambodia with a total population of 472,341 inhabitants (101,260 households) with an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent. The province is covered by five main water bodies (11.28 metres of water level) namely the Tonle Sap Lake, the Stung Krangponley, the Chrey Bac, the Sap Angkam, and the Baribo. Kompong Hav Commune, the study area, is located in the east of the provincial town of Kompong Chhang. It is one of the nine communes of Kompong Learnng District, which includes six different villages namely Troul Rolom, Koh Krek, Doun Viet, Kompong Boeung, Keng Tasok and Stueng Sendek.

This paper mainly aims to examine the importance of public participation in managing the fisheries resource along the Tonle Sap Lake of Cambodia. The specific objectives of the study is to explore the participatory process involved and capacity-building obtained by small-scale fishermen for sustainable fishing; to gain feedbacks on the enabling environment from small-scale fishermen focusing on the policy and its enforcement, the institutional arrangement and community participation. In all this, it was very significant to study the development of an appropriate approach for sustainable small-scale fishing.

Study Area and Methods

Kompong Chhnang Province is located in the central part of Cambodia with a total population of 472,341 inhabitants (101,260 households) with an annual growth rate of 2.4 percent.⁹ The province¹⁰ is covered by five main water bodies (11.28 metres of water level) namely the Tonle Sap Lake, the Stung Krangponley, the Chrey Bac, the Sap Angkam, and the Baribo.¹¹ Kompong Hav Commune, the study area, is located in the east of the provincial town of Kompong Chhnang. It is one of the nine communes of Kompong Learnng District, which includes six different villages namely Troul Rolom, Koh Krek, Doun Viet, Kompong Boeung, Keng Tasok and Stueng Sendek. Troul Rolom is the nearest to the Tonle Sap Lake and Don Viet is the farthest. The study area, Kompong Hav Commune of Kompong Learnng District was deliberately selected. Out of the total population in the commune (1,298 households), the data

collection was targeted to 334 respondents who were small-scale fishermen interviewed throughout the six villages of the commune based on Yamane's work.¹² The primary data was obtained from a survey by using social tools and participatory approach. The primary data collection methods were applied including a household survey, field observation, key informants, community meeting and social mapping. In data analyses, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used.



Source: Asian Development Bank

Map of Cambodia and Study Area

Fishing Scales in Tonle Sap Lake



Fishing dependency by Learning on how to fish

The livelihoods of the communities along the Tonle Sap Lake are generalised as “fisheries-dependent”. The people living in the fishing villages tend to rely heavily on the fisheries resources.¹³ Baran categorises fishing in the Tonle Sap Lake into 3 different types: Small-scale; medium-scale and large-scale.¹⁴ The large-scale fishing or fishing lots are concessions auctioned by the government of Cambodia to the highest bidders (who are private businessmen) for exclusive operation over two to four year periods and their equipments such as seine nets and bamboo barrage traps are used to cover large areas.¹⁵ There are two types of large-scale fishing gear used in Cambodia, namely dais (i.e. bagnet) and bamboo fence/barrage with trap. The fishing season is officially open from 1 October to 31 May; during the closed season, no activities are allowed in the fishing lots. The conditions of the lease are specified in a standard-format contract. Small-scale fishing, or family-fishing or survival-oriented fishing is common to almost every family around the Tonle Sap Lake and it is usually practised by family members

using small equipments such as bamboo fences traps, and gill nets. It is true that small-scale fishing is much more significant, as a source of livelihood, food security and national income, than most people realise.¹⁶

Fisheries Reform in Cambodia

In Cambodia, historically, public policy strategies and policy discussions on fisheries are directed largely towards managing and regulating large and medium-scale fisheries, rather than small-scale inland fisheries. It is only recently that some significant changes in the rules and regulations governing the fishing sector have begun to allow communities to control and manage fisheries resources locally, under the banner of community fisheries programmes. The policy reform in 2000 (under Sub-decree in 2003) is very vital to give the poor communities access, user rights and management responsibility of fisheries and inundated forests in the country including the Tonle Sap Lake in order to improve livelihood opportunities and food security.¹⁷ The Royal Government of Cambodia decided to relocate the bulk of fishing rights from large-scale commercial fishers to small-scale and subsistence fishermen, thereby implementing a national poverty alleviation programme and effectively solving a long-running conflict between local communities and fishing lot operators.¹⁸

As a result 56 per cent (500,000 ha) of the former fishing lot areas allocated to the commercial sector was released to the local communities. Also, the reform gives local people an opportunity to participate actively in the joint management of natural resources of fisheries in order to achieve the goals of protection, conservation, development and sustainable use of resources. Since the introduction of the policy, local communities have established more than 175 community fisheries and some of them have received support from the Management of River and Reservoir Fisheries component (MRRF). It is a firm belief that community management with appropriate support in terms of financial and institutional community management may help achieve equitable and sustainable natural resource management and environmental protection.

Fishing Seasons in Tonle Sap Lake

Fishing in the closed season is expressly forbidden and the regulations ban all types of illegal equipment such as the use of strong lights, electricity and *muro-ami* for family-scale fishing during the open fishing season.¹⁹ It was observed that the fishermen in the Tonle Sap Lake commonly used gill nets, seine nets at the bank and cast nets. According to the interview with the officers involved and group discussion with fishermen, the gill net could be used not longer than ten metres, seine nets not longer than 500-600 metres and cast nets not longer than eight metres. However, it was hard to find the above-mentioned sizes among those used by small-scale fishermen in the Tonle Sap Lake. In general, small-scale fishermen used gill nets up to 200-500 metres, seine nets up to 1,500-2,500 metres and cast nets up to 12 metres. Yet, the usages of cast nets did not have a negative effect on the fishing resources of the Tonle Sap Lake. The most destructive fishing gears were gill nets, gear fishing nets and electric shock.

Table 2.1: Fishing Season in the Tonle Sap Lake

Status	PHHs		NPHHs		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Open season only	15	6.6	3	2.8	18	5.4
Colse season only	2	0.9	2	1.9	4	1.2
Both	209	92.5	102	95.3	311	93.4
Total	226	100.0	107	100.0	333	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Other and worse forms also found were fishing in the closed season (30 June – 30 August) and fishing in sanctuaries. Table 2.1 shows that only 5.4 per cent of the fishermen who collected fishes in the open season and the percentage of the fishermen from NPHHs (2.8 per cent) were smaller than those who were from PHHs (6.6 per cent). Fishing in the closed season, fishing in sanctuaries and illegal fishing were correlated to possibilities of giving informal payment to the concerned officers and the need of daily food for consumption and fishing being the main source of income. The fishermen from NPHHs always got more advantage in such cases because they have a greater capacity to bribe the concerned officers for illegal fishing in enriched fishing areas. In general, fishermen collected fish for almost the whole year (93.4 per cent of the days) without regard for whether it was an open or closed season. It is a simple fact that they have no better alternative livelihoods than this. Some of the fishermen were involved in farming or gardening in the dry season but they still indulged in fishing to meet daily consumption needs and supplement their main income.

Public Participation of the Fishermen

Group Discussion with Local Fishermen Kompong Leang
District of Kompong Chhang Province, Cambodia



The involvement of fishermen in participatory processes including policy making, planning, community meeting, impact assessment, social mapping, resource mobilisation, campaign, workshop/training and group discussion on fishery-related issues are very necessary. The participatory process could provide the fishermen opportunity to discuss and share their concerns and issues with policy and planning. In order to have a sustainable management of fisheries resources, the establishment of a community fishery (CF) is most important to serve the core function of co-management linking the resource users and the POF for management, conservation and development.²⁰ Then the local people are fully entitled to jointly manage the resources with the POF. Yet, there was not a single CF in Kompong Hav commune. Therefore, the resources were basically managed by the POF. According to the POF, a CF could not be established unless the fishing lot is allotted by the Fisheries Administration. The fishermen

cannot initiate the process to establish the CF for a joint management unless fishing space is available and allowed by the Fisheries Administration.

Table 2.2 shows that fishermen could mainly participate in community meetings (37.8 per cent) and group discussions (24.3 per cent). In this light, fishermen from NPHHs were more actively involved in the activities than those who were from PHHs. The figure also clearly shows that NPHHs had more opportunity to be involved in participatory processes. It is a failure that PHHs had fewer opportunities to communicate their issues and problems. As there was no CF in the commune, so the co-management mechanism for fisheries management did not exist. The fishermen thus had little opportunity to be involved in the management and conservation of the fisheries resources. Other important public fora such as impact assessment, social mapping, resource mobilisation, campaign and workshop/training were not extensively arranged for. In addition, the entire participatory process was mainly conducted by outsiders as policy and planning of their programme as well as implementation was done by NGOs and there was no local initiative.

Table 2.2: Public Participation of the Fishermen

Status	PHHs		NPHHs		Total	
	(N=147)		(N=127)		(N=274)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Community meeting	72	31.9	54	50.5	126	37.8
Impact assessment	8	3.5	4	3.7	12	3.6
Social mapping	12	5.3	21	19.6	33	9.9
Resource mobilization	9	4.0	3	2.8	12	3.6
Campaign	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.3
Workshop	9	3.1	2	1.9	9	2.7
Group discussion	38	16.8	43	40.2	81	24.3

Source: Field Survey, 2008

When the co-management works, the fishermen could jointly work with the POF to develop annual planning and arrange regular community meetings which would enable the fishermen to interact with the POF by raising their problems and concerns for future improvement. Without CF establishment, the fishermen had no such opportunity and NGOs became the most important player in coordinating between the fishermen and POF in the development process. Moreover, NGOs were more helpful for the fishermen while the POF was not much involved in the process implemented by the fishermen and NGOs. In this regard, the voices and problems raised by fishermen were basically included in planning programmes of the NGOs. In Cambodia, the Commune Council (CoC) is the most important local actor for rural development through decentralisation and deconcentration (D&D) scheme. The Commune Investment Plan (CIP) is annually developed and it is very important to include all the priorities raised by the local people. The integration meeting at the end of the year is organised to call for support and contribution from governmental agencies and NGOs of the prioritised sectors in the communes. However the fishermen are not involved in the process prepared by the CoC. But so far, very few fishermen have been able to participate in this process and they had less power in discussion and decision making.

Training and workshop have been organised for focal points and peer educators and then they shared these with other fishermen in the communities. It was considered as the only sustainable means even after the completion of the project. The focal points and peer educators were playing very important roles in disseminating the fishery law to the fishermen. Yet, it is still a very difficult challenge for focal points and peer educators to continue disseminating knowledge about the fishery law as brought by the impact of their learning that there was no incentive and little financial support to arrange for the logistics of training, community meetings and group discussions as soon as the development project was complete.

According to community meetings and group discussions, influential fishermen from the NPHHs were dominant in discussions, while fishermen from the PHHs participated very passively for their own safety and convenience. Moreover, when there is no CF, the fishermen had no opportunity to gather and share problems and concerns before sending their representative to the planning and development process. The absence of the CF also silences the voices in bargaining and in giving the requisite strong message during the planning process. The argument to treat the fisheries on a priority basis in the Commune Investment Plan should be given more attention by the governmental agencies and NGOs. Some other important development processes including workshop impact assessment, social mapping and campaign and resources mobilisation has been occasionally arranged by NGOs. However, these have not been brought to bear unless NGOs need data and information for project implementation. The activities seem not to be sustainable when the project withdraws within a period of two to three years. Thus local initiative and involvement gives more sustainable results.

Capacity Building for the Fishermen

Active participation of fishermen is vital for sustainable development of fisheries management and conservation, which in turn depends on their degree of awareness. This is why the involvement of fishermen need to be accompanied by public awareness and information. This means that fishermen cannot realise the importance of public participation unless they are equipped with knowledge and understanding on the issues. In Kompong Hav Commune, there was one local NGO working for fisheries management and environmental conservation in cooperation with local fishermen and environmental officers. The NGO was working mainly to raise awareness and knowledge of the villagers. The awareness creation was on fishery law and the impact of illegal fishing especially by using electric shock was widely disseminated through information boards, posters, bulletins and billboards. In the commune, the NGO was working with focal points to build the capacity of peer educators from within the communities for the dissemination of the impact on illegal fishing, environmental conservation and resource management.



Small-scale Fishermen in the Rain

Table 2.3: Capacity Building among the Fishermen

Status	PHHs		NPHHs		Total	
	(N=166)		(N=117)		(N=283)	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Training	4	1.8	13	12.1	17	5.1
Workshop	8	3.5	10	9.3	18	5.4
Video show	63	27.9	22	20.6	85	25.5
Drama Show	49	21.7	19	17.8	68	20.4
Cross-visit	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Bulletin	12	5.3	18	16.8	30	9.0
Information boards	26	11.5	34	31.8	60	18.0

Source: Field Survey, 2008

Training and workshop have been organised for focal points and peer educators and then they shared these with other fishermen in the communities. It was considered as the only sustainable means even after the completion of the project. The focal points and peer educators were playing very important roles in disseminating the fishery law to the fishermen. Yet, it is still a very difficult challenge for focal points and peer educators to continue disseminating knowledge about the fishery law as brought about by the impact of their learning. There was no incentive and little financial support to arrange for the logistics of training, community meetings and group discussions as soon as the development project was complete. As Table 2.3 illustrates, the capacity-building obtained by the fishermen shows that very few fishermen could participate in capacity-building in order to support the sustainable management of fisheries resources. The most effective way of capacity-building, like visits to villages that have been successful in fisheries management in other provinces, did not yet exist. Only some small opportunities, such as training and workshop at provincial or national levels, were available for the fishermen. The training and workshop have been organised with basic support from the NGO to focal points and the peer educators to work in the communities.

Other important sources of information sharing were through video and drama shows. However, these tools also have very limited availability for the fishermen. But they still made up the larger proportion at 25.5 per cent and 20.4 per cent respectively. They were very effective equipments as most of the fishermen were illiterate and they were more comfortable with shows than written papers. The fishermen from PHHs were mainly provided with drama (27 per cent) and video (21 per cent) shows related to fisheries management and conservation. The accessibility of bulletin (16.8 per cent) and information boards (31.8 per cent) were also greater for the fishermen from NPHHs. The two tools were not effective for the fishermen from PHHs because of the low level of education. Due to the lack of capacity building activities for the fishermen in the communities, the fishermen had less possibility to participate in the development process, in particular, planning. Also, when the fishermen were not well-equipped with knowledge and understanding on the resource management and conservation, they were not much aware of the negative impact of illegal fishing and over-fishing. Therefore, they may ignore participating in the resource management as well as not demand from the CoC their involvement in policy development and planning.

Enabling Environment for Fisheries Management

The perception on the enabling environment for fisheries management was assessed by using Weight Average Index (WAI) using three scales: 1-strong, 2-moderate and 3-weak. The WAI values were employed to measure the level of satisfaction and the degree of perception of the fishermen on (1) policy and regulation, and (2) institutional arrangements based on various variables. T-test at 95 per cent confident interval was also used to identify the differences and similarities of the perception among the fishermen from PHHs and NPHHs.

Perception on Policy and Regulation

This assessment was made on the policy and regulation for fisheries management and conservation in Kompong Hav commune. The T-test shows that there was no significant difference on all the assessments, but only perception on the confiscation of illegal gears (sig.: 0.004) and de facto law and policy (sig.: 0.012). The fishermen felt that the de facto law and policy were already well-designed (PHHs: WAI=0.82 and NPHHs: WAI=0.87) but the enforcement was still limited (PHHs, WAI= 0.45 and NPHHs, WAI=0.46). The *de facto* loose enforcement of the law and policy could not maintain sustainable management and development. This led to unequal distribution of benefits among the PHHs and NPHHs at a moderately high rate.

Table 3.1: Perception on Policy and Regulation

Status	PHHs		NPHHs		T-test
	WAI	OA	WAI	OA	
De-facto law and policy	0.82	G	0.87	G	0.012*
Law enforcement	0.45	M	0.46	M	0.223
Illegal fishing banning	0.4	M	0.43	M	0.053
Confiscation of illegal gears	0.48	M	0.55	M	0.004**
Quality control	0.46	M	0.54	M	0.235

Source: Field Survey, 2008

WAI: Wight Average Index, OA: Overall Assessment,

* Significant at 95 per cent level of confident

*** = Perfectly Significant = (0.000) ** = Very Significant = (0.01– 0.02) * = Significant = (0.03– 0.05)

Strong (S) = 1.00 - 0.67; Moderate (M) = 0.66 - 0.37; Weak (W) = 0.33 - 0.00

According to group discussion during community meetings, the illegal fishing and confiscation of illegal gears were not done unless the restriction from provincial or central government was released. The fishermen from PHHs were suffering more in dealing with the concerned officers during the confiscation of illegal fishing gear. It was not a big deal for NPHHs because they could give bribes to cover for their illegal acts. However, the relevant officers were working because of emotional reasons rather than legal procedures because they knew that small-fishermen were involved in illegal fishing for their survival. In some small cases of illegal fishing, they ignored procedures as they knew it to be impossible to survive if fishermen only used fishing gears allowed to them. In this regard, fishermen from both PHHs and NPHHs evaluated as moderate the implementation of regulations banning illegal fishing, confiscation and quality control. The main difference among the PHHs and NPHHs related to confiscation of illegal gears were the possibility of informal payment by NPHHs to cover for illegal acts.

Perception of Institutional Arrangement

In relation to the previous assessment of the perception of policy and regulation, the institutional arrangement for fisheries management were also analysed by using the same WAI methods with test at 95 percent confident interval to identify the differences and similarities of the perception among the fishermen from PHHs and NPHHs. The T-test shows that the perception of the fishermen about the police and mass media were significantly different. The fishermen from both PHHs and NPHHs assessed that fisheries officers, commune council, police and the NGOs could moderately support them. However, the fishermen from PHHs and NPHHs differently evaluated the commune council as good and moderate respectively.

Table 3.2: Perception on Institutional Arrangement

Status	PHHs		NPHHs		T-test
	WAI	OA	WAI	OA	
Institutional Arrangement					
Fishery office	0.64	M	0.65	M	0.102
Commune Council	0.69	G	0.65	M	0.055
Police	0.51	M	0.55	M	0.000***
NGOs	0.56	M	0.57	M	0.046
Awareness and Local Participation					
Policy and law	0.62	M	0.70	H	0.541
Local participation	0.63	M	0.65	H	0.313
Local authority participation	0.69	H	0.76	H	0.129
Mass media	0.52	M	0.58	M	0.000***

Source: Field Survey, 2008

WAI: Wight Average Index, OA: Overall Assessment,

* Significant at 95% level of confident

*** = Perfectly Significant = (0.000) ** = Very Significant = (0.01– 0.02) * = Significant = (0.03– 0.05)

Strong (S) = 1.00 - 0.67; Moderate (M) = 0.66 - 0.37; Weak (W) = 0.33 - 0.00

The commune council played a central role in supporting all the fishermen regardless of whether they were from PHHs or NPHHs. Sometimes, the commune council struggled to protect the PHH benefits and they also did not have much authority in decision-making. The fishermen from both PHHs and NPHHs assessed the police as moderate but they had significantly different points of views about the unequal treatment during the confiscation. In connection with the *de-facto* law and policy and local participation, PHHs put their rate as moderate for all except high for local authority participation. While fisheries law and policy have been developed, the enforcement have been limited. The fishermen from the PHHs were very active in participating in the development process, including community meeting and planning. In contrast, NPHHs evaluated as high for all but moderate for only mass media accessibility. In spite of strict law and order regulations, the facts show that the fishermen could involve in illegal fishing without interruption once they have paid the transaction cost to the agencies involved. The accessibility of mass media among the PHHs and NPHHs were significantly different. The fishermen from NPHHs could afford television and radio, which were necessary to obtain information about fisheries-related issues such as the announcement of the closing of the season. The fishermen from NPHHs were assessed as high for policy and law,

local participation and local authority participation because they had more opportunity to be involved in participatory processes than those who were from PHHs.

LEAD Approach

It is true that participation of the resource-user is the most crucial in all the participatory processes including law, policy making and planning. They are the most vulnerable, if the resources are destroyed or reduced. However, it is very difficult for the fishermen to be the owners of all the resource themselves without external support since they have low education and poor knowledge in community development and organising. The facilitation of external support could orient and guide the fishermen to the right direction, in particular, with regard to community development and organisation, and resource mobilisation. The support should be based on the LEAD approach which provides opportunity for the fishermen to lead their own community in development and organisation through the whole process. The LEAD approach is also very important to allow all the resource-users to be involved in all participatory processes, which will make the law, policy or planning more comprehensive and reflective of the real situation and need of the villagers.

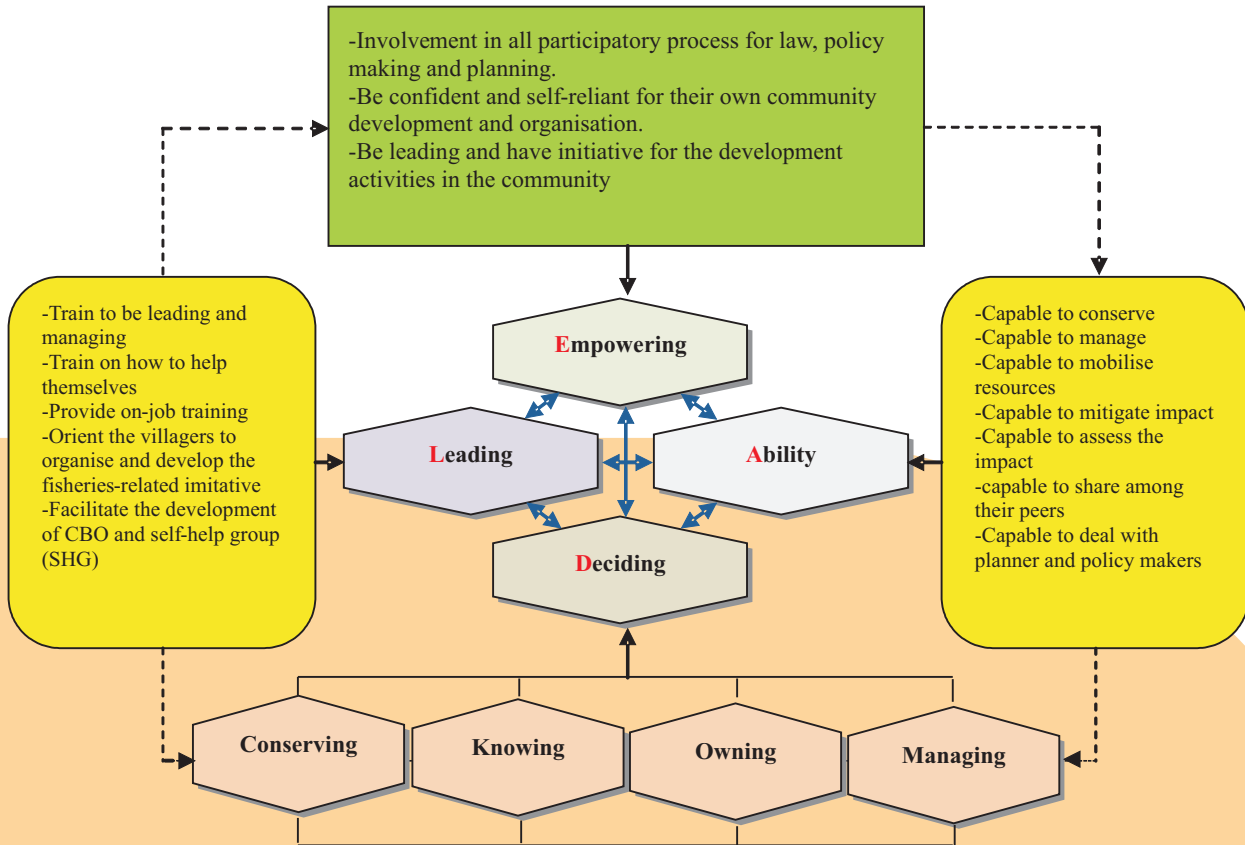
The first step of the “Leading” approach is also the most necessary, where the resource users could learn from the external facilitators on how to lead and manage and how to help themselves. They also need to build up their capacity through on-job training. The community-based organisation should be established either in the form of community fishery or smaller units. There should be a place for the fishermen to gather for discussion and share their concerns with others for appropriate solutions. The self-help group is also very important in order to support other members that have less knowledge and understanding. The self-help group could strengthen the capacity of the members for the development of the internal regulation, policy and law related to fisheries management and governance.

When the local fishermen are strong enough, they are empowered and can be confident and self-reliant for their own community development and organisation. The “Empowerment” of the local fishermen could also allow them to be involved in all participatory processes for law, policy making and planning and to have their own initiative for the development activities in the community. The empowerment could also encourage the fishermen to strongly put their commitment and efforts in managing and conserving. Additionally, the fishermen are confident of their roles and responsibilities. The empowerment and leading could additionally build the capability of the fishermen to be capable to conserve, to manage, to mobilise resources, to mitigate impact, to assess the impact, to share among their peers and to deal with planners and policy makers. The “Ability” of the fishermen is derived from being trained to lead and manage as well as to be empowered.

LEAD Approach - Public Participation in Small-scale Fisheries Management

The ultimate goal of the involvement in all the participatory process with the involved agencies cannot be to sit in meetings without a voice or struggle as they currently have to. They have to be enabled to use their rights to make decisions. The “Deciding” by fishermen will be the most effective since they are dealing with issues and problems on a day-to-day basis. The fishermen cannot be involved in the decision-making process unless they have good perspective and knowledge of resource management, mobilisation and ownership. Capability-building for direct users needs to be deeply ingrained in any understanding of the relationship between their livelihood and resource management. Their lives are dependent on the *de facto* resources, so if the resources are destroyed either by themselves or outsiders, they are the worst victims. The

most-at-risk and vulnerable group should be the most important people who have rights to make decision.



Main Findings of the Study

The findings of this research can make a great contribution in improving the way policies and plans are formulated with regard to fisheries co-management in the Cambodian reaches of the Tonle Sap Lake and the Mekong River with an emphasis on effective engagement of users of fisheries resources and such major stakeholders as government and NGOs. The study clearly concludes that the public participation for fisheries management is important but it is very rare in Kompong Hav commune. A more involved approach on the part of the POF to work with fishermen, CF and NGOs is but the initial step towards an effective co-management in the fishing communities along Tonle Sap Lake of Cambodia. The fishermen and NGOs are always ready to work with POF and lot-owners to deal with unsolved problems.

When there is no CF establishment, the existence of co-management is also rendered unlikely. The CF is the only grass-root organisation which could create a wide-ranging public participation if it functions well. The fishermen, especially from PHHs, did not have much opportunity to engage in the participatory process except for community meetings and group discussions. Without knowledge and empowerment, the fishermen could not have strong voices in decision-making for policy formulation and planning. The opportunity for capacity-building at provincial and national level is very limited and the participants are mainly targeted to focal points from specific local NGOs. The focal points were local fishermen bridging the local NGOs and other fishermen who are always considered to be representative of the fishermen by NGOs on the one hand and the government agencies on the other. They were appointed by NGOs, who always prefer them at meetings. They are expected to share with other members

their knowledge but they failed to do so when the development project of NGOs is completed.

As the law is not properly enforced, almost all fishermen still take part in fishing in the closed season (30 June–30 August). The poor legal framework, due partly to informal payment and lack of participation from fishermen for their safety and benefits, weakened the resource management. The absence of CF also meant that the fishermen could not be enabled to take into account all the problems and issues in order to communicate them to the Commune Investment Plan initiated by the CoC. The fishermen are more involved with NGOs than with the POF. The POF does not take much interest in events organised by CF, and on the contrary, POF does not involve a large range of fishermen and their representatives. Thus, the fishermen from PHHs did not give good assessments on provincial fishery office, police and NGOs but only of the commune council. The provincial fishery office and police might not enforce the laws and policies. At the same time, the coverage of NGOs was still very small and could not deal with major issues. The ‘inactive involvement’ of the local people and local authorities in gathering and disseminating information about illegal fishing was further informed by the issues of inefficiency of the crackdown and rampant bribery.

Under these circumstances, the LEAD approach is developed from the findings of the study in order to support the concept of the involvement in participatory process by all the stakeholders, in particular, for the resource-users. The approach aims to focus on “Leading”, “Empowering”, “Ability” and “Deciding”. When the fishermen are provided the wherewithal to LEAD the process of development of their own community in such a way, resources will be sustainably conserved. First, they have to be trained to lead and manage and then the focus should be on their empowerment. They should be more involved in various processes and use their newly acquired abilities to deal with planners and policy makers. The external developer is also very important to initiate the process of orienting them on how to mobilise and manage resources. When they are well-trained and empowered with capacity and ability, they will be more active and efficient participants in decision-making for their own community development.

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- 1 UNDP-GEF (2002), Portfolio Search Result. Integrated Resource Management and Development in the Tonle Sap Lake, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
- 2 See H, Leang Navy, R. Chuenpagdee, *Socio-economic and Livelihood Values of Tonle Sap Lake Fisheries*, The World Fish, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 2006. The six provinces that surround the lake have a population of nearly three million people (about thirty per cent of the country’s total population). About one third of this population lives on floating villages around the lake and within the inundated forests. Population of fishing communes: 58 per cent of fishing districts, corresponding to 2.4 million inhabitants in fishing communes in 1995. Actually when Kandal and Kompong Cham provinces are removed from statistics as not being located around the Great Lake, 161 communes out of 307 are fishing communes (52 per cent), and their population was made up of 1.2 million inhabitants in 1995.
- 3 The catch per fisher amounts to 20 kilograms (kg) per person per year (compared to 4.5 kg/person/year in Bangladesh and 0.5 kg/person/year in India). The natural productivity of the Tonle Sap’s floodplains ranges from 130 kg to 230 kg/hectare/year, which is a world record.

- 4 E. Baran, P. Starr, and Y. Kura, *Influence of Built Structure on the Tonle Sap Fisheries*, The Cambodia National Mekong Committee and the World Fish Center, Phnom Penh, 2007. Research suggests that production ranges from 290,000 tons to 430,000 tons per year.
- 5 E. Baran, *Cambodian Inland Fisheries: Fact, Figures and Context*, The World Fish Center and the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute, Phnom Penh, 2005. See also *Future Solutions Now: The Tonle Sap and its Fisheries*, The Asian Development Bank. Phnom Pneh. Cambodia, 2005. Csava, I.D.J. Doulman, T., O., Petr, J. Prado & L., Debas, *Cambodia-Rehabilitaion and Development Needs of the Fishery Sectors*, FAO, Fisheries Circular Nr.873, FAO, Rom, 1994.
- 6 The general food consumption per capita per year is 224 kilogrammes of paddy rice, 39.23 kilogrammes of fish, 3-4 kilogrammes of meat (including beef, pork, chicken etc.), 15-20 kilogrammes of vegetable and 10-25 kilogrammes of others.
- 7 Of the total population 85.5 per cent are farmers, 6.0 per cent are fishermen, 7.5 per cent are traders and 1.0 per cent are government officials. Rice cultivation and gardening are grow in the dry season because the area is fully flooded in the rainy season except Stueng Sendek and Kompong Boeung, the latter being partially flooded.
- 8 The greatest potential for future development are prioritised with fisheries coming first, agronomy second, livestock third, agro-business fourth, followed by forestry and agro-industry respectively and agro-tourism as seventh.
- 9 The General Population Census of Cambodia 2008, The National Institute of Statistics; The Ministry of Planning, Phnom Pneh. Cambodia. MAFF, the Provincial Government, 2001. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.
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Picture Source: Author

Sexual Commerce and Transnational Experiences in South America at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

This article focuses on the transnational experiences of a specific group of European women associated with prostitution who lived in Brazilian and Argentinean cities at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although those women are considered in historiography as part of the “white slave trade”, this text deals with other dimensions of their life and work experiences. I argue that the transnational dimension of social experiences of women identified as victims of pimps is fundamental in understanding their social networks and their strategies to deal with the prevailing social organisation of sexual commerce in each city. Their experiences also illustrate aspects of many other groups of immigrant workers in the period.



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Since the end of the nineteenth century, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro were strongly connected through an unprecedented circulation of people, capital, ideas and practices. The flows of men and women, principally Europeans, between both cities have particularly sparked the interest of historians in Argentina and Brazil. Labour historians in both countries have broached the question of the international circulation of workers in order to understand anarchist and worker militancy in the period.¹ Historians of culture and sexuality have also noted the growing international transit of women linked to sexual commerce between both capital cities, interpreting it in terms of forced immigration in the context of the widespread histories of “white slavery”.²

In both cases, Brazilian historians have drawn on records of the expulsion of foreigners to sustain their interpretations. Their sources were the documentation that resulted from the passage of Gordo law, which gave the executive power the prerogative to expel foreigners through an administrative measure, therefore, without the necessity of a judicial process. For a long time, historians considered this expulsion legislation a mere reflection of the predominant politics of the period known as the First Republic in relation to social protest, when arbitrary measures by the executive power, martial law and the use of police force to deal with social question were well known. However, recent studies in the social history of work and the law, preoccupied with a growing interest in comparing different national experiences, have questioned this vision. Such studies have opened up a series of new interrogations about the construction of the legitimacy of expulsions in specific contexts.³

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, as many cities in the western hemisphere, approved laws of expulsion that gave the executive power the right to define, incriminate and expel undesirable foreigners. As with other countries, expulsion was debated in the context of wider discussions about citizenship, nation and nationality. As a result of this and of the exclusion of the judicial power, the expulsion laws provoked recurrent polemics and questionings of their constitutionality. In both countries, they were contested several times over the years, but remained in force for many decades.

When the very procedures of accusation become objects of historical investigation, we can put aside the supposition that the histories of prostitution registered in the documents related to expulsion necessarily refer to the traffic in women, as in the expression used by journalists and police at the beginning of the twentieth century. By the same token, if we consider prostitution as an activity that organises identities and social hierarchies and that is inserted in ample social networks and informal economies, we can propose other questions that refer to work and to sociability. In this way, prostitution becomes a prism through which we can understand the social (and transnational) experiences of diverse groups of workers in the period.

As a result, the comings and goings between Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires of men and women associated with the practice and exploitation of sexual work are not considered here as proof of the existence of traffic in women, as many police and judicial authorities argued and which is reflected in certain recent histories, but as clues in interpreting the articulation of social networks between certain immigrant groups.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires, as in many cities in the western hemisphere, approved laws of expulsion that gave the executive power the right to define, incriminate and expel undesirable foreigners.⁴ As with other countries, expulsion was debated in the context of wider discussions about citizenship, nation and nationality.⁵ As a result of this and of the exclusion of the judicial power, the expulsion laws provoked recurrent polemics and questionings of their constitutionality. In both countries, they were contested several times over the years, but remained in force for many decades.

In Brazil as in Argentina, the process of expulsion remained in the hands of the police. But while in Argentina the process was rapid and summary (the police authority elaborated long

lists of expulsion that were transformed into ministerial decrees), in Brazil the instructions for the execution of the law established specific procedures. Beyond the ample and undefined “threat to national security” that targeted political militants, the law also mentioned as motives for expulsion “vagrancy, mendicity and competently verified pimping”. In the first two cases, being caught in the act was sufficient proof to be imprisoned. In the case of pimping, a police investigation that gathered at least “two testimonies” was required.⁶ Therefore, in contrast to the Argentinean case, in which expulsion decrees could be collective, in Brazil the decrees were individual and followed a “judicial” format.⁷

In practice, it is quite probable that in both the countries many anarchist suspects or any other foreigner under the scrutiny of police prosecution ended up expelled with no regards to formalities. For many contemporaries committed to the defense of foreigners faced with the violent initiatives of the police, it was not particularly important in some cases whether the expulsions followed a formal path. For them, what was at work in any case was the same illegal practice on the part of the executive power.⁸ However, the records produced in the Brazilian case raises the question of the construction of the legitimacy of expulsions, evident in the procedural preoccupation. But principally, for the historian these records open up many possibilities to scrutinise the social experience of many men and women that exceed the question of expulsion itself.



Polish Women

The records of Brazilian expulsions demonstrate the construction and consolidation of certain common meanings regarding the identity of pimping in South America, especially the idea that it was a foreign phenomenon. European immigrants, particularly of Jewish origin, who lived in Buenos Aires or Montevideo before moving to Rio and who cohabited with prostitutes were easy targets of police investigations; such immigrants were easily turned as targets of expulsion measures, without passing through the legal procedures of the regular charge of pimping, an offence included in the penal code of 1890. For this reason, the common features of men accused of pimping in expelling processes, such as being Jewish, “Russians” and French, having had spent some “suspect” period in the Southern Cone and having declared themselves small businessmen, cannot be taken as evidence of the organisation of the traffic in women or of the profile of traffickers.⁹ Considered in the context of their production, these records show first the functioning of the mechanisms and routines of police suspicion. Second, and indirectly, they indicate the social experiences of immigrant groups who fell under police suspicion.

In the records produced by the police in Rio from 1907 onwards, it is not only possible to look at the meanings of the reference to other countries in the construction of the accusation of pimping, but also to examine the meanings of the travel of the accused for other countries. In this sense, the references to time spent in Buenos Aires in the processes of Brazilian expulsions not only help to clarify the construction of the accusation of undesirable, but also allude to the

meanings of international dislocation and the sojourn in Buenos Aires in the lives of the men and women associated with the practice and exploitation of sexual commerce.

Naturally, documents tend to show more about the mechanisms of accusation than the trajectory or social experience of the accused. To expel the thirty-two year old New Yorker, Max Burckner, one of the first victims of the 1907 law, the police precinct chief arrested him under the accusation of:

not exercising any profession, craft or business in which one licitly gains a life, nor having means of subsistence and correct domicile, and to be accused of exercising pimping.¹⁰

The amplitude of this accusation converged in the intention of the police precinct chief to characterise the suspect as a non-worker. The accusation of the authorities, reiterated by the declarations of two other policemen, the evidence that Burckner was in the country for less than two years and, finally, the time he spent in Buenos Aires, completed “the process”. We end up knowing less about the life of Max Burckner than about the paths of police accusation.

More revealing is the case of the Austrian Mauricio Goldran, 38 years old, who was expelled in 1912. The police brought together the declaration of who would become the principal element of incrimination, his wife, a prostitute in São Paulo, and the statements of two chauffeurs and a woman who lived in the same house of prostitution as his wife. The intention of the police precinct chief was to prove that Goldran exploited his own wife, which was reinforced by an identification bulletin sent by the police in Buenos Aires, which stated that Goldran was known there “as a pimp and dangerous thief”.¹¹

As in this and other cases, police investigation reiterated the notion that there was a circuit between the capitals used by more or less dangerous criminals. The reference to the antecedents of Goldran in Buenos Aires, which consisted of an observation at the end of an identification file produced by the Secretary of Public Security of São Paulo, functioned as an element of confirmation and legitimacy of police suspicions. This was despite the fact that neither in Buenos Aires nor in São Paulo was there any record of a conviction against Goldran. Dangerous thieves and ruffians became sufficient and interchangeable definitions to define the Austrian as undesirable. The interpretation of these examples of international circulation as symptoms of the condemnable behaviour was fed on stories, more or less sensationalist, about pimps and other criminals who acted internationally, circulating with impunity in the port cities of the Southern Cone. The strategy of the expelled in disembarking in the closest port to return to the city and therefore dupe the precarious police control of the borders ended up functioning to reinforce this idea.¹²

As the process of expulsion was administrative and not judicial, the accusation ends up referring to a diversity of behaviours more than to a particular offence. Robbery, theft, living with prostitutes, and a broad idea of dangerousness were combined with reference to Buenos Aires as the place in which an unknown past becomes concrete as the scenario of the morally condemnable lives of these threatening foreigners.

In the statements of the witnesses, however, the city assumes other dimensions. The Argentinean Adelia Francatti, Goldran’s wife’s housemate, declared that Goldran went often to the house “in search of his wife, sleeping with her some nights, I mean, every night, and taking the money that she gained from prostitution.” Adelia mentioned in passing that she knew Goldran since his time in Buenos Aires, when he lived with another woman.¹³

Francatti’s statement appears to have been cautiously prepared to combine with the accusation of the authorities, as is shown by the rectification in respect to the nights in which the accused slept with the victim, so as not to leave any doubts as to the connection of Goldran and his victim. But the central point of her statement is the reference to her previous familiarity with the accused in Buenos Aires, from where both of them came. The reference to the

Argentinean capital sounds threatening to the police because it indicates that the city was part of the common experiences of life, work and sociability of the men and women who lived in the world of prostitution in São Paulo. Unknown by the Brazilian police authorities, these people appeared to know each other very well before they arrived in the country. In many expulsion procedures such as this, Buenos Aires is concretised as an unknown past, and for this it becomes an important element in the definition of the identities of these unknown foreigners.

In the eyes of the authorities, and in agreement with the accusatory procedure that does not search for an offence, but a condemnable behaviour, the past becomes a central part of the identity of the undesirable. In this context, the past life in the police reports becomes almost a destiny, a condemnation. Nonetheless, the same references indicate that for the Argentinean Adelia Francatti and for many other women, the previous experience in Buenos Aires could acquire specific meanings.

If many processes were summary and revealed the trajectory of the authorities, such as in the case of Burckner, many others counted on the declarations of the supposed victims of the pimps, as in the case of Goldran. In these cases, the women called to incriminate the “undesirable” in question almost always referred to themselves as having a past in Buenos Aires. As such, in 1913, the French woman Fernanda Alban, 26 years old, appeared at a Rio police station in search of police protection against her thirty-year old Argentinean husband, Maurice, recently arrived from the Argentinean capital. To prove that her husband was dangerous, Fernanda brought to the police station various threatening letters that her husband had sent her and also receipts of the remittances of money sent to him while he was in Buenos Aires.

The story told by Fernanda had various novelistic moments, but it was not just a story of trafficking in women. According to her, the marriage was recent, having occurred in Paris one year earlier. Very soon afterwards, the couple left for Buenos Aires, but after a few months, Fernanda Alban escaped from her husband, who, in her words, “wanted to force her into prostitution”, and ended up in a boarding house of prostitutes in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁴ Barely arrived in Rio, Alban began to receive the threatening letters from her husband, and eventually, his unexpected visit, that ended up leading her to the police station.

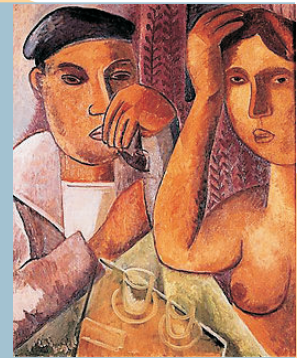
Buenos Aires represents in this and in other statements an experience of exploitation by a husband or a violent companion. The arrival in Brazil is accompanied by the hope for a more autonomous life. Fernanda, for example, established herself in a women’s boarding house in the elegant neighbourhood of Catete, close to the centre of the city. In the boarding house, she encountered at least one French woman who she had known for a long time. There is no evidence that Fernanda wanted to free herself from the practice of prostitution, as she did from the exploitation of her abusive husband.

Stories such as this bring to light some differences in the legal context and social organisation of sexual commerce in each city. In many Argentinean cities, prostitution was regulated by municipal ordinances since the 1870s. As in many other countries that followed the so-called “French system”, the municipality of Buenos Aires created a differentiated legal status for notorious prostitutes, defining rules for their circulation in public space as well as for working hours and other conditions of life and housing.

Maybe this French woman was not aware that her declarations corroborated the images that circulated with more and more force about Buenos Aires in various international ambits. Being a city that continued to regulate prostitution despite the growing international pressure for the abolishment of regulation measures, and to receive great contingents of European immigrants, the idea that the Argentinean capital was a paradise for white slavery was consistent with the report of Fernanda about her personal history. In Buenos Aires, she appeared to be incapable of fleeing the exploitation of her partner; in Rio de Janeiro, where prostitution was not regulated, she could seek a more autonomous life, re-establish relations with people she knew.

Therefore, in the new context she could count on some type of help from fellow countrymen as well as, principally, appeal to the police for protection against the persecution of her husband.

Stories such as this bring to light some differences in the legal context and social organisation of sexual commerce in each city. In many Argentinean cities, prostitution was regulated by municipal ordinances since the 1870s. As in many other countries that followed the so-called “French system”, the municipality of Buenos Aires created a differentiated legal status for notorious prostitutes, defining rules for their circulation in public space as well as for working hours and other conditions of life and housing.¹⁵ Differently, in Brazil, while the debate between the so-called “regulators” and “abolitionists” was brought up for discussion now and then, there was never a consensus for the approval of regulatory measures, considered authoritarian and immoral, since the regulatory intervention of the public power would legitimise the exploitation of sexual commerce by third parties. This difference reflected two specific legal traditions in relation to prostitution: In Argentina, sexual exploitation was only an offence in the “corruption of minors”. In Brazil, the exploitation of the prostitution of any woman was considered an offence in the penal code.



Sailor and a Prostitute

In both cases, the legislation was always directed to defend what was perceived as the common good or public morality, never the rights of the prostitutes, which were never in question. But the cases discussed here show that at least in the Brazilian case, many women could mobilise these legal notions in their favour. Concretely, in 1913 the Argentinean regulatory legislation did not protect Fernanda and the benefits gained by her in prostitution from her husband, since she was an adult and legally married. Therefore, she was fully responsible for her acts and her work as prostitute. In Rio de Janeiro, however, the threatening letters of her husband together with the frequent remittances of money to him were considered proof of pimping in the eyes of the Brazilian police. Such elements justified either the initiation of a case of pimping, in the terms of the Brazilian penal code or, of expulsion, under the terms of the 1907 law.

Reports of women like Fernanda suggest, even in the coercive and potentially manipulated context of a police investigation mounted to expel a foreigner, the expectation that life in Brazil could signify more autonomy in relation to previous entailments. This is expressed with particular clarity in the case of the 23 year old Russian Sara Praigret, resident of an elegant women’s boarding house at Lapa beach in Rio. Sara appears to have gone spontaneously to the police station in search of protection against her ex-partner, the young Italian, Vicente Grassi, 21 years old. At the station, Sara affirmed that she met him “when she was in Buenos Aires”. On her return to Rio, she was surprised by the uninvited appearance of Vicente, with intentions of living with her. The unexpected presence of Vicente ended up becoming a problem for Sara, if we take into account her affirmations that she gave him money, bought him clothes and ended up selling her jewellery to pay the expenses of this bothersome

man.

With an exceptional sincerity, Sara reported to the police precinct chief her decision thus—

... tired of maintaining Vicente, she was able to make him leave for Buenos Aires, at the end of December; for this end, she was obliged to borrow money from the renter of the building in which she resided, Ana Gold, to whom... she pawned a ring... after the departure of Vicente, she sent him a letter telling him to never return since she did not want to live in his company anymore....¹⁶

The whole case began at the exact point in time when Vicente, not accepting Sara's letter, decided to return to Rio in search of his wife. The police precinct chief acted rapidly, and was able to bring together statements from other women sympathetic to Sara. All of them told the same story, with a few different details that confirmed how bothersome was Vicente's showing up at his partner's door. Ana Gold, the owner of the boarding house mentioned that she gave Sara 10,000 réis for Vicente so that he could sleep in a hotel and leave her in peace. Another Russian woman, Margarida Grin, said she heard Vicente argue with Sara to give him 30,000 réis, with the justification that he was accustomed to always have some money on him.

In a story similar to that of Fernanda, Sara also was able to leave her life in Buenos Aires behind her, adapting to her new life in Rio thanks to her ties with other women, who helped her find an elegant boarding house to live and work. Moreover, her friends and acquaintances in Rio de Janeiro lent her money to "dispatch" Vicente to Buenos Aires. When this strategy did not work, Sara ended up appealing to the Rio police, who saw in her story the opportunity to free themselves of one more "undesirable". Thanks to the police intervention in the case, Sara saw Vicente being expelled from Brazil after only ten days since her first denunciation at the police station.

Fragments of the lives of such women show the partiality of the perceptions of contemporaries and also of the historiography that exclusively takes into account the victimisation and violence to which so many European prostitutes were submitted to in this period. Stories such as those of Sara, Fernanda and many other women do not corroborate this perspective insofar as they indicate that in certain moments of their lives, they could count on a variety of resources that increased their margins of action.

This is not to counterpoise autonomy and possibilities to that of the perspective of the victimised. However, fragmentary and incomplete reports from the experiences of work and sociability of many prostitutes allow us to call into question some of the basic lines of the histories of trafficking in women in this period. These histories, with strong and efficient symbolic dimensions (which not by chance have been updated throughout the twentieth century, and continue until today, with some significant changes in their national and racial as well as gender components) tend to restrict complex migratory experiences related to sexual commerce to a dimension marked only by coercion and violence. In this respect, the narratives of the trafficking of women tend to erase some of the central aspects of the experiences of many prostitutes, such as the centrality of relations of sociability and solidarity between women of the same origin in the decision to travel, the possibility of economic accumulation and the liberating dimension of certain transnational dislocations.

Many of the trajectories of life registered in the declarations given to the police reveal encounters of people, interests and histories that contribute to the consolidation of certain characterisations of these cities that were, at the same time, the scenario and part of the life experience of a variety of men and women. The exercise of mutually crossing these trajectories in South American cities and their possible meanings to the protagonists, with daily practices of social control and of repression of certain profiles of foreigners on the part of public functionaries, opens up the possibility to contextualise these practices of vigilance and control

and of seeing, in the middle of these practices, some indications of action and influences exercised by men and women.

The references by Rio's authorities to the Argentinean antecedents in the life of pimps and prostitutes began to function as an efficacious accusatory element, in part, because these references had peculiar meanings in the experiences of these women and men. As such, to spend time in Buenos Aires, or spend time in Rio de Janeiro, could be understood by public authorities as proof that they were facing threatening and unknown undesirables. At the same time, for many women, to spend time in Buenos Aires or Rio involved the possibility of re-encountering acquaintances, dealing with their income in a more autonomous form, escaping from harassing husbands, or simply taking a chance for a better life, just as many other immigrants.

- 1 In addition to the ample bibliography in the field of migratory studies, see, among others, Sheldon Leslie Maram, *Anarquistas, imigrantes e o movimento operário brasileiro, 1890-1920*, Paz e Terra, Rio de Janeiro, 1979; the works of Carlo Romani, *Oreste Ristori: uma aventura anarquista*, Annablume/Fapesp, São Paulo, 2002, Edilene Toledo, *Travessias revolucionárias: idéias e militantes sindicalistas em São Paulo e na Itália (1890-1945)*, Editora da Unicamp, Campinas, 1994, and of Vitor Wagner Neto de Oliveira, *Nas águas do Prata: os trabalhadores da rota fluvial entre Buenos Aires e Corumbá (1910-1930)*, Editora da Unicamp, Campinas, 2009.
- 2 See, for example, the works of Margareth Rago, *Os Prazeres da noite*, Paz e Terra, São Paulo, 1991; Lená Medeiros de Menezes, *Os Estrangeiros e o comércio do prazer nas ruas do Rio (1890-1930)* Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, 1992; Donna Guy, *El Sexo peligroso: la prostitución legal en Buenos Aires, 1875-1955*, Sudamericana, Buenos Aires, 1994; and Yvette Trochon, *Las rutas de Eros. La trata de blancas en el Atlántico Sur*, Taurus, Montevideo, 2007.
- 3 A good example is the work of Rogério Luis Giampetro Bonfá who reviews and criticises the more traditional historiography which interprets the expulsion of foreigners as a symptom of the repression and authoritarianism of the First Republic, and also proposes an approach that contrasts the Brazilian and Argentinean cases. See his "Com lei ou sem lei: as expulsões de estrangeiros e o conflito entre o executivo e o judiciário na Primeira República", Unpublished Master's Dissertation, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2008.
- 4 The Argentinean law, called the "Resident" law, was approved in 1902. See Juan Suriano, *Trabajadores, Anarquismo y Estado Represor: de la ley de Residencia a la ley de Defensa Social (1902-1910)*, Centro Editor de América Latina, Buenos Aires, 1988; Eduardo Zimmermann, *Los liberales reformistas. La cuestión social en la Argentina*. Sudamericana/U. San Andrés, Buenos Aires, 1995; Susana Villavicencio (ed.), *Los contornos de la ciudadanía. Nacionales y extranjeros en la Argentina del Centenario*, Eudeba, Buenos Aires, 2003. The Brazilian law, known as the Gordo law after the deputy that presented it to the National Congress, was passed in 1907. See Lená Medeiros de Menezes, *Os Indesejáveis*, EdUERJ, Rio de Janeiro, 1996, pp. 183-187.
- 5 For a contemporary analysis of the legislation of expulsion in other Latin American countries, see J. Irizzary y Puente, "Exclusion and expulsion of aliens in Latin America", *The American Journal of International Law*, 36, 2, April 1942, pp. 252-270.
- 6 Transcribed in Lená Medeiros de Menezes, *Os Indesejáveis*, p. 207.
- 7 See Marcela Aspell de Yanzi Ferreira, "Expulsión de extranjeros. La ley 4144 'de residencia' y la jurisprudencia de la Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación", *Revista de Historia del*

Derecho, 15, 1987, and Lená Medeiros de Menezes, *Os Indesejáveis*, Rio de Janeiro: EdUERJ, 1996, pp. 187-202.

- 8 Rogério Bonfá discusses this perception, that first appears among contemporary critics of the law, and ends up being assumed by historians who interpret the First Republic as a “regime of legal exception”, an expression of Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro in *Estratégias da ilusão: a revolução mundial e o Brasil, 1922-1935*, Companhia das Letras, São Paulo, 1995. See Rogério Bonfá, *Com lei ou sem lei*, pp. 85-88.
- 9 Historian Lená Medeiros de Menezes affirms, based on a sample of 194 expulsion processes referring to pimping: “Taking into account the global conjuncture, there is a significant weight that marks the presence of pimps from Russia, Poland and France, which demonstrates that Rio de Janeiro was profoundly involved in the traffic organised at the international level, a fact that is proved by the total inversion of the weight of these nationalities in the general tendencies of immigration to Rio de Janeiro.” Menezes, *Os Indesejáveis*, p.163. See also Menezes, *Os Estrangeiros*, p. 80.
- 10 Expulsion of Mario Marck Burckner, IJJ 7 – 143, 1907. National Archive, Rio de Janeiro. (Hereafter, AN).
- 11 Expulsion of Mauricio Goldran, IJJ 7 – 144, 1912. AN.
- 12 I discuss this practice, as well as the preoccupation of the Brazilian authorities in promoting deportations to Europe, and not to Buenos Aires or Montevideo, in *Que Tenhas Teu Corpo: uma história social da prostituição no Rio de Janeiro*, Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, 2006, p. 142. For the Argentinean case, Yanzi Ferreira identifies the same subterfuge among the expelled in the first years of the vigilance of the Resident law. See Ferreira, “Expulsión de extranjeros”, pp. 11-12.
- 13 Fourth testimony, Expulsion of Mauricio Goldran, IJJ 7 – 144, 1912. AN.
- 14 Testimony of Fernanda Alban, Expulsion of Maurice Alban, IJJ7 – 145, 1913. AN.
- 15 The “French system” was the style of the regulation of prostitution inherited from Napoleonic laws. Despite a series of revisions, it persisted throughout the nineteenth century and was adopted in different countries. See Alain Corbin, *Women for hire: prostitution and sexuality in France after 1850*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, 1990. I have discussed the legal status of prostitutes in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro contexts in “Esclavitud en blanco y negro: elementos para una historia del trabajo sexual femenino en Buenos Aires y en Río de Janeiro a fines del siglo XIX”, *Entrepasados*, 29, pp. 43-62.
- 16 Testimony of Sara Praigret, Expulsion of Vicente Grassi, IJJ-140, 1913, AN.

Picture Source:

1. <http://imagesvisions.blogspot.com/2009/07/augusto-malta-retratou-as-polacas-que.html>
2. [Http://veja.abril.com.br/vejarj/180505/capa.html](http://veja.abril.com.br/vejarj/180505/capa.html)

Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago and Among the Diaspora

The article will explore the liberating changes which Carnival has undergone in Trinidad and Tobago and the influence of this festival abroad. There is an examination of the features of Trinidadian Carnival which are characteristic of similar celebrations in New York, Miami and Toronto. Also, there is an examination of Carnival's impact on class relations, identity, ethnicity and gender stereotypes. Two of the significant issues dealt with are, whether the celebration created divisions or provided the opportunity for mixing among classes and various ethnicities and secondly, the perceived negative impact of calypsonians. Additionally, the issue of morality in Carnival is briefly discussed. Also included is the extent of participation of Indo-Trinidadians and other ethnic groups in the annual festival.



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Influence Abroad

Carnival has made a notable global impact and significantly influenced the construction of identity among the Caribbean diaspora.¹ Wayne Berkeley, one of the leading bandleaders in Trinidad and Tobago, believed that every year there are 75 carnivals and with the exception of those of Venice, Germany, Brazil and New Orleans, these are “spin-offs of Trinidad Carnival”.² In the United States more than twenty cities host Carnival celebrations.³ In New York, the Carnival has become a major symbol in the development of a “Trinidadian transnation”.⁴ Christine Ho examined the Miami Carnival and argued that Trinidadians produced cultural symbols which represented West Indianness. She felt a social position of uniqueness was created via boundary-defining rituals.⁵ Carnival in Miami has been viewed as an opportunity to promote unity.⁶

Today, public cultural activities among migrant communities are important in their collective self-representation. Percy Hintzern in ‘Globalization and Diasporic Identity among West Indians’ argued that West Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area in northern California belonged to a high socio-economic category. He believed West Indians in that area conformed to the racist notions of being “exotic, hypersexual, fun-loving and given to bacchanalian excesses”.⁷ Such ethnic and national stereotypes create ‘cliché citizens’ who are automatically placed into this category simply because they are West Indians. This could explain the low involvement of the Indo-Trinidadian and the Indo-Caribbean diasporas in carnivals which tend to be viewed as belonging to the Afro-Trinidadian element of the population. It would also explain the tendency, among some East Indians, to avoid mixing with Afro-Trinidadians in West Indian organisations or events in North America. Thus it is a myth that carnivals amongst the diaspora have bridged a critical cross-cultural divide which existed in the Caribbean and among other immigrants in the host society.

By the 1990s it was increasingly obvious that Carnival in the United States was no longer a ‘marginalised festival’ celebrated by a minority population. An illustration is the coverage of the Labor Day and Miami Carnivals by the major American television network, the National Broadcasting Corporation in 1997.⁸ In 2007, in New York, the annual West Indian American Day Carnival Association Labor Day Parade (known as Labor Day Carnival) observed forty years of its existence. Since the mid-1990s it has been attracting an estimated 3.5 million persons.⁹

Usually artistes from Trinidad and the Caribbean would be invited to participate in overseas carnivals. In 2001, a contingent from Trinidad including Phase II Pan Groove, Pamberi and Woodbrook Playboyz, The Mighty Shadow and Roy Cape All Stars participated in Miami Carnival.¹⁰ The security is heightened during these festive activities. For example in the Boston Carnival, in 2003, there was a heavy police presence which prevented any disturbances.¹¹

In Florida too, there are replicas of Trinidad’s Carnival. These include the Miami-Dade Carnival and Broward Caribbean Carnival.¹² Occasionally there are minor problems in the organisation of these celebrations.¹³ Despite hiccups, these events are well-attended and there is a significant Caribbean population in Palm Beach County, Miami-Dade County and Broward. This public recognition reinforced the Caribbean diasporic identity but more importantly the extensive participation by non-West Indians and incorporation of materials from the United States is a poignant testimony of assimilation and acculturation.

The well-known Notting Hill Carnival celebrations in Britain began in 1958 when Claudia Jones, an Afro-Trinidadian activist and writer, organised a Trini-style Mardi Gras at St. Pancras Town Hall. One of the prominent individuals involved in this carnival was Lawrence

Hill. He is a Trinidadian who migrated to London in 1959, and believed that Carnival creates a togetherness among West Indians and places Trinidad and Tobago's culture on the map.¹⁴ Today the celebrations at Notting Hill are considered the largest in Europe.¹⁵

The well-known annual Caribana Festival in Toronto began in 1967 as a community heritage project to recognise Canada's centenary. Caribana, a version of Trinidad's annual Carnival, attracts not only Caribbean-born persons but other ethnic groups who enjoy the jovial atmosphere with its music, food and costumed characters.¹⁶ An estimated 400,000 Americans participate in the festival.¹⁷ The involvement of East Indians in Caribana is evident from the costumes, '[U]se of lace, colours like purples and oranges, bell bottom trousers, lots of mirrors and reflective finishes, have all been linked to an Indian aesthetic.'¹⁸ Cecil Foster, a Barbadian novelist residing in Toronto, in *A Place Called Heaven: The Meaning of Being Black in Canada* described Caribana in one of the chapters as the "best spiritual tonic for the social and spiritual alienation so many of us feel in Canada, including so many of us born and raised in this country."¹⁹

The Caribbean diaspora have been faithfully introducing and continuing Carnival activities across the globe. An illustration is Marlon Singh, a Trinidadian, who has been producing versions of Trinidad Carnival in Hong Kong and Honduras. Trinidadians have also been promoting Carnival in Ghana (Africa), South Africa and Australia. Thus, the celebrations are not limited to North America and England. In neighbouring Caribbean countries like Grenada, Jamaica and Barbados, Carnival is also observed, though at different times throughout the year.

However, in 1997, some who witnessed Caribana claimed it 'fizzled out into a lame and boring affair.'²⁰ Almost a decade later, in 2006 Raynier Maharaj, a newspaper writer, revealed that the City of Toronto refused to financially assist the Caribbean Cultural Committee (CCC) which organises Caribana. This problem arose because the Caribbean group failed to provide an audited account of public funds, almost Canadian \$1 million, it received in 1999.²¹ The festival was saved when the CCC was replaced, in 2006, by the Toronto Mas Bands Association and the name 'Caribana' changed to 'Toronto Caribbean Carnival'.²²

The Caribbean diaspora have been faithfully introducing and continuing Carnival activities across the globe. An illustration is Marlon Singh, a Trinidadian, who has been producing versions of Trinidad Carnival in Hong Kong and Honduras.²³ Trinidadians have also been promoting Carnival in Ghana (Africa), South Africa and Australia.²⁴ Thus, the celebrations are not limited to North America and England. In neighbouring Caribbean countries like Grenada, Jamaica and Barbados, Carnival is also observed, though at different times throughout the year.²⁵

The annual festival of Carnival in Trinidad attracts an estimated 50,000 persons including expatriates from the United States, Canada and Europe. The celebration of Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago in the final decade of the twentieth century was marked by a transformation in space, a redefining of class relations, perpetuation of gender stereotypes and the reconstitution of images. Some of the features associated with Carnival in Trinidad are unique.

Gender Stereotypes and Morality

Those persons, usually women, interested in being slimmer and leaner for Carnival allocate additional time for exercise every morning and evenings. In Carnival the erotic body of the female is constantly emphasised. In the nineteenth century one of the noteworthy portrayals of a female was the Dame Lorraine. This character eventually evolved into a caricature which mocked the female body. The figure possessed oversized breasts, enlarged posterior and a protruding belly. Interestingly the Dame Lorraine has emerged from an androgynous

framework, ‘The Dame Lorraine mas was so engaging, its performers were not solely liberated slaves or even women. Often, beneath the masks were cross-dressing men, many of whom happened to be the descendants of the very French planters they were mocking.’²⁶

This sexual ambivalence in the Carnival portrayal of ole mas’ characters has also been identified by Patricia Alleyne-Dettmers:

A characteristic feature of old mask (sic) was to disguise oneself totally, thereby concealing one’s identity. These portrayals involved cross-gender masking, in which men generally dressed as brides and women as policemen. The impersonators often spoke in falsetto voice as a further disguise.²⁷

Foote was accurate in arguing that ole mas is “...embedded in our psyche or inner hidden selves while we project to the external world ‘modern mas’.”²⁸ One local commentator believed the mask was ‘...a cultural expression— a facial shield that exudes the spirit of people and their traditions.’²⁹

In recent years, there have been voluptuous and scantily dressed women wining on top speaker boxes. However in the mid-twentieth century the female presence was limited. In the 1950s, young middle-class ladies did not jump on the streets. They would be on rented trucks and moved to music from bass players, drums and saxophonists.³⁰ During the past decade there are always reports of unsavory incidents in the parade of bands. This usually involves uncostumed revelers and freeloaders who boldly join the parade of bands. These shameless intruders seek a good time and intend to avoid the exorbitant cost of costumes. Furthermore, they interrupt the festivity and joy of the occasion since the female masqueraders are made uncomfortable by the anti-social actions of these non-paying patrons. This was highlighted in the editorial of the *Express* in 1996, ‘...these interlopers sometimes molest women, who comprise more than 85 per cent of the bands.’³¹ Of course, this was a difficult problem to solve and two years later the NCBA identified ‘the large numbers of uncontrollable stragglers’ who were a nuisance to Carnival.³² Even with the presence of police and security guards the problem persists.

The public’s image of Carnival is a sensual one, where the female reveller is adept at dancing and wining/gyrating. Additionally, the male revellers believed they possess a license to ‘wine and jam’ on the females during Carnival season. In 2000, Jay-Z, a rap star from the United States, taped segments of Trinidad’s Carnival for his video ‘Big Pimpin’’. The scenes from the Carnival focused on women’s posteriors and this created a furore among certain sections of the Trinidad public.³³

The band leaders and the media are partly responsible for propagating this stereotype. Furthermore, the band leaders have designed clothes for females which are skimpy, tight-fitting and revealing. This phenomenon is similar to the fable “The Emperor’s New Clothes” in which the masqueraders are conned into parading almost nude in the belief that ‘less is better’ and that their costumes are exquisite. The skimpiness of costumes in Caribana was also highlighted by columnist Raynier Maharaj.³⁴ Not surprisingly it was not a cause for concern among the big bands. Michael Headley, chairman of the Poison Committee, defended his band’s costumes, ‘We cater to the demand of those people who spend the time before Carnival in the gyms.’³⁵

Foote examined the public perceptions of morality and freedom among female revellers who are considered indecent. He felt such revellers possess a relatively strong value system but these are diluted, ‘Given the amount of people thus exposed, levels of tolerance increase. The likelihood of restoring previous standards of civility is reduced and we begin to expose ourselves openly in thoughts, words and deeds.’³⁶ This is true and could also be crucial in understanding the violence exhibited by persons, traditionally conservative and law-abiding, who are part of a mob or protest. The issue of anonymity in a crowd allows for a degree of liberation in which feelings of shame, fear and embarrassment are suspended.

In February 2000, masman Minshall harshly condemned the country's mas as 'making our Caribbean girls look like blonde bimbos... the dregs of Western culture...' ³⁷ He claimed that the country's Carnival had descended into 'trashy Las Vegas.' ³⁸ Conrad O'Brien, a Trinidadian and former business executive residing in the United States, felt Carnival had regressed, '...except for a few exceptions it seems to have degenerated into an orgy of gay abandonment and sexuality.' ³⁹ Every year, there are letters to the editors of newspapers condemning the negative aspects of the festival. ⁴⁰ Other members of the public such as Father Clive Griffith of the Anglican Church expressed concern over the nakedness of the revellers. ⁴¹ In an interview in 2006, Kenny de Silva, Chairman of the NCC, acknowledged there was too much nudity in mas. ⁴² Clevon Raphael, a journalist, expressed disgust over the 'outrageous outfits' worn by women and the vulgar dancing at Carnival parties. ⁴³

LeRoy Clarke referred to it as 'public sex on the streets.' ⁴⁴ Clarke, in a panel discussion, also made the unsubstantiated claim that 'many women's sexual urges increase tremendously and they become more fertile.' ⁴⁵ The perception from some members of the public is that the female presence in the festivity is primarily for the gratification of the male. Additionally, there is the image of fertility as the woman gives birth to the joyful celebration and nurtures the happiness of the participants.

Indeed, Carnival is associated with liberation of actions, inhibitions and forbidden desires. And, Minshall has accurately described Carnival as a 'cathartic ritual.' ⁴⁶ He also claimed, "Mas' is not about escapism. Mas' is really about attaining the highest self." ⁴⁷ However, Minshall made the assumptions that everyone would experience this feeling. Those who are victims of crime, experience discrimination and are murdered/injured during the season would rather classify Carnival as a cursed ritual.

Class and Ethnicity



A Carnival Gathering in Trinidad

Numerous scholars, activists and masqueraders have boasted of the levelling social effect of Carnival. Indeed, the celebration provides the ideal opportunity for mixing among upper, middle and lower classes and the multitude of ethnicities. Russell Foote felt that Carnival, with its performances, colour and design, served as a medium for communication. He felt that the annual festival is 'the mirror of communication', reflecting the meaningless and meaningful in our lives. ⁴⁸ Foote did not elaborate as to whether this included the onlooker or the participant.

Mikhail Bakhtin identified this phenomenon in *Rabelais and His World* thus: '...carnival celebrates temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from the established order; it marked the suspension of all hierarchical rank, privileges, norms and prohibition...' ⁴⁹ This supports the view of Christine Braanmark, a foreign researcher at Oxford University, who claimed Carnival 'transcends race, class and every rung of the social ladder' and that the panyards were important venues for social interaction. ⁵⁰ The participants display

‘rebelliousness’ as societal norms are ignored, rules are forgotten and divisions are cast aside. Such local expressions as ‘do yuh ting’, ‘is we ting’, and “you can’t play mas and ‘fraid powder’” suggest that participation in Carnival ignores rigid social stratification. Undoubtedly, the lax attitude is only temporary and after Carnival, society expects the resumption and preservation of the ‘normal’ social, class and ethnic relations.

Indeed, the mud mas is only one of the occasions in which an atmosphere of equality is created. Indeed, a metamorphosis occurs as the revellers are ‘reborn for new, purely human relations.’⁵¹ Mudders International, a J’Ouvert band, contended that mud is ‘an equalizer or leveller.’⁵² Dennis Pantin, a university lecturer, believed that Carnival activities resulted in ‘a substantial blurring of class and race lines.’⁵³ The mud or motor grease on the skin of Whites and light-skinned persons is symbolic of temporary unity among various ethnicities. The mud is a body mask which allows the rich, poor, old and tattered attire to join in the street theatre.

In the early twentieth century, the first and major revamping of Carnival’s image was to present it as a festival devoid of crime, violence and controversy. Lovelace in *The Dragon Can’t Dance* focused on the fighting and rivalry among the steelbands in North Trinidad during the 1940s and 1950s. Part of the metamorphosis was to exorcise the undesirable elements and eliminate the stigmas attached to the festival. A setback was that most of Carnival’s participants inhabited the ‘barrack-yards’ – prostitutes (jamenttes), bad-johns, corner-boys and stickmen.

Today, Carnival continues to reflect a temporary unity since segregation still exists within the celebrations. For instance, there are all-inclusive pre-Carnival fetes with exorbitant admission fees to deliberately exclude the poorer and seemingly more disruptive elements in society. This results in the space of the upper and wealthy middle classes being circumscribed. Additionally, within these all-inclusive parties there is limited interaction as persons mingle with their friends or associate with others belonging to their ethnic group or social status.

The need for separation arises when one considers the occasional incidents of fights, stabbings, robberies and murders at fetes.⁵⁴ Not surprisingly, an article revealed, ‘Fights in fetes, especially while the culprits are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, have always been a feature of Carnival.’⁵⁵ The headline of an article in 2005 provided evidence of the frightening reality: ‘Monday Mayhem 32 stabbed, several shot during Jouvert.’⁵⁶ The Carnival season seems to be a time for high levels of crime. On Carnival Tuesday in 2006, British tourists in Trinidad were robbed of personal items worth TT\$100,000.⁵⁷ These unsavoury reports prompted increased security for future Carnivals and contributed to a considerable reduction in crime.⁵⁸

The cost of costumes and membership in certain ‘socialite’⁵⁹ bands are not within the income of the average citizen. The high cost of enjoying Carnival prompted one columnist, Peter Ray Blood, to note, ‘...the people who had the most fun are the ones who are most broken.’⁶⁰ A fellow columnist, Terry Joseph, indicated that some producers of Carnival are only concerned with the ‘profit potential’ and overlook the festival’s benefit to the ‘national psyche.’⁶¹ The high cost of participating in this festival is not limited to Trinidad. Jeff Henry, a Trinidadian-Canadian and professor emeritus of Theatre Arts, revealed that the expensive Carnival costumes in Brazil results in the exclusion of poor persons.⁶² Band leaders in 2006 added more DJs to offset the high cost of live music bands which accompanied masqueraders.⁶³

Schisms are also created with the controversy surrounding the quest for such titles in the Panorama, King and Queen of Carnival and calypso competitions. Earl Lovelace, a Trinidadian novelist, highlighted the division during the colonial era in Trinidad in *The Dragon Can’t Dance*:

Is seventeen years since she place third in the Carnival Queen competition in Port-of-Spain: two white

girls, one first, the other second, and the girl, a black girl who come in as Miss Ebony and who should win the whole thing, fourth....⁶⁴

However, David Payson viewed these divisions as temporary, ‘...these hierarchies are themselves effervescent, dissolving, unlike the hierarchies of mundane social structure, with the years passing.’⁶⁵

The involvement of East Indians in Carnival had been low-key for the first half of the twentieth century. Carlisle Chang, a well-known designer, noted that before the 1970s, there were few Indians participating in the bands, ‘...no self-respecting Hindu would be caught dead in taking part in that kind of bacchanal... But it was a means of making money, so some dancers came out.’

Some calypsonians have also been deliberately creating controversy with their lyrics. Jeff Hackett, a reporter of the *Express*, highlighted the decline in quality of compositions, “[T]he singers pay little attention to lyrics or musical structure: it’s all about rhythm, a frenzied, cacophonous sped-up jab jab beat... and simple words anyone can remember like ‘wave your rag’, ‘put your hand in the air’, ‘jump’ etc.’⁶⁶ In 2006, Rev. Pam Greaves, an Anglican priest based at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Port-of-Spain, commented on too many ‘wine and jam’ and derogatory calypsoes.⁶⁷ Debbie Jacob, a columnist of the *Trinidad Guardian*, is accurate in believing there are still some artistes who produce high quality songs.⁶⁸ Today there are still no solutions to improving these musical productions. The frequent parody of the upper class, verbal attack on the government and public personalities partially serve to polarise the classes and ethnic groups.

In Jamaica, Carnival, which was introduced in the 1990s, is still confined to one section of the society. Byron Lee, a Jamaican who regularly visits Trinidad Carnival and spearheads the festivities in the neighbouring West Indian island noted, ‘[I]t is supported mainly by upper class folks and tourists to the island and is not recognised as a national celebration.’ He also revealed that some Christians in Jamaica view the Carnival as ‘the work of the devil.’⁶⁹ Such feedback should encourage governments to embark on a public campaign to educate the less informed on the origins and history of Carnival.

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Since the late 1950s there has been an increasing participation of Indo-Trinidadians among the steelbands during the Carnival season. East Indians such as Bobby Mohammed became a legend in the 1960s with his band ‘Guinness Cavaliers’ and his brother Selwyn was the arranger of the band now known as the ‘Amoco Renegades’.⁷² Jimmy Bridgenarine, an East Indian, was leader of the ‘Golden Dukes’ and subsequently ‘Curepe Scherzando’. In south Trinidad, in areas as Princes Town and Rio Claro, there were steelbands whose membership was mostly Indians. The musical contributions from East Indian pianists as Jit Samaroo and Lennox Mohammed are still remembered. Furthermore, the annual chutney soca competition, which attracts a considerable number of East Indians, is held early in the Carnival season.⁷³ However,

as late as 1997, some East Indians were reluctant to be involved. '[F]or older, more conservative Indians, to claim Carnival would be to compromise or betray their Indianness and abandon core values.'⁷⁴

There have been Chinese-Trinidadian and Syrian/Lebanese-Trinidadian calypsonians who have made significant contributions to the musical stage during Carnival. Singers such as Mighty Trini (Robert Elias), Chinese Laundry (Anthony Chow Lin On), Doctor Soca (Dr. Kongshiek Achong Low) and Denyse Plummer (Denyse Plummer-Boocock) demonstrate that the art form is not only for Afro-Trinidadians and Indo-Trinidadians. Despite participation from a larger cross-section of the public, some still hold the view that ethnic minorities as those of Chinese, Syrian, Portuguese and German descent are not competent singers and have little or no input in the designs of the costumes and organisation of bands.

Reconstitution of characters

A Carnival Parade



Trinidad's Carnival is an illustration of acculturation which occurred as a result of the cultural influences of the French and slaves. After the prohibition of Carnival, during the Canboulay celebrations, the Blacks incorporated characters from Trinidad's folklore into the festivity. These included the phantom, Papa Bois, diablesse, loup garou, and soucouyant. Blacks also introduced dragons, imps, clowns, robbers, bats and devils.⁷⁵ For more than thirty years veteran masman Brian 'Tico' Skinner has been producing bands with colourful imps and devils. Some of his themes were 'Domestic Violence is Hell' and 'Hurricane Ivan is Hell'.⁷⁶

In Michael Anthony's collection of short stories he mentioned '...there was such a bubbling mass of colour it was as if the rainbow had come to the Carnival.'⁷⁷ He further commented on the various characters portrayed, 'For bands, both historical and warrior bands, musical bands of all descriptions, yankee bands, calypsonians, summaries and burroquets, advertising bands on lorries, gymnasts, stunt men and stunt women, Arabian war lords, pierrots and Wild Indians were all to be found there.'⁷⁸

By the late 1950s, the festival was being gradually transformed into one epitomising happiness, gaiety and freedom. In the post-1960 era the government embarked on a campaign to market Carnival as a national and multicultural, festival which is celebrated by a wide cross-section of the population in a plural society.

Carnival's ambivalence is evident from the Midnight Robber who epitomises 'the synthesis of old and new world cultures.'⁷⁹ The Robber has a duty '...to rearrange perceptions, experiences, and ideas into new shapes of consciousness.'⁸⁰ The duality of the Robber also exists in the masquerader who simultaneously holds the position of subject and object.⁸¹ The ambivalence of some of these Carnival characters reflects a country in which there is often a vague boundary separating the religious and the profane. Interestingly, the fun, sanctimonious

display and satire juxtaposed with the monstrous characters reflect one's personal struggle with good and evil.

However, the conservative and religious elements of the society have continuously condemned the negative impact of Carnival activities. The drunkenness, sexual immorality, spread of HIV/AIDS, incidents of robberies, fights and stabbings have not dampened the occasion. Groups such as the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research (CAFRA) of Trinidad and Tobago assisted in the distribution of condoms for the 2005 Carnival.⁸² Samuel Selvon, a Trinidadian novelist, described one of the negative aspects of the festival thus, 'When is Carnival time in Trinidad you are lucky to get a whiff of liquor, for the masses who want to fill up— that is why a lot of people go through the period in an alcoholic daze, knocking back as many as they could and accepting every offer....'⁸³

The government has been acutely aware that the negativity of Carnival is a deterrent for tourists and local participants. These grave concerns have been dealt with by increasing the security in bands and police presence. Trinidad's Carnival and the celebrations by the West Indian diaspora reflect creativity and gaiety but also masks continued segregation, class divisions, gender stereotypes and ethnic problems which are an inseparable component of Caribbean society.

- 1 See Keith Nurse, "Globalization and Trinidad Carnival: Diaspora, Hybridity, and Identity in Global Culture", *Cultural Studies*, 13, 1999, pp. 661-690.
- 2 "TT Carnival in trouble", *Weekend Independent*, 25 September 1998.
- 3 See Errol Hill, *The Trinidad Carnival*, New Beacon Press, London, 1997.
- 4 Philip Scher, "From the Metropole to the Equator: Carnival Consciousness between New York and Trinidad", in Christine Ho and Keith Nurse (eds.), *Globalisation, Diaspora Caribbean Popular Culture*, Ian Randle Publishers, Kingston, 2005, p. 46.
- 5 See Christine Ho, "The Globalisation of Pan in South Florida and Caribbean Diasporic Identity", in Ho and Nurse (eds.), *Globalisation*, pp. 162-183.
- 6 Terry Joseph, "T&T nationals in Miami achieve Carnival Unity", *Express*, 29 August 1997.
- 7 Percy Hintzern, "Globalisation and Diasporic Identity Among West Indians", in Ho and Nurse (eds.), *Globalisation*, p. 6.
- 8 Jeff Hackett, "Minshall promotes T&T Carnival on NBC", *Express*, 2 September 1997; Terry Joseph, "NBC-TV for Miami mas too", *Express*, 12 September 1997.
- 9 Sol McCants, "Breakaway on the Parkway", *Caribbean Beat*, September-October 2005, p. 64.
- 10 Sean Nero, "Miami carnival to go ahead despite attacks", *Newsday*, 25 September 2001.
- 11 Keith Shepherd, "Carnival 2003", *TnT Mirror*, 5 September 2003.
- 12 "Steelpan spreading Caribbean culture", *Trinidad Guardian*, 9 June 2005.
- 13 Dalton Narine, "Bacchanalia in Miami", *Sunday Express*, 1 October 1995.
- 14 Phoolo Danny, "The genius who dresses up Notting Hill", *Express*, 12 March 1997.
- 15 See Annabelle Alcazar, "Coming from the cold", *Caribbean Beat*, July-August 1998, pp. 62-69.
- 16 Brett Clarkson, "'You Can Just See All The Love'", *Newsday*, 26 August 2001.
- 17 "Huge crowds jump up at TO's Caribana parade", *Trinidad Guardian*, 5 August 2005.
- 18 Shereen Ali, "Indians in the Mas", *Trinidad Guardian*, 29 January 1997.
- 19 Cecil Foster, *A Place Called Heaven: The Meaning of Being Black in Canada*, HarperCollins Publishers, Toronto, 1996, p. 248.
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Picture Source: Author

Report on the Second Annual Papiya Ghosh Memorial Workshop on 'Communities at the Margins: Practices and Livelihood' from 1-2 July 2010

Shilp Shikha Singh is a political scientist by training with her D.Phil. from the University of Allahabad. Presently she is working as post-doctoral fellow in Centre for Studies in Social Sciences. She has published two articles and is attempting to specialise in political sociology with special reference to the issues of governmentality, marginalities and social movements.
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Shilp Shikha Singh

The main purpose of the workshop, organised by Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC), was to unravel various configurations of communities at the margins. An attempt was made to explore different registers across which the marginality of communities are constituted, reproduced or contested. The two-day workshop opened with the screening of a short documentary film on the life of Papiya Ghosh, remembering her contribution to academics and committed engagement with societies at the margins. Homage was also paid to Anjan Ghosh, a member of the Centre's faculty and also the SEPHIS coordinator, whose long association with Papiya and personal engagement with each participant of this workshop, in various capacities had made the organisation of the workshop possible. This was followed by the keynote address by Shahid Amin on "The Marginal Jotter: The Curious Case of Ram Gharib Chaube". Ram Gharib Chaube was a junior employee (clerk) in the colonial bureaucracy, who participated in the First Linguistic Survey conducted by the British administration. His meticulous, detailed description of local culture on the margins of the printed main text of the

survey reports was used as an allegory to problematise the margin. Citing the story and work of Ram Gharib Chaube, he mapped the multilayered exchange between the margin and the mainstream, the constitution of the margin and its relevance in defining the mainstream. He also commented on the historical categorisation and ordering of mainstream knowledge and deliberate neglect of the unclustered, undefined, heterogeneous and scattered knowledge as marginal.

There were four presentations on the first day of the workshop. The first session touched upon two broad categories of ‘Marginal Publics’ – those who hawk their wares from pavement and the prostitutes. The first presentation, by Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay, was titled “Governing Footpath-Hawking in Calcutta, 1975-2010”. The paper dealt with the left politics of cooption and confrontation in managing the footpath hawkers as margin of mainstream neo-liberal entrepreneurs of the global economy. The paper visualised the promulgation of regulation and institutionalisation, in the street-vending sector, as institutionalising informalities in several layers of planning and governance. At the same time the anti-hawking campaigns led to the emergence of street hawkers as politically charged figures, who developed ingenious ways of claiming resources and entitlements, which the government denied them. The second paper, presented by Darshana Sreedhar, dealt with the issue of prostitution and debates on sexuality in the developed state of Kerala. She highlighted how the organisational efforts of the sex workers to voice their concerns against discriminatory treatment meted out to them became a rallying point for debates on sexuality to resurge in Kerala. The hypermasculine space of Kerala challenged the organisational attempts of the sex workers to enter the public sphere by rallying the ideological support offered by the feminists to reassert the cultural anarchy it would entail. Interrogating the filmic depiction of prostitution in the shadow of rescue- and-rehabilitation discourse, the paper established the regression in the conceptualisation of sexuality; the simultaneous emphasis on family as an institution which guarantees protection and the significance of pleasure invested in the role of the woman as ‘playful but not carnal’.

The second session was on ‘Performing the Popular’, which focused on sites of performance and cultural productions, through which marginal communities fashion their identities in relation to various dominant political, social and cultural formations. The paper on ‘Odia Jatra Texts’, presented by Sharmila Chhotaray engaged with the highly popular theatre of Orissa. *Jatra* represents the ‘low’ culture of a common mass that is marginalised by the Odiya avant-gardes. The paper, through an analysis of dominant representations in *jatra* texts, showed how *jatra* has appropriated the ‘Little and Great’ literature into its narratives, to evolve as a culture of the Odiya community. The preferred story types are to invigorate the nation and to improve the moral climate of Orissa by reaffirming and reminding of its past glories in the plays. They represent the nostalgia to foster social solidarity, collective memory and imagination. The second presentation in the session was on ‘Wild Animals and Indian Circus’, by P.R. Nisha. The paper dealt with the complex issue of wildlife protection and the circus industry, how the ban on the use of wild animals has affected the popularity of circus and livelihood of animal trainers. The paper questioned the legacy of the colonial practice of prevention and protection through law enforcement.

The second day of the workshop was divided into three sessions. The first session on ‘Complicating Communities’ engaged with the fractured and complex trajectories of the parallel constitution of the social margins and marginal positions of communities. P.V. Sreebitha presented the case of Thiyyas and Ezhavas communities of Kerala. Ezhavas and Thiyyas are two different communities imagined as one for various socio-political reasons. The paper focused on the matrilineal structure of Thiyyas and looked into the contexts wherein it transformed into the patrilineal structure highlighting the role of “modernisation” process which

homogenised differences in tune with the hegemonic culture of Kerala. The second presentation, titled ‘Intervention and Identity: Reconstructing Marginality’, presented by Shilp Shikha Singh, dealt with changing configuration of marginality in a fixed location due to varied interventional experiences. The paper focused on marginal Musahar community of Eastern Uttar Pradesh and traced the struggle of the community, adopting diverse strategy, in an attempt to negotiate its own marginality.

The second session of the day centred around ‘fractured archives’, throwing light on the attempts made by marginal cultures to carve out separate space for themselves through literary and visual creations. The presentation by Samarpita Mitra titled “Literary Separatism or Formulating a New Literary Language?” dealt with the Bengali-Muslim literati’s pursuit of modern Bengali *sahitya* (literature). The paper underlined the absence of social experiences and life practices of Bengal’s Muslims in literary works that constituted canonical Bengali literature in the early twentieth century. Mainstream ‘Bengali’ literature spoke in terms of two literatures– ‘Bengali’ literature that was by and large ‘Hindu’ (and ‘Brahmo’) and its ‘Muslim-Bengali’ complement. This paper addressed the broader question on how this position came to be problematised by “Musalman Bangla Sahitya” in ways that were disconcerting to the Hindu and Brahmo intelligentsia whose aesthetic sensibilities were ostensibly predicated on modern liberal and secular principles. The second paper by Radhika Chopra was titled ‘Visual Mnemonics: The Martyrs of Operation Bluestar’. The paper engaged with the history of martyrdom represented in the galleries of new museum, paying particular attention to the ‘production’ and remembrance of the martyrs of Operation Bluestar. While a lineage of medieval to modern martyrs is created in the layout of museum spaces as well as through visual representations, remembrance remains incomplete. Certain key martyrs are missing from the walls of the museum. Analysing the visual as an ordering narrative of memory and memorialising within the overarching landscape of the Golden Temple, the paper re-looked at the politics of representation and elision to think through issues of a nightmare remembered and the production of modern martyrdom.

The last and the final session of the day dealt with perspectives beyond ‘Victimhood of the Marginal’. Rather than treating the issue of marginalisation of certain communities in a unilinear trajectory of ‘victimhood’, the presentations explored how these groups use their marginalised status to assert their social, political and cultural identities through various representations, including selective use and memorialisation of history and heritage. The first presentation of the session was on ‘Imag(in)ing Identities: The Contested Canvas of Mithila Paintings’, by Sandali Thakur. The paper assessed how modernity’s interface (in the form of the commercialisation project) with the traditional socio-economic order of Mithila, impinged upon the social relations among the painters. Post-commercialisation, Mithila painters share an acutely contested space, which, in some cases, has amplified the hierarchies existing in social relations. The paper investigated the contexts and processes of marginalisation– of cultural production, identities and subjectivities– and those of resistance.

The second presentation by Levin N.R., ‘What is Your Time?’, dealt with social mobility and consciousness about time in early twentieth century south India. The paper discussed the loosening hold of the older order of caste, with the introduction of temporal practices, in the context of modernity in Kerala. The negotiation of backwardness by caste groups through the adoption of ‘progress’ as virtue was commented upon in this presentation.

The concluding speech of the workshop was delivered by Partha Chatterjee on the concept of marginality. Delving into the issue, he pointed out that the marginal is not just the ‘other’, but also an irrelevant and non-worthy other. He pointed out that in order to understand the margin one has to understand the centre, the mainstream, first. Linking all presentations he

categorised two kinds of reactions/struggles from the margin. One aimed at a self-fashioning of communities to create new mainstreams and the other attempting to transgress the margin and join the existing mainstream. Though he emphasised that there are no fixed categories of framing marginalities, the only way to capture the marginal is to explore each case in great depth, as each marginal case is unique in itself. Appreciating the presentations of the workshop, he emphasised the need for further research in the area to capture the diverse positioning of marginality.

International Policy Dialogue: “Bridging the Gap between Sexuality Research and Advocacy for Sexual Rights”

Hardik is presently Ph.D. fellow at the School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur University, Kolkata. He is also building an archive on the visual cultures of Bengali urban middle-class women in collaboration with the India Foundation for the Arts. A SEPHIS fellow under the History of Modernity and Sexualities in the Global South, he has published articles and translations on women's issues, gender and post-structuralist philosophy. Apart from these, he is into graphics and architectural photography. Email: hardikbb@gmail.com



Hardik Brata Biswas



The Venue of the Dialogue, Yogyakarta

The International Policy Dialogue was held from 9-12 August 2010 at the Centre for Population and Policy Studies, University of Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. A multi-partner event where Kartini Asia Network, CPPS/GMU, Institute of International Education, SEPHIS and Ford Foundation came forward to collaborate. The Dialogue was inaugurated on 9 August as Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Kartini coordinator, Indonesia, Muhadjir Darwin, Director, CPPU/GMU, Marina de Regt, Sepsis Coordinator, The Netherlands and David Hulse, Ford Representative in Indonesia welcomed the participants and ingeminated the increasing necessity for sexuality research based on regional specificities and the importance of exchange of academic researches and activism in an effort to bridge the age old gap between the two. The dialogue, as evident

from the title itself, provided a rare opportunity to bring in 45 researchers and activists from India, Brazil, Bangladesh, the Netherlands, Syria, Egypt and the Philippines to share and discuss issues of contemporary sexuality research and activism, keeping intact their methodological rigour and the passion.

The panel (Session 1) on the opening day “Research and Policy Considerations” chaired by Saskia Weiringa (Kartini/Sephis) had five presenters. Nitya Vasudevan, Sephis Research Grantee from India, briefly laid out the often contested relationships between publicness and sexuality in India and how censorship and abolition work as acts of colonial government, the independent states, and the various political groups that are invested in these practices. Budi Wahyuni and Soka Handinah (APIK, Yogyakarta and Semarang) jointly presented a case study of lesbian witch hunting in contemporary Indonesia titled “No Making Love for Lesbians: A Case Study for Watik” and the state’s approach in such cases. Hardik Brata Biswas, Sephis grantee from India, talked about obscenity and masculinity in representational politics since colonial India and showed how such discourse structures plague contemporary times.

Explaining the Domestic Violence Act of India and the recent debates on the changes from rape to sexual violence in the Indian Penal Code, he laid the broader field where academic/historical research was intrinsically tied with activist interventions. Theresa De Vella, (Kartini/Isis International, Manila) stressed on accepting differences and specificities seriously and explained the need to appreciate the complex relationship between research/theory and activism/practice on multiple levels while taking stock of the recognising strategic moments and prioritising sexuality rights agenda accordingly which again can come up from collective actions, everyday lives and theoretical/discursive spheres.

There were two parallel sessions titled “Reflections on Historical research and Sexual Rights” on the same day. Two groups were divided with Anna Marie Wattie (CPPS/GMU) and Budi Wahyuni facilitating one, and, Shaikh Imtiaz, coordinator, Sephis sexualities programme, helping the other group to continue interactions on the topic. The summary points of the discussions held in the one and a half hour long sessions were submitted to the facilitators who presented the discussions on the plenary session titled “Sexuality as a Topic of Research” chaired by Hanan Sabea, Sephis Steering Committee member from Egypt.



The inaugural session in progress, 9 August 2010

The panel (session 2) ‘Advocacy and Sexual Rights Activism’ on 10 August was chaired by Horacio Sivori, CLAM (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) /Sephis in which three presentations were scheduled. Iman al Ghafari, Sephis Research Grantee from Syria, talked about “The ‘Lesbian’ Existence in the Arab Cultures: Historical and Sociological Perspectives”, her interdisciplinary approach in research and iterated the need for re-defining lesbianism, deconstructing sexuality in development programmes and making a distinction between male homosexuality and female homosexuality in Arab cultures. Abha Bhैया, (Kartini sexuality theme convener, India) explained the objectives of Kartini that ranged from building bridges between academics and

activists within the Asian context, fighting homophobia and integrating the principles of social justice and human rights with a focus on sexual rights and gender equality. Siti Mazdafiah, University of Surabaya, Indonesia in her presentation on building communication among Lesbian community in Surabaya to support activism reported on their activities with regards to community mapping within groups and individuals. While speaking on their activities that includes 'funedutainment' like watching movies or even planning a fishing trip together, capacity building, advocacy and support group networking. She flagged the importance of social gatherings and the fall outs of the post-Ilga incidents.

The second panel (session 3) "Multiculturalism, Religion and the State (Indonesia's Experience)" was chaired by Sita Ari Purnami from the Women Research Indonesia, Jakarta. Inayah Rachmaniya from the Parenthood and Family Planning Association, Yogyakarta was the first presenter and she talked about religion, women and state mainly from a historical perspective. Explaining the background of Islam since the awakening of the Indonesian state and the acceptance of Pancasila as the state ideology, she went on to point out the inconsistencies in the fundamental principles of Indonesian constitution of 1945, prevailing gender stereotyping and the rejection of the 2004 draft amendment to the 1991 Compilation of Islamic Laws. The next presentation "Male Foreign Students: Study, Leisure and Sexual Behaviour" by Novi Widyaningrum, Sri Purwatiningsih and Susi Eja Yuarsi from the CPPS/GMU demonstrated the findings of their research project and talked about the types of relations built by male foreign students in the shape of non-commercial sex. Soe Tjen Marching (Bhineka magazine, Surabaya) talked about her experiences post-ILGA affair which happened between 26 and 29 March 2009, together with publishing the Bhinneka magazine and later on the Bhinneka organisation in troubled times in order to fight homophobia and claim sexuality rights. Nurul Ilmi Idrus, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, made a presentation on "Women's Sexual Rights in Marriage: Islam, the State and the Bugis Practices". She explained in detail Bugis marriage and the position of women in it and addressed issues of pleasure and desire in marriage especially with regard to women.

Participants and facilitators at the Dialogue attending a session in progress



The second parallel session was held again with newly shuffled groups of participants with the theme "Advocacy and Sexual Rights Activism" with Inayah Rachmaniya/ Soe Tjen Marching and Theresa De Vella as respective facilitators. The summary discussions were presented and general discussion continued in the Plenary session on "Sexuality as a Development Issue" chaired by Abha Bhaiya. Nursyahbani Katjasungkana stressed on dissemination of research findings among advocacy groups.

The public seminar scheduled on 11 August was chaired by Anna Marie Wattie with three speakers. Muhadjir Darwin laid out the contemporary political climate in Indonesia with regional specificities and its implications on researching or carrying on activities regarding sexual rights. Abha Bhaiya reiterated the never ending necessity of coming together in order to

resist and claim while celebrating the achievements that such rights movements in Asia have successfully claimed. Horacio Sivori, CLAM/Sephis made a presentation on the specificities of the Latin American situation from the colonial to the contemporary charting the milestones in its dynamic history and showed how homosexuality/LGBT movements have been in constant and quite terse negotiations with the state. He also talked about CLAM's partnerships with scholars, activists, legal operators, policy makers, communicators, educators and health researchers in achieving better research output and stronger regional and trans-national rights movement. Although the structured sessions of the dialogue came to end with this session, evidently the discussions and arguments continued beyond the printed schedules and names with all the participants actively finding someone to talk and share. The press conference (11 August) was attended by many media persons including Kompas News and The Jakarta Post. In fact a few of them had been with the participants throughout the dialogue. Nursyahbani Katjasungkana, Hanan Sabea and Muhadjir Darwin mainly fielded questions from an enthusiastic media. It was followed by a visit to the magnificent Borobudur temples. The excursion on 12 August to the Suku Temple was missed by a few participants due to prearranged travel schedules.



Participants in a parallel interactive session

Life of a Young Artist in Lahore

Ritoban completed his Masters in Philosophy from the University of Calcutta. He is more popular for his musical interests especially in the genres of Rock and Jazz. His band, Cassini's Division, has changed the way people look at original English Rock Music in India.

He is also the editorial assistant of *Global South*. Email: ritoban.ludo@gmail.com



Ritoban Das

Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh, *Side-Effects: Portrait of a Young Artist in Lahore*, Pakistan, 2009.

The film centres on the daily life of a young artist from Lahore called Omar Daraz. Omar studies in the Arts College in Lahore. He is also a designer for an I.T. magazine. He works in his office almost all night and does classes in the morning. Sleeping is almost a luxury for him. He spends his time with other students of the college, discussing studies and technical processes with them. Through the eyes of these young students, Mashhood Sheikh shows the picturesque night life of Lahore and how the boys have fun eating and partying outside on the road. The hand held shots from the bike do give a nice feeling to this night shoot, though at places they become a little jarring. The place where Omar shows the photographs of his trip to the northern regions of Pakistan is quite interestingly shot. The photographs and the dialogues are quite witty and bring a fresh element into the film. The college photograph gives a little insight to Omar's past. This is also a nearly typical portrayal of any college student's life in southern countries. Through these pictures and the water scene (where all the boys jump and swim in the puddle) Sheikh has quite successfully sketched the life of an average college student who can be from any of the South countries. I could myself relate to these scenes. The character named Ahmed Raza is worthy of special mention, just for the flare and charisma he exuded. He single-handedly takes the film to a different artistic dimension. The shot taken of the road, from the car does not, however, make any sense to me. This is where a little bit of background score has been used. The traditional music used in the background

could have been of a much superior quality, especially for a film made in Lahore.



Omar Daraz with his Friends

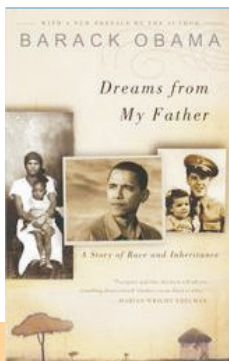
The shot where Omar describes his dream of having his own advertisement agency sometime down the line again explains the spirit of middle class urban youth in the southern countries trying to get over the colonial hangover and establish something of their own. The love angle is also something that is pretty common. Once again the bike ride with the camera showing Omar's face in the mirror is good cinematography.

The film overall is quite nice but it could have been better had it had a little bit of storyline. The film primarily lacks that. Having said so, it should also be mentioned that the picture of a young student that has been sketched in the film is quite vivid. Both the editing and sound aspects of the film could have been better though. Without the subtitles it would have been really difficult to follow the dialogues. It must be said that the film achieves its aim. The portrait of a young artist has indeed been sketched well by Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh.



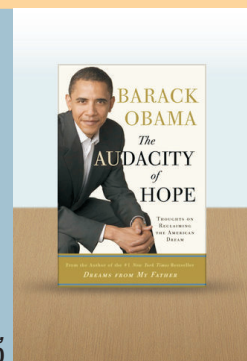
The Artist in Contemplation

Book Notices



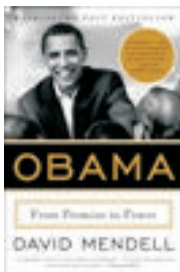
Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance*, Three Rivers Press, New York, 2004, pp. 453, \$ 13.95

The book, a memoir by the United States President Barack Obama, revisits his African lineage. It charts the painful quest for identity of a boy- the son of a black African father and a white American mother- through the death of his arrogant and impulsive father and his family's search for security. The sudden death of his father forces Barack Obama's family to move from Hawaii to Kenya where he encounters his African heritage. Through this book he confronts the world of his father, of whom he knew little as a man and more as an idol.



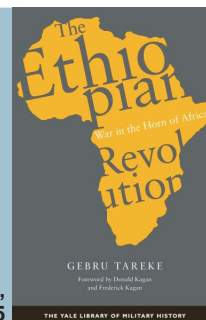
Barack Obama, *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream*, Crown Publishers, 2006, pp. 375, \$ 16.50

This is the second book by Barack Obama at a time when he was the Senator, awaiting his Presidential campaign. The roots of this book date back to his famous address at the 2004 Democratic Convention titled *The Audacity of Hope*. In subsequent days this book became the basis of his famous Presidential campaigns in 2008 where he drew upon many of the ideas expounded in his book. The book remains Obama's strongest political statement voicing his opinions on a variety of issues ranging from education and health upto the Iraq war.



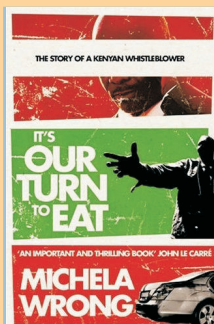
David Mendell, *Obama: From Promise to Power*, HarperCollins, New York, 2007, pp. 406, \$ 14.95

In this book veteran journalist David Mendell tracks the rise of the Obama phenomenon in American history right from his Senate campaign. It thus naturally provides the author with a much wider canvas to draw out his narration about the man who comes with a promise to blacks-whites, young-old, Democrats-Republicans-Moderates. This book covers the development of Obama from Barry- an adolescent in Hawaii, to Barack- a graduate at the Harvard Law School. The author interviews many of his friends, families and colleagues as well as providing day to day coverage of his activities from Chicago to Washington.



Gebru Tareke, *The Ethiopian Revolution: War in the Horn of Africa*, Yale University Press, Yale, 2009, pp. 437, \$ 45

This book, a study of war and revolution in Ethiopia and Eritrea, provides a wide ranging and detailed study of the emergence of revolution, insurgency and war in Ethiopia and Eritrea over the past few decades. In reconstructing this history, Tareke's extensive use of Ethiopian military records together with interviews with officers, almost characterises his work as military history. Together with an important contribution to the history of Ethiopian conflicts the book is also a prime source for the study of guerilla warfare.

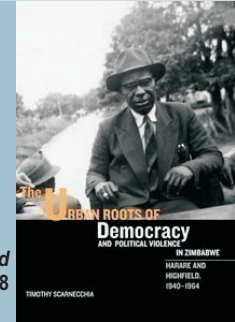


Michela Wrong, *It's Our Turn to Eat: The Story of Kenyan Whistleblower*, Fourth Estate, London, 2009, pp. 400, 12.99 GBP

Michela Wrong's book is supposed to be an insider's story of one of the scandalous theft of public resources in Kenya's postcolonial history. The scandal which came to be known as Anglo-Leasing was deemed to have cost the Kenyan taxpayer tens of billions of Kenyan shillings. Wrong tells the story of John Githongo who was hired in 2003 to advise the government on corruption. But when the scandal broke out Githongo in an attempt to set things right attracted the ire of senior government officials, bureaucrats and finance personnel. Despite certain narrative loopholes, the book is an important contribution to the genre of investigative

journalism especially in the case of Africa.

Timothy Scarnecchia, *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe: Harare and Highfield 1940-1964*, University of Rochester Press, 2008



The book details a democratic tradition developed in the 1940s and 1950s, while at the same time giving an expression to the world of Zimbabwean violence. The work takes the reader back to the early formations of democratic spaces in Zimbabwe and how those spaces were eventually clogged to make way for violence and manipulation by the state elite. This book demands merit for delving deep into the history of violence as compared to earlier superficial accounts. And at the same time Timothy Scarnecchia is successful at weaving an intricate narrative that traces the trajectories of earlier democratic traditions in Zimbabwe, including women's political movements, township organisations, and trade unions.



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