11

Understanding Life and Education in an Urban 'Ghetto'

*Farah Farooqi**

Shahjahanabad, a city that the Mughal emperor Shahjahan (1627–1658) named after himself, was a walled city and had seven gates. The Red Fort (Lal Qila) was home to upper-caste Muslims and Hindus, while areas near the walls were inhabited by various craftsmen and workers. The transformation of these caste- and craft-based spaces into communal areas during colonial and postcolonial India has been a long and complex process (Parveen 2021).

Historians describe Shahjahanabad as a place of 'composite culture', where both Muslim nobility and upper-caste Hindus shared cultural practices, learned Persian and etiquettes (Gupta 1981). The city was known for its diverse population living in mixed urban spaces, fostering close relationships between Hindus and Muslims across social classes (Chenoy 1998).

Referring to significant changes in the sociocultural and political landscape of Delhi over time, Narayani Gupta (1981) points out: 'Delhi has died so many deaths.' Poet Altaf Hussain Hali echoes Gupta's feelings in this couplet:

> *Tazkira Dilli-i-marhoom ka na chhed ai dost. Na suna jaayega hum se ye fasaana hargiz.*
>
> Don't talk to me of Late Lamented Delhi, my friend. I don't have the heart to hear this story. (Mahmood 2024)

* I would like to thank the editors for inviting me to contribute to this volume and for their insightful comments which proved to be most useful.

Three major shifts in social relations are clearly visible over time. First, the Britons, after the 1857 revolt, treated communities differently based on their loyalty towards them. They labelled Muslims as 'traitorous' and Hindus as 'loyalists'. This marked the symbols of Muslim presence as 'contested sites' for the first time (Parveen 2014). Many older inhabitants, including the tyre *biradri* (caste brotherhood) and the Punjabis, discussed later in this chapter, shifted to areas outside the city walls and were permitted inside only with passes issued to them. Residents of Bara Hindu Rao can actually trace the founding of their locality in the events that took place in the aftermath of the 'mutiny' in 1857 (Jamil 2017). When Shahjahanabad became British-controlled Delhi, their capital was shifted to New Delhi in 1912 and Delhi became Old Delhi (Purani Dilli). The issue of cow slaughter was for colonial powers an administrative concern. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) concretised the demarcation of space, and conflicting practices, including the meat trade with 'modern' and 'rational' vocabulary of offensive trade and slaughterhouses, were shifted outside the city walls near the Idgah area where they remained for almost a century before being shifted to Ghazipur Mandi in 2008.

The second watershed event was the partition of India which further altered the social fabric. This was due to both bloodshed and Muslim exodus to Pakistan leading to a loss of two-thirds of Muslims from Old Delhi (Zamindar 2007). Those who shifted to camps such as the Purana Qila to escape violence lost their property as it was seized by the state and declared as 'evacuee' property. Independence brought more sociocultural and economic changes, with Muslims facing suspicion and stigma. According to Rotem Geva (2022), most of the Muslims who stayed in the city or returned from the camps flocked to the Muslim-majority localities considered safe for Muslims. Jawaharlal Nehru, too, reluctantly admitted that Muslims were not safe in non-Muslim areas and advocated turning the Muslim-majority areas into 'Muslim zones' (Geva 2022). In this way, the spontaneous internal displacement was systematised by the state.

Since India gained independence, Muslims have often faced suspicion and discrimination. The third shift is visible as discrimination intensified and violence against Muslims increased, especially with the rise of the Hindu right. In the 1950s, the school mentioned in this chapter had 35 per cent Hindu students as per the school attendance registers. Many refugees settled near the school initially but later moved to other areas as they were rehabilitated by the government or expanded their businesses. After Purani Dilli became too congested, people settled in areas such as Jamia Nagar and Seelampur where migrants from nearby states had already started to arrive (Farooqi 2023). The bulldozing of parts of the walled city during the 1975 emergency further displaced poor Muslims and led to the labelling of Muslim-majority areas as 'dirty blotches' (Jamil 2017).

Recent years have witnessed targeted violence against Muslims, including threats, assaults, sexual violence and killings (Rapp 2022). Rohit Chopra (2023) argues that Hindu mobs and vigilante groups since 2014 have targeted Muslims with impunity and destroyed their businesses, leading many Muslims in mixed neighbourhoods to seek refuge in Muslim-majority areas. The areas discussed in this chapter, such as Qasabpura, Idgah, Bara Hindu Rao, Ahata Kidara and Nabi Kareem, are predominantly Muslim but diverse in terms of region, class, sect and caste backgrounds. Both employers and employees inhabit the same localities. Many families have roots in these areas for generations, while others are recent migrants from states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Economic clustering due to neoliberal policies, coupled with communal tensions and violence targeted at Muslims, has additionally contributed to segregation of religiously homogenous areas (Gayer and Jaffrelot 2012). Laurent Gayer and Christophe Jaffrelot (2012) conceptualised the term 'ghetto' on the basis of the social and political constraints over residential options open to residents, class and caste diversity, neglect of locality by state authorities and limited job opportunities to residents resulting in their estrangement from the rest of the city. This led me to use the term 'ghetto' in the title. While the term 'ghetto', according to Jeffrelot, denotes isolation, the areas mentioned previously are well connected to other parts of Delhi due to market demands.

Several reports tell us that the economic base of self-employed Muslims and those in the informal sector has been systematically targeted (Chatterjee 2021) which is the reality of the residents of this area.

I feel that it is important to also consider the social mechanisms that result in and sustain different levels of segregation (Wacquant 2015). The category 'ghetto' needs to be revisited and further complicated in view of contemporary polarisation politics spiralling newer changes in the urban landscape. Discrimination, communalisation and polarisation have become a part of the collective memory of the community. Fear drives people to live close to each other, but the areas are at times feared. It is important to understand the processes of stigmatisation and the production of stereotypes about the marginalised. I feel the category 'ghetto' is contested and in need of much more nuanced conceptualisation. The details presented in this chapter will help in bringing out complexities in Muslim localities which are at times, in common parlance, referred to as 'ghettos', a term also used in the Sachar Committee report (2006).

I was the manager of Shafiq Memorial School, situated in Bara Hindu Rao, attended by children from *mohalla*s (neighbourhoods) mentioned previously, from 2009 to 2014. Later, I remained associated with the school as a member of its managing committee and continued to work with the children. The school has deep

connections with the *mohalla*s. This provided me a rare window to understand the social, political and cultural life of the area in which it is located. The conception of my role as a manager required me to interact with students, parents and teachers, both formally and informally. I also visited the students' homes and *karkhana*s (factories or manufactories), took classes, helped them prepare skits, conducted workshops and officially communicated with the Department of Education, Delhi, and the society responsible for running the school. I met members of the community, police officials and politicians residing in the locality. A glimpse of my journey with Shafiq is contained in my diary, published in the form of 19 articles, as 'School Manager ki Diary ke Kuchh Panney' in *Shiksha Vimarsh* (Farooqi 2013, 2015), a journal published by Digantar, Jaipur, and also other journals (Farooqi 2016). Later, my work was published by Eklavya, Bhopal, in the form of a book titled *Ek School Manager ki Diary* (Farooqi 2020).

I begin by describing the inhabitants of the localities because it is they who make up the area. I discuss how the heterogeneity between different groups including caste groups of Muslims gets masked by outward markers such as their names and burqa, projecting them as a homogeneous group. I posit how different caste groups and recent migrants negotiate differences for making the locality a place for themselves. In this context, it is explained how similarity in circumstances, which includes the sense of insecurity and fear, brings people together. I produce for you, in this paper, the urban margins comprising dense Muslim localities, deprived of basic civic amenities and hygiene and inhabited by people from various socio-economic strata. I show how electoral politics of vote are practised around identity and deprivation in this congested area. A high percentage of residents of the area comprises first- and second-generation migrants who have to constantly engage with uncertainties, income shocks and the vicissitudes of the market. These factors help me examine the life of the people as a roller-coaster ride in the city. The area around the school is inhabited by workers and their children who assist them. I show how students of the school start working at an early age and get caught in the intergenerational cycle of impoverishment and deprivation. Seeking to connect all of these aforementioned factors – the ebb and flow of employment, market swings, processes of stereotype production, the socio-economic and cultural structures of impoverishment, inter-community conflicts and violence and resultant reconfiguration of residences on communal lines – the chapter describes, analyses and even questions the production and reproduction of segregated neighbourhoods.

I think I have been able to bring the *mohalla* and the school in conversation with each other. The local people, many of whom are alumni of the school, feel a sense of belonging to it. In various ways, the school reflects the demographic composition, culture and ethos of the surrounding *mohalla*s.

I have interspersed the description of the *biradri*s with profiles of a few children. These profiles are not representative of children of these respective caste groups fully but nevertheless help in understanding the struggles and aspirations of some children to access education. In order to gauge the social reality of the worker children, it is important to look at the interplay between factories, residence, the school, the vicissitudes of the market and the support system.

The Locality and the Inhabitants

The entire area around Bara Hindu Rao, where the school is situated, consists of a criss-cross web of narrow gullies (lanes) opening into broader lanes and roads. Apart from houses and *karkhana*s, small shops and *khoka*s (kiosks) selling *rotis*, rusks, bakery items, meat and grocery, and so on, are located in these lanes. Some of these gullies are so narrow that it is difficult for two people to walk past each other. Mounds of garbage can be seen in the corners of these lanes. People and children can be seen leisurely chatting and walking, oblivious of the filth. In several places one can hear the metrical sound of machines, announcing a *karkhana* in the vicinity.

There has been a gradual migration of affluent Hindus and Sikhs out of these *mohalla*s into middle-class localities across Delhi. Their space was taken up by Muslims, especially after the Babri Masjid demolition in 1992 and the Gujarat mass killings of Muslims in 2002 (Mander 2022). The Hindus of the area live near Pahari Dheeraj, Filmistan and Chimney Mill. They have significant economic capital – most of them are employers and traders in the Sadar Bazar area in Old Delhi. Their localities are much cleaner. The *mohalla*s where the Jains live have gates at both exits. *Basti*s of the Dalit and Khatik people lie between Muslim areas such as Quraish Nagar and the localities of higher-caste Hindus such as Pahari Dheeraj, located on the outskirts of the area.

The people who have been living in this area for several generations – Muslims – see themselves as divided into three main *biradri*s or *zaat*s (castes): the Qureshis, who trade mostly in meat, live in Qasabpura or Quraish Nagar and the Idgah areas; the Mirdhas, popularly known as tyre-*wallah*s, live in *mohalla*s adjacent to the school such as Chameleon Road and Mohalla Sheikhian; and the Punjabi Muslims live in areas such as Beri Wala Bagh, Bageecha Achcheyji and Azad Market. Besides these groups, there are the Ansaris, who live in Gali Darziyan and are scattered in other areas as well. The Ansaris were traditionally weavers. When their trade suffered in the Ganga plains in northern and eastern India, many migrated to Delhi and other bigger cities. The first- or second-generation migrants from Bihar and other adjoining states constitute almost half

the population of these neighbourhoods. Besides these communities, the Saifi, Saqqey and Faqeer *biradri*s live in the adjoining *mohalla*s. The Shia community of Shikarpur lives towards Pakki Gali. Many of them are engaged in the glass trade. Since their total numbers, including influential and wealthy members, are fewer as compared to the rest, their clout is also limited.

The three well-known *biradri*s of the area – the Qureshis, the Mirdhas and the Punjabis – are described here. Struggles of the migrants from adjoining states are also discussed. I have described the Qureshi *biradri* more extensively in comparison to other *biradri*s as the community was in the eye of a storm with the coming to power of the right-wing government at the centre in 2014 and also in several states. The meat trade suffered and, along with it, the community. I describe here how this has had a bearing on the education of the children.

The Qureshis

The butchers of the Qureshi community live in Qasabpura and the Idgah area, less than a kilometre from the Shafiq school. This area was once outside the walls of Shahjahanabad. Owing to urban expansion, this population, still marginalised, no longer lives on the physical margins. When I took up the position of school manager in 2009, hundred-year-old slaughterhouses were shifted to Ghazipur Mandi (a wholesale market), 25–30 kilometres away from Idgah–Qasabpura. This was in abidance to the Supreme Court orders, the court ostensibly operating from the 'neoliberal praxis of aesthetics, safety, health and hygiene' (Ahmad 2013). The people of the area were passing through a difficult period and thousands lost work. The trade suffered. Such income shocks are the hallmark of the area. The sufferers were mostly labourers who had to spend a considerable amount of money travelling, and their net earnings were barely two to three hundred rupees a day. There is a small percentage of the well-off amongst the Qureshis who saved their people from starvation during this period. The school, too, condoned the fees of a number of Qasabpura children. Despite this, some children left the school, taking up petty work to support their families. Though the cattle *mandi* was shifted from this 'residential area', marginal meat traders continued to work stealthily from here, and students of the school became part of this trade under these circumstances. Buying goats from the *mandi*, transporting them to the area, slaughtering them and selling the meat often brought the children and their parents into conflict with the police. Work and the economic condition of the community have deteriorated since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government came to power in 2014. The community feels that their economic base has been deliberately targeted and proclaims that it an 'organised conspiracy' of the state to weaken them. With the

beef ban and controversy (*Clarion* 2024), the area remains under surveillance and in a state of panic because of rumours and false reports.

Since 2014, getting and renewing licenses has been strictly enforced. It is not just a dreary process, but a lot of bribery and exploitation also mars the entire procedure. People who work with livestock used to make big profits, but now they are struggling. Transporting animals from one place to another is tricky and risky. The traders say there were rules for transportation before, but they were not enforced as strictly. Earlier they could fit 300–350 goats in a truck, even though the limit was only 40 per vehicle. But now, if they are caught, they get beaten up and fined. The traders lament that if they follow transportation rules, the cost of meat will shoot up exponentially. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act has been around since 1960 and got changed a few times, last in 2017. Qureshis complain that Maneka Gandhi's 'goons' now rule the roads. If they get caught, their animals are taken away and auctioned without their say. Those who secretly slaughter and sell in Qasabpura have to pay big fines often. Some MCD officials fine them for one animal but keep the money from the fines for the rest of the animals.

Talking about how the Qureshis are doing now, one man sadly whispered: 'Their struggle remains hidden. People wearing sparkling white clothes, seemingly well-to-do, sit like dogs ready to pounce on whatever little work comes their way, in desperation to feed their kids.' Some parents took their kids out of good private schools like Columbus and Cambridge and admitted them in government schools because of their tough situation. Hardship makes people more sensitive to unfair treatment and exploitation. A person noticed: 'Did you see there's only one government school and no clinic or community centre in all of Qasabpura? But there are four police posts in a small lane that connects Ahata Kidara with Quraish Nagar.' The man also said that the education of the Qureshis, which was getting better earlier, is now sliding again. Almost all of the community's kids go to schools, but only about 30 per cent study beyond school and very few make it to regular colleges.

I have known Shahzeb, an alumnus of our school, for several years now. When he was at Shafiq, he was very interested in his studies. His peers often teased him for his attempts at speaking broken English. But he never gave up trying. He used to participate in every co-curricular activity. Despite all his motivation and hard work, he could not continue his studies after school. His father's health deteriorated, and he and his brother had to support the family financially and contribute towards their father's treatment. Shahzeb now goes to the Ghazipur Mandi, where he arbitrates the sale of livestock. For mediating the sale of one goat, he gets a rupee as commission. He is able to earn INR 200–400 per day and INR 9,000–15,000 per month. He is required to keep accounts and knowledge of his school subjects (which included accounts) has helped him in this.

The Tyre *Biradri*

The tyre *biradri* consider themselves to be natives of the area. Some older people share that their community lived in Daryaganj and shifted to this place after the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Some members migrated to places in western Uttar Pradesh such as Meerut. The rich members of the community are involved in the tyre trade and are earning well. The economically weak members of the community work for the rich and in other small factories.

Since they are old inhabitants of the area, they have more property as compared to people who have migrated later. They have built and rented out small rooms to people, mostly workers, which fetch them good rents each month. The price of property in this dense locality is very high. The rents are also soaring in comparison with cleaner and less dense localities nearby. Many, such as Haji Tamkeen, are involved in both the tyre business and property dealing. A tall building adjoining one of the walls of the school belongs to him which he has rented out to recent migrants. Several people revealed that many workers were injured in a huge fire in a building few years ago. In order to escape smoke and fire, many had jumped down and were critically injured. This incident points towards the risky and precarious conditions in which many inhabitants of the area live. The entire area, in order to accommodate the new residents, seems to be perpetually under construction. Small rooms on top of one another and a mesh of wires hanging on top in narrow lanes is the hallmark of the area.

Many from the *biradri* are able to afford good private schools for their children, but most do not study beyond school and instead get involved in their respective businesses. Iqbal belongs to the tyre *biradri*. I taught him in class eight for about four months. He used to come to the school only for two to three days per week. When I asked him about this, he sheepishly told me that he has to peddle tyres in different streets. He candidly added that he cannot afford to attend school more than thrice a week. He had an ailing father and he needed to help his older brother in the business. I later found he had dropped from the school. He rejoined in class nine after a gap of two years. I found him dressed in a neat, ironed uniform. He seemed happy. He told me that his family's business was now steady and his brother encouraged him to rejoin school.

The Punjabis

The affluent and economically comfortable people are in the Punjabi *biradri* as compared to the two discussed thus far. They have formed an *anjuman*, or organisation, which is involved in many educational activities. It also helps members in various ways such as offering them interest-free loans. They run

several *maktabs* (elementary schools) and *madrasa*s in the locality and a charitable dispensary and hospital. The wealthy choose to send their children to good private schools outside the locality. Many in the *biradri* are businessmen and support not just each other but other needy people of the locality. They consider and project their identity and culture to be not just different but also superior to other groups. A few have shops in Chandni Chowk and Connaught Place. The *biradri* even has its separate burial ground close to the Filmistan intersection, which is one of the most well-maintained graveyards in the city.

One day, before the month of Ramadan, I was sitting in the principal's office when a gentleman arrived. He was a parent and had come with a request to allow his child a month's leave so that the child could devote his time fully to Ramadan activities. Since the child was *hafiz* (someone who has memorized the whole Quran), he was obligated to recite the Quran in the Taraweeh *namaaz* (longer namaaz, or prayer, during Ramadan) in the evenings. When I tried to reason that the child would miss a month's studies, both the parent and the principal looked surprised at my sacrilegious comment. The principal politely said: 'Ma'am, we do not refuse leave in such cases.' The father added: 'Madam, my son would join the family business later. I only want both my sons to somehow complete their graduation so that I am able to tell their in-laws that they are BA [Bachelor of Arts] when I go to ask for their daughter's hand in marriage.' I was told that they have a flourishing business of *topi*s and caps which the sons are expected to look after.

The Migrants

At least 65 per cent of parents of the school are those who have migrated to Delhi within the last two decades for the sake of work and educational opportunities for their children. Many of them live and work in the Nabi Karim area. Most are engaged in the manufacturing of bags, jeans, purses, diaries and belts. Several belong to Madhubani, Darbhanga, Sitamarhi and Champaran districts of Bihar, but some are also from Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan. Some have their own manufacturing units, but most sell their labour to *karkhana*s. A few are financially 'comfortable' while most are on the breadline. They support each other in this far-off land and maintain a distance from those who are settled here for the last many generations. They say: 'These Dilliwalas sport decent clothes but mouth such abuses; we keep away from them.'

The labouring poor, whom I write of, gain some stability after toiling for a few years. In Nabi Karim, 15 per cent to 20 per cent of the houses are now owned by people from Bihar. Their dwellings may just be a room, doubling up as a *karkhana*, but to have one's own roof is a great blessing in a city like Delhi.

Water is scarce in these areas, the supply of electricity remains erratic and roads are under perpetual repair. Many people have also bought houses in Sarai Khalil, a comparatively cleaner location that boasts of government flats. At times, the original inhabitants are worried: 'These Biharis are progressing fast; they arrive in a wretched, pitiful condition but slowly they move on.'

I had visited Irshad's home-cum-*karkhana* for the first time when he was in class five. One day, when I met him in school, he invited me for lunch which I politely declined, but had tea with him and his brothers. The dimensions of the house were 10 × 12 feet. Their home doubled up as a belt-making *karkhana*. A plastic sheet was spread on the floor where everything from working and cooking to sleeping took place. A sewing machine was placed on one side. Near it was kept the machine for grating leather. Raw material was piled up in a corner and packing of the finished product was being undertaken. When I looked up, I saw four or five strings tied across the room. Belts were hung on these for drying after being dyed. A fridge was kept in a corner. A small gas stove and a cylinder for cooking food were there in the room. A few cans containing water were kept near these. An attempt had been made to put things in order to welcome their 'esteemed' guest. On one side of the plastic sheet, a clean bed cover was spread on which I sat down. The rent of this room was INR 3,500, excluding electricity charges which were nearly INR 1,500 per month. A single toilet was shared between occupants of many such rooms – sometimes as many as 40 people.

The brothers were packing belts even while talking to me. Four brothers lived and worked in this room. The older brothers, Naushad and Shamshad, devoted all their time to the work. Irshad and Dilshad together shouldered household responsibilities such as cooking food and washing clothes and utensils. Along with this, after coming back from school, they devoted some time to the *karkhana work* as well.

Negotiating Differences

The three Muslim *biradri*s differ from each other in their beliefs related to Islam. The tyre *biradri* follows the Barelvi sect. They believe in rituals like *milad* (celebration of Prophet Mohammad's birth and his deeds by singing hymns in his praise), *waaz* (Islamic sermon or discourse) and *urs* (death anniversary of a Sufi saint usually held at *dargah*, or shrine). The Punjabi *biradri* considers the former's values to be 'incorrect' and some of the attendant practices to be *bidat*, which means 'un-Islamic innovations' or polluting orthodox Islam. The Punjabi *biradri* interprets Islam in the light of the Quran and Ahadees (narratives about the life of the Prophet, plural of Hadith). Religious beliefs are also changing with

time. Some of those following the Barelvi sect have now adopted the Deobandi (sect) viewpoint under the influence of the Tablighi Jamaat. Differences in beliefs, everyday practices and rituals are quite evident between the three *biradri*s. Marriages take place within *biradri*s, but not between them. Amongst most Punjabis, weddings take place in mosques and later a reception is hosted by the groom's parents. Following the path of Ahadees, in most weddings no dowry is taken and the brides' parents are spared spending hard-earned money on weddings. On the other hand, amongst the tyre *biradri* and the Qureshis, weddings are a lavish affair. Each person tries to outdo the other in showing off their wealth and pomp. A philanthropic gesture by the rich members of the tyre *biradri* includes communal weddings. Thirty to forty couples are wedded in a single gathering and given necessary items as gifts to start their home together. This tradition is believed to have been started by Mufti Samar Dehlavi.

Amongst the Barelvis, which includes the tyre *biradri*, a huge procession, from Pahari Dheeraj to Fatehpuri and Jama Masjid, is taken out on the occasion of Milad-un-Nabi (the Prophet's birthday). Naat singers are invited from all over India, and food and sherbet are distributed on the way by the wealthy. A committee is formed and contributions are taken from the *biradri*. Before the procession starts, political leaders are invited to shed light on the Prophet's life and teachings. In previous years, former chief ministers of Delhi such as Sheila Dikshit and Arvind Kejriwal have spoken on the occasion. The Punjabi *biradri* and others belonging to the Deobandi faith assert that these rituals have been copied from the Hindus and 'pollute' Islam. The Barelvis claim that these help in reviving the lost spirit of Islam and bring people together. Nothing, of course, can be affirmed as correct or incorrect.

People and *biradri*s remain critical of not just each other's faith but have other misgivings as well. It was shared with me that the Punjabis are 'professionals', who allegedly do not even offer discounts to their brothers. Punjabis call the Barelvis *kafir* (non-believers). At times, there are reports of scuffles between residents of Bara Hindu Rao and Qasabpura, as also between Shia and Sunni children of the school.

Ethos and Making Place

For the world beyond this 'ghetto', these heterogeneities and conflicts are masked under the label of 'Muslim community'. For all three communities, however, the Quran and Ahadees are the founding texts. Each of these sects has its own historical trajectory and respective reasons for practice, which link present forms with the past. Moreover, the people of this area have internalised the responses of dominant groups and the media. Hence, they are compelled to take refuge in this

locality, called *chhota* Pakistan (little Pakistan) in some circles. I feel the sense of insecurity is a running thread that binds people in the area. The vice principal of the school often said in a jest: 'Bas ilaaqe mein hi sher hein ye log, ilaaqe ke bahar hawa kharab hotee hai' (In their own localities, they are like lions; ask them to step out, they chicken out and become like lambs!). People living in the area find comfort and freedom to practice their religion and rituals openly. It is said that they can together celebrate festivals and other occasions. It is also said: 'At least four ready shoulders will be found to carry us to the burial ground.'

The people have a familiarity with the ethos (*mahaul*) which includes *azan* (call to prayer), greetings, language and traditions. The Tablighi Jamaat is quite active in the area. People from all the three *biradri*s and other residents, including some children of our school, are associated with it. *Taleem* (religious instructions) happens in many mosques of the area between *asir* and *maghrib* (afternoon and sunset) *namaaz* or after *isha'a* (night) prayers. *Tabligh* is mostly concerned with 'proper' interpretation of religious obligations such as *namaaz*, *roza* (fasting) and *zakat* (obligatory charity). It also tries to retrieve such aspects of religion which have a direct bearing on everyday aspects of life, such as taking care of neighbours and cultivating politeness. Association with it gives people a sense of piety and being a part of a valued group. I found many young adults adopt Islamic symbolism in attire. Beard, kurta–pyjama and *topi* give them a feeling of oneness with a 'respected group'. At times, this also facilitates business associations. Being a part of the unorganised sector, without any trade unions, people need to build relationships of trust and friendship. Adopting symbols and rituals as well as meeting as part of a religious group helps in forging a collective identity and good relationships between members. However, kurta–pyjama and skullcap remain degraded markers, identifying people as uneducated, backward and radicalised fundamentalists.

Kalyani Menon (2022) argues that religious practices are central to constructing community and subjectivity. In a place like Old Delhi, she sees rituals as spatial practices that forge cultural commons. Taking the argument forward, she says that space becomes place through religious practices, narratives of self and community, architectural details and visual signs that inscribe it with meaning, as can be seen in this area.

Insecurity and Fear

The entire area remains under high alert during any communal clash anywhere in India. Whether it is the national days such as Republic Day and Independence Day or other major festivals, extra police force is deployed in the area.

The perception of Muslims as troublemakers remains persistent. There have not been many cases of rioting in the recent past. Rioting last took place in the area on 15 November 1990, when the news of *kar seva* (voluntary service, especially for the construction, restoration or maintenance of a temple) having taken place in the Babri Masjid on 30 October 1990 reached the area. Muslims and Sikhs took out a peace rally from Gurdwara Sisganj to the Old Idgah. It is alleged that on that day, Muslims raised provocative slogans while Hindus resorted to brick-batting. All this happened after the visit of a few right-wing politicians to the area. The residents of Qasabpura angrily alleged that police openly sided with the Hindus during the skirmishes. On my recent visit to the area, people cribbed that they have to be extra careful now as it is 'their government' which is in power. I was told that in 2018, on the occasion of Ram Navami, the Hindus organised an elaborate procession. People carrying swords and shouting slogans marched the lanes while the annual *ijtema* (congregation) was underway in the Old Idgah. Residents of the *mohalla* shared that they had no option but to restrain themselves from reacting to provocative slogans lest the situation went out of control.

While living together in the 'ghetto-like' locality gives people a sense of security, they also reinforce each other's fears. One hears complaints about the systematic and conscious targeting of Muslims by stigmatising them and then implicating them in false cases of hooliganism and rioting. The people say: 'God forbid if riots happen, then both the police and the judiciary will accuse Muslim boys and implicate them in false cases.' Hence, those living in the locality thank God for whatever little space they are able to afford in this dense and filthy neighbourhood. Cases of picking up Muslim boys for interrogation have been reported from the area. Also, news of police excesses and state-sponsored violence from other Muslim-majority areas such as Muzaffarnagar, Shamli and Batla House sends shivers down the spine of the residents. Such instances of repression and violence shape relations in the public sphere and civil society.

This does not mean that people remain isolated from the Hindu communities. Work brings them together. In many cases, employers are Hindu while employees are Muslim. They share good relations though these mainly remain patronising. A young person commented that inter-religious conflicts in the area are unthinkable because of economic relations between people. He further added: 'The entire economy of Sadar Bazar [a wholesale market close to the area] will crumble if some untoward incident happens.' Many people are great friends with each other; some families have had harmonious relations for several generations. Taking a deep sigh, they proclaim: 'Our leaders are the cause of all conflict between people. Things were never this bad.' Danish shared: 'Just outside my window, close to my house, we have a family which sells milk and milk products. Every other day *bhaiyya*

[brother] invites me to have *kada* milk [thickened milk]. He knows I am very fond of it.' We know well that the media has managed to project Islam and its adherents as extremist, fundamentalist, bombers and terrorists. In fact, an impasse is projected between the religion and the religious on the one hand and the idea of secular and liberal people on the other. The categories – religious and liberal – show the relationship of people to ideas, ethical codes, interpretations and communication in general. Thus, a singular normative idea of the secular is problematic in a multi-religious country like India. The selfhood embraced by people of the area is of Muslimness informed by minority consciousness, but it is not radical.

At the heart of the 'ghetto', where the school is located, lies the amalgam of discrimination and fear. The feeling that Muslims lack resources and education and that institutions such as the police and the judiciary are against them is widespread amongst children and adults, rich and poor, *neta*s (politicians or leaders) and commoners, and is also reflected in the topography of the 'ghetto'. A multi-layered discourse of fear is seen engraved in everyday imagination and conversation. This is reflected in a secret passage which a mill owner allowed to be built on his property near the school. He reflected: 'God forbid, this will prove to be useful in situations of curfew or riot.' A local politician was invited to the school to unfurl the flag on the occasion of Independence Day. In his speech, he said: 'If someone says to you that this country is not yours, then don't get convinced. Our fathers and forefathers are buried here. They have sacrificed their lives for the country. This is our nation just as it is theirs.'

Adults have passed down the sense of fear to children. I taught a chapter on marginalisation given in an NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) textbook, *Social and Political Life: Part III*, to students of class eight. Some of the responses of the children pertaining to the manner in which Muslims are constructed and discriminated against included:

> Villains in films are shown as Muslims.
>
> If there is a bomb blast somewhere, Muslims are first to be named.
>
> Once my neighbour was looking for a job; members of other communities were unwilling to give her a job. When she got one, she had to undergo a lot of humiliation. Is being Muslim a sin?
>
> When Muslims were subjected to atrocities and cruelty in Gujarat, no one came forward to help them. This happened because no Muslim in Gujarat had any government job.

A number of research studies support the premise that children who perceive discrimination and bias may feel discouraged to strive and struggle for academic success, as this contradicts the image of education as providing equality of opportunity (Ogbu 2003). This needs to be examined as one of the factors in the glaring dropout rates amongst Muslim children as observed by the Sachar Committee report (2006).

Prejudice and Stereotypes

The *mohalla*s are a good example to study how stereotypes, phobia, fears and criminality are constructed. I learnt that stereotypes may have a basis which most often is perceptually skewed. Muslims are considered unclean – the dense *mohalla*s are 'proof' where piles of garbage are seen accumulated in every nook and corner. The MCD, with its inadequate workforce, cannot keep up with garbage generated in the dense locality. The houses-cum-*karkhana*s of the workers cannot be called clean by middle-class standards. Several one-room workshops have one toilet which stinks because it is used by more than 30 people, as mentioned earlier.

Hardships and income shocks do not allow people to have peaceful family lives. In some places, women and children are running households by doing piecework such as packing of materials as men have lost work due to closure of *karkhana*s and slaughterhouses. Even if *karkhana*s are running, the income remains uncertain. When this happens and women and children gain some decision-making powers, it leaves patriarchs feeling disempowered. This leads to conflicts and quarrels in families. In some families, it reaches a limit where the patriarch leaves his home, wife and children. Muslim men are anyway constructed by some communal-minded Hindus as cruel husbands who pronounce *talaq* at the slightest pretext!

I found that illegality and criminality can be exclusive categories if seen closely and compassionately. Many people in the area would not be able to afford to eat more than once a day if they did not steal electricity. Moreover, children below 14 years of age work in *karkhana*s, which again is illegal. Every now and then one hears of police raids. Giving *hafta* (weekly bribes) to the beat officers comes in handy as they inform the factory owners in advance! Fights between people due to non-payment of rent and debt are a common sight. Butchers of Qasabpura who work hard to earn their *halal rozi* (permitted earning in religious terms) but do not have licenses are rounded up and fined. Rare incidents of pickpocketing are also reported from the area. Acts of destitution and despair are easily constructed as criminal by the state mechanisms of police and judiciary.

'Trading' of Votes

A complex web of people lives in the *mohalla*s around the school. This consists of workers, businesspersons, service providers, traders, brokers and contractors, the poor and the rich, politicians and social workers. The residents' welfare associations (RWAs) are important actors in any local situation, and the police and the press are never far away. Cooperation, clashes, conflicts, selfish interests and politicking – all of these come into play. At times, the school gets caught in this web. You will find boards bearing the names of RWA members installed at the entrances and exits of lanes. The work that happens in the *mohalla*s brings people into conflict with the police every now and then. One hears, occasionally, that a *karkhana* has been shut down on allegations of pollution. As mentioned earlier, there are different types of *karkhana*s manufacturing machine parts, tools, equipment, wires, and so on, which consume a lot of electricity. The local people report that it is almost impossible to make any money through the *karkhana*s without stealing electricity. We know the government provides electricity at subsidised rates to big capitalists such as the Tatas and the Ambanis in the special economic zones. In this locality, however, the electricity bill of a *karkhana* may at times be overblown to lakhs of rupees. In order to rectify this, the people lure and bribe the police and entice the politician through feasts. Furthermore, there is a lack of services in the area. Even for basic necessities such as water, electricity and hospitalisation, one has to pay obeisance to politicians. The intermixing of 'white'–'black' and profit–loss in businesses escalates the need for escape from the clutches of the law and the police. Rallying around politicians for appeasing them becomes necessary. The politicians know all this well. If work happens through them and the institutions obey their directives, then through the RWA and the 'social workers' they can establish links with the people – all, of course, for votes. When work gets accomplished, the rich of the area even organise a small felicitation for *netaji*, who obliges the crowd with speeches and words of wisdom.

The area is bursting at its seams. There is an encroachment of even the graveyard. Tales of litigation, and of people moving in and out of lock-ups, are always in the air. Given the deprivations and drawbacks, the environment is ridden with conflicts and wrangles. There seems to be a flood of 'social workers' in the area, go-betweens, seeking to link the 'rulers' and the 'ruled'. Instead of critiquing and pressurising the state and the politicians, they are busy concealing their excesses. Both the social workers and the politicians gain and grow at the cost of ordinary people. Obliging people is a source of votes. The 'social workers' are positioned at the right juncture, but instead of stirring the consciousness of the people, they stifle it. According to one of the schoolteachers, 'They mentally enslave people. The poor fools' throats become hoarse in shouting slogans in their praise.'

'Social workers' often visit our school as well. Once or twice a year, students from the school too come under their obligation when a politician distributes stationery, books and bags, and so on, to them. One day the principal introduced me to a social worker. He said: 'Madam, he is not like others. He has gently got many things done. We had requested him for computers which he has arranged through *mantri sahib* [legislator]. I received the letter of sanction today itself. He has got many things arranged through *netaji* [leader].' Anyhow, things get done in the locality only through flattery and the lure of votes. Just before the enforcement of the code of conduct during the previous general elections, the computers reached the school. Along with the computers came the legislator, to deliver his speech, to cash the favour, to preside over thanksgiving and sloganeering. I too eulogised and garlanded *netaji*! Ironically, our political leaders charge each other of appeasing the Muslims!

Being familiar with the locality, I have realised that politicians who appear unapproachable to us may alight from their high perch to trap some 'fish'. Since the area is congested, electoral politics is played around people's lives. The entire administrative machinery and institutions are misused for the purpose of winning elections from these dense areas. You can spot the schoolchildren happily raising slogans in marches that are taken out for campaigning. They are happy with whatever little is distributed in return for their precious time. Our children get educated in politics but, sadly, petty politicking as well.

Due to the dearth of role models, some of our children look up to the people who have 'made it big through short-cuts via *netaji*'! The *neta*s oblige one or two out of thousands by signalling a few departments and institutions to give them tenders for air conditioner (AC) fitting, cooler installation, and so on. Because of this monetary assistance, the poor people they have helped feel obliged to the *neta*s and are likely to 'gather' votes for them in future elections.

Accumulation by Segregation: Children Bear the Brunt

According to Ghazala Jamil (2017), there is an implicit materialistic logic in the prejudice and segregation experienced by Muslims. The areas are ideal for economic exploitation. Talking about Seelampur and Jamia Nagar, Jamil argues that these localities are eminently suitable for being 'integrated' into a globalised economy geared for profit maximisation. As these are 'segregated' localities, this renders the workers and manufacturers with limited capacity to bargain because of their inability to move to other spaces. This argument is equally true of the areas of Bara Hindu Rao, Ahata Kidara, Nabi Karim, and so on. According to the

Sachar Committee report (2006), the participation of Muslims in the informal sector, especially in own account trade and in manufacturing enterprises, is much higher than of people from other socio-religious communities. Children are easier to manipulate and are employed at lower wages. About 65 per cent children studying in the government schools of the area are engaged in some or other form of work. Children as young as those in classes three or four start contributing to work. All around Ahata Kidara and Nayi Basti, there are small factories manufacturing wires, small instruments and parts for use in machines, plastic toys, and so on. The glassware making and cutting workshops can also be found. These small factories are located in narrow lanes around the area. These *karkhana*s vary from 8 × 8 feet in size to bigger interconnected halls. In some places, bunker roofs have been raised to create more space. Young boys and men, with greased clothes and hands, can be seen working in these *karkhana*s. Some load raw materials into the machines; others can be found packing finished products into cartons. Working for long hours in these small cramped places, hot even during winters, can be quite harmful to health though this work may not be classified under the hazardous category of work. Many such *karkhana*s were closed in the area during the sealing drive of the MCD in 2006. Many people came under heavy debt as their livelihood was snatched away. In 2018, the state of panic amongst the people was again palpable as 33 shops were shut down in the adjoining Qutub Road. Many people of the tyre *biradri* and other communities either rent out these *karkhana* spaces to people from Bihar and other adjoining states or run small factories themselves in these spaces. Some of these spaces double up as homes to the workers as well. Several of these, I found, were so small that all of the family could not sleep at one time; they slept in shifts. A few members worked while others slept and vice versa.

I visited a diary-making *karkhana* located on the third floor of a building. The broken and dark staircase was hard to climb. The factory was a small rectangular room where machines, raw material, packing material, instruments and finished products were stacked in different corners. Ten boys were engaged in different tasks: sewing, packing, cutting, and so on. They were between ages 8 to 30. The eldest was the employer of the rest. He had hired them from his hometown in Bihar. Four of the boys were related to one another. The youngest, aged 8 and 11, went to the local madrasa in the morning and helped in doing domestic and packing work in the evening. Two of their uncles, aged 23 and 25, also lived and worked in the same *karkhana*. All they could ensure was that their nephews regularly went to the madrasa. The uncles urged me to help them in getting the two youngsters admitted to a good government school in the neighbourhood. They said that they had brought the children along for the sake of education (Farooqi 2023).

The uncles complained that the children were in classes three and five but had not learnt to read properly. This was a complaint of also other guardians whose children were going to regular schools. Apart from the low levels of engagement in schools, I realised it was difficult for the children to follow the kind of discipline and regularity that schools demanded. Many of the children took leave when work in the *karkhana*s mounted. While this has a more pronounced effect in the foundational years, older children also suffer due to a heavy curricular load. Textbooks, syllabi and assessments are skewed towards children from middle-class families whose only work is to study. Apart from irregularity, the worker children and those from working-class families do not have role models to emulate and form study habits. They also do not have environments that may facilitate learning at home. Their homes-cum-*karkhana*s and chaotic lives hamper a disciplined study schedule. Most guardians invest a lot by sending children for tuitions, but unqualified teachers in low-cost tuition centres do not support them much.

Even if the children are not contributing much time and energy to the economic activity of the family, the children's life-worlds and the adults' life-worlds overlap intimately. Though Irshad, his younger brother or their respective families may not consider what they routinely do as 'work', they nevertheless assist in small and big ways. If you ask younger children, most would innocently reply: 'Nahin kaam nahin kartey; bus bazaar se khana, dhaagey waghera la detey hein. Aur bartan dho detey hein' (We do not work; we only get threads and food, and so on, from the market. And we wash utensils). The girls not only accept work such as washing, cleaning and cooking as their responsibility, but many also help in packing, putting beads on clips, and so on. The lives of these children, informed by the interface of culture and household economics, have taught them to be fairly independent in terms of taking care of themselves, managing everyday affairs and assuming responsibility. The descriptions of the settlements in the neighbourhoods allude to the impossibility of insulating children from 'adult worlds' of work and hardships. Here, childhood is not seen as a distinct and shielded phase of life by most families (Aries 1962).

There are other children learning a skill and earning an income in the process. Apart from craftsmanship, labour dynamics also need to be understood and developed for succeeding in market. A considerable part of the children's day is spent in honing such skills and knowledge. It gives them and their families confidence in the children's capability to earn their bread through the skills gained, if not through education. But none of these crafts are such that they cannot be learnt in adulthood with a few months or years of labour (Weiner 1996). Even so, looking at the resources and quality of teaching–learning processes in the school,

it is difficult to tell these children to engage solely in studies for improving their future prospects. The board examination results of the school enable only a few students to secure admission in regular colleges. Many children find their way forward through low-quality distant education courses, which only take them as far as the call centres. In this case, the children lack adequate skills as well as degrees and at best become slaves of multinational companies. The challenge of keeping up with changing technologies and skill requirements in these set-ups further jeopardises their futures. If the school and its counterparts in the area extend full support to their students, it will be appropriate to advise them to focus only on study. Ahmed Iqbal, who works in a *karkhana*, often shares how adult coworkers and neighbours tease him for his seriousness about studies, saying: 'Tell us what you will gain through studies?'

It is clear from the description of homes-cum-*karkhana*s that most migrant families are engaged in the informal economy, where work happens on a piece-rate basis. Entire families contribute labour to the household-run *karkhana*s. In the context of an excessive supply of labour, piece rates are low in the value chain. The labour of the children involved in such household work – whether for a few hours or long stretches – remains invisible at times. Thus, Neera Burra (2005) argues that there exists a thin line between labour and work, and if we persist in keeping these lines intact, we will be doing a great disservice to workers in household enterprises, particularly women and children. Mario Biggeri, Ratna Sudarshan and Santosh Mehrotra (2009) pointed out that unless the returns from schooling are increased, the informal sector will continue to grow.

Conclusion

The chapter highlights a brief history of the patterns of Indian Muslims' precariousness and its connection with space in the colonial period and in pre- and post-partition events that have led to urban space being religiously defined today. The areas discussed are diverse in terms of class, sects and caste, and homogenous only in terms of religious identity. The residents negotiate their differences through cultural and religious commons – such as visibility of rituals, *azan* and religious markers – which constitute the ethos, or *mahaul*, of the place. By living together, they overcome the overwhelming sense of insecurity to some extent and make the area a place for themselves. They escape the harsh stereotyping and stigmatisation of their religious markers by other socio-religious communities, but intra-community stereotyping between different caste and social class groups is not uncommon in the diverse area. The area remains neglected as far as cleanliness and provision of civic amenities are concerned. Apart from the aforementioned markers, this

segregated area referred to as 'ghetto' by some sociologists has a large population of residents who are manipulated and economically exploited to fulfil neoliberal agendas. Though precarious labour has been recorded throughout historical and geographical contexts, compounded precarisation is the hallmark of this area. This includes sense of insecurity vis-à-vis the state institutions and vulnerable life circumstances due to market uncertainties resulting from many factors including corporate–state nexus as in the case of abattoirs now. Even the children of the school are compelled to seek work in the informal sector in order to support their families. Philippa Williams, Bhaskar Vira and Deepta Chopra (2011) pointed out that the marginals are often those that experience the state most frequently and intimately. The vulnerable livelihoods and stigmatised identities are criminalised using repressive laws incompatible with life realities which become the organisational principles of governance of urban margins. Also, in such dense localities with a considerable floating population of migrants, governance and control require informers, touts and brokers, at times in the garb of social workers, to negotiate between people and the state. This exchange due to the powerful tentacles of the state remains skewed towards it. There remains an overwhelming presence of the state in the form of surveillance, violence and punitive action. The residents cushion themselves against threats of market vicissitudes and state excesses through social relationships they forge in the *mohalla*. It is apparent to the politicians that electoral politics in such dense areas can make a difference. The constitutional promises and the state machinery are actively misused with impunity during elections at all levels in this dense area to garner votes. The school too is embroiled in electoral politics by political parties. The residents have lost trust in the state agencies such as the judiciary and the police. Though the residents realise that citizenship is differential, they invoke their constitutional right and assert their Indian identity, without compromising their Muslimness, so as to be recognised as equal Indian citizens with all others. This is apparent from the petitions filed in the court by both the residents and the teachers of the school against what they recognise as injustice. Their pleas may remain unheard, but they are not voiceless victims of the contemporary politics of hate and oppression which tries all possible means to exclude them and make them second-class citizens! It is important to include in the idea of urban margins or 'ghetto' the manner in which the state tries to maintain certain spaces as margins through governmentality. The people, though homogenised, pathologised, constrained and bounded using media and other state practices, do not submit passively, and engagement of people driven by needs and tactics of survival ensures political participation as every opportunity needs to be seized.

However, the school reflects the tensions and chaos of the life of workers and worker children and hampers their mobility.

References

Ahmad, Z. 2013. 'Marginal Occupations and Modernising Cities: Muslim Butchers in Urban India'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 48(122) (August): 121–131.

Aries, P. 1962. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Biggeri, M., R. M. Sudarshan and S. Mehrotra. 2009. 'Child Labour in Industrial Outworker Households in India'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 44(12) (March): 47–56.

Burra, N. 2005. 'Crusading for Children in India's Informal Economy'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 40(49) (December): 5199–5208.

Chatterjee, P. 2021. 'Is the Economic Marginalisation of Muslims Becoming Widespread?' *Deccan Herald*, 1 September. https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/is-the-economic-marginalisation-of-muslims-becoming-widespread-1025721.html. Accessed 30 December 2024.

Chenoy, S. M. 1998. *Shahjahanabad: A City of Delhi, 1638–1857*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manohar Publishers.

Chopra, R. 2023. 'How Credible Is the Claim that India Is on the Brink of a Genocide against Its Muslim Citizens?' *Scroll.in*, 23 January. https://scroll.in/article/1022102/how-credible-is-the-claim-that-india-is-on-the-brink-of-a-genocide-against-its-muslim-citizens. Accessed 30 December 2024.

Clarion. 2024. 'Delhi Meat Traders Seek Urgent Action to Rectify Woes at Ghazipur Abattoir'. 18 January. https://clarionindia.net/delhi-meat-traders-seek-urgent-action-to-rectify-woes-at-ghazipur-abattoir. Accessed 31 January 2024.

Farooqi, F. 2013. 'Ek School Manager Ki Diary ke Kuch Panne: IV – Mazdooron ke Bachhey, Mazdoor Bachhey aur Bazaar'. *Shiksha Vimarsh* 1(15) (January–February): 20–30.

———. 2015. 'Ek School Manager Ki Diary ke Kuch Panne: School, Ilaqa, Biradri aur Rajya – Ranjishein aur Gardishein-I'. *Shiksha Vimarsh* 1(17) (January–February): 35–45.

———. 2016. 'A School in a Ghetto: Some Reflections'. *India International Centre Quarterly* 42(3–4): 232–244.

———. 2020. *Ek School Manager ki Diary*. Bhopal: Eklavya.

———. 2023. *Education in a 'Ghetto': The Paradoxes of a Muslim Majority School*. London: Routledge.

Gayer, L., and C. Jaffrelot. 2012. *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalisation*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Geva, R. 2022. *Delhi Reborn: Partition and Nation Building in India's Capital*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.

Gupta, N. 1981. *Delhi between Two Empires 1803–1931: Society, Government, and Urban Growth*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Jamil, G. 2017. *Accumulation by Segregation: Muslim Localities in Delhi*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Mahmood, S. 2024. *Beloved Delhi: A Mughal City and Her Greatest Poets*. New Delhi: Speaking Tree Publishing.

Mander, H. 2022. 'The Soul-Wounds of Massacre, or Why We Should Not Forget the 2002 Gujarat Pogrom'. *The Wire*, 27 February. https://thewire.in/politics/2002-gujarat-anti-muslim-pogrom. Accessed 31 December 2024.

Menon, K. 2022. *Making Place for Muslims in Contemporary India*. Gurugram: HarperCollins.

Ogbu, J. 2003. *Black American Students in an Affluent Suburb: A Study of Academic Disengagement*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Parveen, N. 2014. 'Making of Muslim Ilaqe'. *Seminar* 663 (November): 44–50.

———. 2021. *Contested Homelands: Politics of Space and Identity.* New Delhi: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Rapp, S. 2022. 'Violence Against Indian Muslims Must Be Urgently Investigated'. *The Diplomat*. 12 August. https://thediplomat.com/2022/08/violence-against-indian-muslims-must-be-urgently-investigated. Accessed 31 December 2024.

Sachar Committee. 2006. *Report of the Prime Minister's High-Level Committee on the Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India*. New Delhi: Government of India.

Wacquant L. 2015. 'Revisiting Territories of Relegation: Class, Ethnicity and State in the Making of Advanced Marginality'. *Urban Studies* 53(6): 1077–1088.

Weiner, M. 1996. 'Child Labour in India: Putting Compulsory Primary Education on the Political Agenda'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 31(45–46) (November): 3007–3014.

Williams, P., B. Vira and D. Chopra (2011). 'Marginality, Agency and Power: Experiencing the State in Contemporary India'. *Pacific Affairs* 84(1): 7–23.

Zamindar, V. 2007. *The Long Partition and the Making of South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.