AESTHETIC CITIZENSHIP; POPULAR CULTURE, MIGRANT YOUTH, AND

THE MAKING OF 'WORLD CLASS' DELHI

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to Tajeme Sylvester and the many moments we shared on the streets of New York at the start of the new millennium, the smoke of 9/11 just clearing as we rhymed to understand the twists and turns of our lives and struggled to peer into our individual futures through the words we conjured in our meanderings. Rest in peace.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

but certainly not least, I am grateful to my partner of many years, Karin Hilfiker, for lovingly keeping me sane during this process of becoming.

ABSTRACT

AESTHETIC CITIZENSHIP: POPULAR CULTURE, MIGRANT YOUTH AND THE

MAKING OF WORLD CLASS DELHI

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Delhi has nearly doubled in population since the early 1990s due to in-migration

(censusindia.gov, 2011). These migrants, like migrants around the world, strive to adapt

to their new surroundings by producing themselves in ways which make them socially,

economically, and politically viable. My project examines how recent international and

intranational immigrant youth who have come to Delhi to partake in its economic

possibilities and, in some cases, to escape political uncertainty, are utilizing globally

circulating popular cultural forms to make themselves visible in a moment when the city

strives to recast its image as a world class destination for roaming capital (Roy, 2011). I

focus on two super diverse settlement communities in South Delhi to explore the

citizenship making claims of immigrant youth who, to date, have been virtually invisible

in academic and popular narratives of the city. Specifically, I follow three groups of

ethnically diverse migrant youth from these two settlement communities as they engage

with hip hop, a popular cultural form originating in Black American communities in the

1970s (Chang, 2006; Morgan, 2009; Rose, 1994). As hip hop's music and its practices

gain popularity amongst youth in Delhi from across a wide spectrum of class and ethnic

positions, I trace how these migrant youth utilize its styles and globally reaching

networks coupled with inexpensive digital capture technology to fashion themselves and

their settlement communities as part of a world class urbanity in the making.

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"Citizenship in the hip-hop nation is defined not by conventional national or racial boundaries, but by a commitment to hip-hop's multimedia arts culture, a culture that represents the social and political lives of its members" (Morgan & Bennet, 2011: 177).

"As an interstitial space between nation and the world, the megacity becomes a zone of mutating citizenship, as different categories of migrants are differentiated according to the kinds of tangible or intangible assets they bring to the urban economy" (Ong, 2007: 84).

"[Delhi] will be the prime mover and nerve center of ideas and actions, the seat of national governance and a centre of business, culture, education, and sports" (Delhi Master Plan 2021).

As I opened my Facebook 'page,' I, after scarcely a month in Delhi amidst its burgeoning hip hop scene, would get bombarded with the prosumer experimentations of the B-boyers, graffiti artists, and MCs I had met. Photos of B-boying sessions in the park, sometimes the very sessions I had witnessed the same day, videos of graffiti pieces in the making, recordings of musical tracks, acapella raps, and self-produced music videos – all featured on my "news feed." The photos, videos, and lyrical content of the recorded raps all depicted the young men in my study and others in the larger hip hop scene, laminated onto Delhi's mutating urban landscape. As they practiced their top rocking skills, showcased their latest graffiti piece, named particular locations in the descriptive poetics of hip hop, or simply posed for selfies (self-portraits), their baseball caps slanted to the side, their eyes locked in mock aggression with the lens of the camera; their self-produced hip hop products painted a picture of a startlingly different Indian urbanity than what emerges in the social science literature or in most mainstream media accounts. First and foremost, these audio-visual productions reveal Delhi's growing diversity, the changing demographics of India's capital city now in its third decade of economic liberalization. As the young men in my study, whose families travelled from the politically and economically unstable regions within North and Northeast India, Nepal, Afghanistan, and several countries in sub-Saharan Africa to partake in the city's post-liberalization promise, performed their hip hop styles for circulation the images they produced offered evidence of a Delhi that ran counter to the more familiar mass

mediatized constructions of a city deeply divided along class, caste and religious lines. A city whose young lumpen men, shadow figures in the media, were dangerous threats to the economic and social changes currently underway in the city (Sundaram, 2011). These hip hop inflected images, I suggest, put forward a more hopeful picture, one that aesthetically rendered the migrant urban male, the oft invisible laboring, waiting, or criminal body in urban India, more diverse and perhaps less threatening, precisely because he is self-styled in the now globally familiar picture of the urban made possible through hip hop's forms.

What's more, the backdrop of their photos and videos, or the descriptions of the 'hood or the slum in the Hindi and English lyrics of their raps, also revealed a glimmer of the places where many of the youth who I met in the hip hop scene make their lives, the teeming unauthorized settlement communities that house the city's service workers, small entrepreneurs, laborers, international students, and refugees. The congested habitations interspersed with Mughal era ruins and surrounded by middle class semi-gated enclaves, brand new shopping malls, and private hospitals. These dense, walkable and super diverse communities whose walls are covered in murals and graffiti pieces produced by European and Indian street artists, when rendered and circulated in the digital, posed yet another tantalizing entry into the unknown, invisible but, in the hip hop renderings of the youth in my study, imminently desirable city. Indeed, the Delhi that emerges in these images could be considered world class not because of its malls or it's other public-private infrastructural commitments of the last decade but because it held within it authentic globally recognizable urban subjects and places (cf. Bhan, 2009; Roy, 2011 on the world class discourse in Delhi as it relates to formal infrastructural development).

The young men in my study intimately understood the power these hip hop inflected images and texts they produced. As they depicted the creative play they engaged in across racial, ethnic, caste and class difference in 'authentic' Indian 'hoods, as they revealed communities in Delhi obscured in mainstream depictions, they attracted attention from hip hop practitioners from middle class backgrounds in Delhi's larger hip hop scene and hip hop practitioners across national borders, members of a 'global hip hop nation' (Alim, 2009). Yet, their productions didn't simply connect them into a network

of hip hop practitioners from near and far. While, no doubt, as I discuss later in this introductory chapter, the import of a global circuitry of belonging undergirded by the popular is critical to understanding the significance of youthful digital popular cultural production in our contemporary moment, equally important are the ways in which the images, texts, and so on that are produced within hip hop's global networks leak into larger and smaller public spheres. In the months I spent in Delhi journalists, artists, branding agents, filmmakers, entrepreneurs, public audiences and of course, social scientists/educators and erstwhile hip hop heads, myself and a sociolinguist from Germany who will make several appearances later in this book, all gravitated to these youths' multimodal experimentations with hip hop. The collective interest of these different actors, I argue, produced unexpected possibilities for participation for the youth in my study in the political, social, and economic life of Delhi as the city continues to undergo transformative processes of becoming that elevate the city as a central node in global capital's networks.

This monograph, then, is about the different modes and moments of participation made possible as the young men in my study engage with global hip hop and its image making technologies in a moment where digital media production and the circulation of images that depict space and people becomes as central to the making of a particular place as the formal processes of development (Roy, 2010; Sundaram, 2011). I argue throughout that, for these young people who are growing up in Delhi in a moment where the city seeks to construct itself as world class, a destination for roaming capital, the images and stories they produce in what has been called hip hop's vision for an alternate modernity (Partridge, 2013) contrive to make visible the spaces and people that are and have been in the shadows of the formal development process that has been ongoing in the city since, at least, the colonial period. As importantly, this visibility, made possible as a result of web 2.0 and digital capture technology – cell phone cameras, inexpensive video equipment and so on –works to place the youth in my study and the spatial communities where they live, contrary to the literature on development in Delhi and urban, India which positions the urban working underclass as, at best, passive recipients of a vision of 21st century urban modernity (Ghertner, 2011) or at worst, as subjects of its demise and

dissolution (Chatterjee, 2004); as actors involved in networks that are actively shaping the city's present and future image.

This chapters ahead focus on a simple idea: that if one approaches the young men in my study's public performances, their digital capture and circulation as an ethnographic ground zero, one can begin to see the complicated ways in which their experimentations with hip hop, what Jeff Chang (2007) calls "the most far reaching arts movements of the past three decades" create opportunities for social, economic, and political participation in the city they call home (60). Perhaps more simply, I suggest that the value of the images they and others produce of them engaging in hip hop's practices are revealed in the ethnographic moment, where representations of an alternate Delhi imaginary creates new relationships with people, places, and things. I call the digitally enabled cultural production these young men engage in and the visibility, belonging, participation, and limits it suggests, aesthetic citizenship. I conceptualize aesthetic citizenship in a moment where digital infrastructures offer people across the world the possibility to produce themselves and their lifeworlds for circulation in ways that cohere to and reformulate enduring ideas of belonging and difference in the digitally enabled public sphere.

In this introductory chapter I begin with a discussion regarding the relationship between the 'network' and the 'public sphere,' two 'grand' social theories that posit how participation and belonging are enabled at various spatio-temporal scales – the local, the national, and the global. I utilize these two theoretical framings to begin to tease out a theory of aesthetic citizenship that hinges on self-production and circulation in our digital age. I argue that in our digital moment these heuristics for understanding communicative practice and belonging overlap in ways that complicate notions of political and cultural citizenship in ways that point to the centrality of audio-visual renderings of the aesthetic in public life.

Drawing from recent theorizations of the networked public (Boyd, 2010, Ito, 2008), I focus on how the young men in my study extend their relational networks and their exposure to various publics in Delhi and beyond through the production and circulation of representations that imbricate themselves and their lifeworlds with hip

hop's aesthetics, aesthetics born in the historic Black Atlantic. I argue that the interest in these various networked publics for audio visual-content that promotes an alternate (to the expert driven world class discourse on Delhi) 'hip hop' reading of the city as global, offers a means by which to interrogate the well worn democratic ideal of citizenship as a condition and consequence of belonging. I wind up this discussion with a brief history of hip hop's productive practices to theorize aesthetic citizenship in relation to hip hop's discourse on the urban subject. By moving towards hip hop as a discourse on the urban rather than the ways hip hop has commonly been pursued as a research subject where it appears either as a coopted commodity form or a valorized global community of practice, I argue hip hop offers a productive entry point to engage with the kinds of development aesthetics that promote Delhi as a "middle class utopia" in the making (Sundaram, 2011).

I then discuss how my ethnographic journey in Delhi's emergent hip hop scene with young migrant men from two South Delhi settlement colonies required me to straddle the digital and the physical worlds they inhabit – to engage in an ethnographic project that necessarily had to take these two spaces of sociality as dialectically related and iteratively produced. I argue that this move to simultaneously engage with the digital and lived worlds of my participants complicates and reimagines the anthropological project as it requires a recognition that 21st century ethnography is always mediated, sometimes in surprising ways, through digital technology. I conclude by providing a blueprint for the chapters ahead, each of which seek to elucidate how the young men in my study, through their hip hop experimentations, create engagements with various actors in Delhi and beyond as they reimagine themselves and the city through their creative acts. Each of these processes and projects to reimagine Delhi vis-à-vis hip I examine closely reveal the profound changes afoot in Delhi as the city grows increasingly enmeshed in a world system. Moreover, these mise-en-scènes of connection reveal how the diverse young men in my study envision and imagine themselves within the changing city in which they live in ways that elucidate how, as Aiwa Ong and Ananya Roy (2012) have recently argued, the unfolding of subjectivities are inextricably intertwined with city-making processes.

The Public Sphere and the Network: Introducing Networked Publics

While access to web 2.0 and its social domains remains an issue globally, an issue that has been marked in the academy and in public discourse by the term digital divide, there can be no denying that an exponentially increasing number of people across the globe, with young people leading the charge, are plugging into, producing, and occupying the virtual spaces of web 2.0. To give some idea of the scale of these changes within the national context of my ethnographic work, it is projected that by 2017 India will have the largest number of regular social media users in the world (emarketer.com, 2013, November 19). These users will be concentrated in India's cities, particular first tier megacities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore. By mid-2014 it is estimated that there will be 80 million urban social media users in India, with 97% of them on Facebook. By 2017, while the overall growth rate of increase for new users will decline in India, reflecting a global trend, there will be an estimated 282 million total users in India, the majority concentrated in the nation's urban centers (socialmediacases, 2013, July 14).

What web 2.0 and its social media sites offer, particularly when coupled with inexpensive capture technology, i.e. cell phone cameras and video, is a democratized space for production, circulation, and communication. Indeed, one of the most profound consequences of digital technology is that web 2.0, when combined with inexpensive capture technology, seemingly offers people, regardless of historically contingent class, caste, race, or gender positions, opportunities to become producers and distributors, amateur media makers in their own right. These available digital media making possibilities, while they certainly don't eliminate the role of representational intermediaries or the influence of what Theodor Adorno (2001) famously and ominously called the culture industry, offer new opportunities for those who have historically not been in the spotlight to engage and influence a public, however small or large, through self-representation. As Yochai Benkler (2006) argues, this possibility for self-representation hints "at the emergence of a new information environment, one in which individuals are free to take a more active role than was possible in the industrial information economy of the twentieth century" (2).

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As a result of digital technology and it's newfangled networked spaces for production, dissemination, and interaction, previously invisible, submerged, or 'subcultural' notions of community have become visible. As Danah Boyd (2010) suggests, the technologically produced channels for communication create a space for greater participation and engagement between people and groups who are already linked as part of an existing transnational or subnational community. The technological advent of web 2.0, she argues, also creates the possibility for people to find each other through a shared interest in particular circulating texts or in shared cultural production. Boyd (2010) and Ito (2008), two media theorists working to grasp the enormity of changes that iterative new media creates in our patterns of communication, consumption, and production, describe this digitally enhanced public sphere as a networked public sphere. The term networked public sphere draws from two distinct and now overlapping heuristics that have been utilized in the 20th and 21st century to understand communicative processes that create and maintain the nation-state as well as imaginaries that extend beyond and within the national.

The first is the public sphere, a term that originated in Jürgen Habermas's (1962, 1991) theorization, based on his historical analysis of 18th century urban Germany, of a unique public emerges in conjunction with a burgeoning middle class and offers a deliberative space disconnected from the formal state apparatus. Habermas's (1962, 1991) conception of a public sphere is tied to deliberative interaction in the physical spaces that emerged in Germany during that time period -- the coffee house or salon – and, similar to Benedict Anderson's (1991) notion of imagined communities, is also reliant on the advent of print media -- the newspaper and the pamphlet. For Habermas (1991), the emergence of the public sphere is particular to the advent of the modern nation-state, and works to foster the development of a bourgeoisie civil society, intermediaries between the 'people' and the 'state.' Through deliberative, rational discourse, this collective of interested intermediaries in the public sphere work to shape or inform public opinion, and therefore, in Habermas's (1962, 1991) vision, work to influence the state towards more democratic forms of governance.

More recent formulations, including Habermas's (1987) own revisions of his

original conceptualization of publics, have attempted to nuance the original theoretical framing of a public. Michael Warner (2002) and Nancy Frasier (1992), for instance, argue for a more fractured notion of the public sphere, one that includes many borderless publics rather than a singular public ensconced within a national imaginary. Publics, they argue, congeal around texts that cleave to particular interests and create opportunities for individuals to affectively perform, form, and deform social identities rather than rationally deliberate from already fully formed identitarian positions, as Habermas's original formulation implies. Moreover, publics and what Nancy Frasier (1992) and Michael Warner (2002) identify as their counters, are political in ways that create a more complicated spatial and temporal milieu of resistance and consent to dominant national, classed, gendered and racialized notions of collectivity and exclusion.

 In short, a contemporary theorization of publics argues for an attention to loosely formed and ever expanding groups who cohere to particular texts or public performances, texts that allow publics, or what Sonia Livingstone (2005) argues is synonymous with publics, audiences, to engage in a reassessment of cultural norms and ideas at various scales of belonging. Publics, in this sense, are what Laurent Berlant (2011) has argued are affect worlds, spaces where pleasure, hope, and a sense of belonging are made and unmade through and in between the detritus of circulating cultural signs.

This reformulation of Habermas's (1991) initial patriarchal, European, class distinct, and overly rational notion of the public sphere to include diverse positions has been a necessary step in reimagining publics. Anthropology has played a significant role in this work to further theorize the public sphere in light of the changing nature of the media and mediatization in the 20th and early 21st century. By producing granular accounts concerning the everyday meaning making practices of people as they engage with television, radio, and cinema, anthropologists have revealed the ways in which transformation in the public sphere reveal the profound changes in aspiration, imagination, and consumption in various socio-historical contexts (Appadurai, 2000). However, in the contemporary moment, the discipline has been shy to continue its engagement– vis-à-vis ethnography – of examining the role of web 2.0 in the creation and maintenance of publics as affect worlds. While there has been some notable works

within the discipline that seek to elucidate the contours of a digital anthropology, by and large, social networks and so on have been largely unexamined.

Media scholars and cultural theorists, however, have, in the last decade, jumped headlong into engaging with the virtual worlds of digital 2.0 as publics. Indeed, the very concept of networked publics emerges from media and contemporary cultural studies scholar's engagement with the 'internet' and the emergence of new media. The theoretical contributions that have emerged as a result of an engagement with new media and web 2.0 are deeply influenced by theories concerning the network, a concept that has gained traction across the social sciences as a way of describing emergent social life, a term that doesn't take as an apriori condition particular sociological facts (Latour, 2005). The network, when coupled with public, coins a term that is decidedly focused on digital technology as a key component for the formulation of 21st century publics. I will delve more deeply into the notion of the network in a just a moment, but for now what is important is that theorists such as Danah Boyd (2005), have argued that networks, when combined with publics, refer to both the technologically assisted space where links can be made between people who share common interests as well the people who populate its spaces. Critically, I argue, networked publics are also comprised of the iterative content that circulates within its circuitry. This content cannot be easily contained within the boundaries of interest that a networked public creates. Moreover, this content, as it moves, sustains existing relationships and creates new ones.

Social media, the now ubiquitous term used to describe the channels of circulation – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and so on -- emerge as the digital highways that connect people and circulate iterative multimodal content that people produce and/or remix from existing web circulating popular texts– content which contain text, images, moving images, and sound. These networks of connection and circulation most readily and obviously distribute content through the already existing relational networks in the physical world as they are reproduced in the digital. That is, put simply, what we produce reaches the people we already know or that we have pre-existing affinities towards in our offline worlds -- family members, friends, ethnic, linguistic, and religious community members, and so on. Here the concept of the network offers a clearer

heuristic by which to apprehend social connections and the circulations and qualitative nature of content than the more amorphous concept of the public sphere. While the notion of the public creates a more distended and abstract notion of connection and exchange through content, the network, particularly when digitized, reveals specific pathways of circulation and offers a means to engage with how historically constituted notions of identity and community are maintained and reformulated across time and place through specific visible social connections. Here, a focus on the networks of web 2.0 yield the sobering recognition that self-production and participation in affect worlds does not necessarily create a more cosmopolitan sensibility, or communication across difference. Several media scholars, arguing against a simplistic valorization of the web 2.0, have suggested that, rather than providing a space for the emergence of a digital cosmopolitanism, web 2.0 reproduces historically situated networks, i.e., kin, ethnic, racial, religious, and linguistic that exist in the physical world (cf. Hermes, 2005).

However, it is clear that web 2.0 also offers people across the globe, and young people in particular, the technological capacity for multimodal production that ratifies membership in what has been broadly defined as participatory cultures – communities of practice that straddle web 2.0 and physical worlds (Jenkins et al., 2006; Uricchio, 2006). Put simply, the digital allows us to access to those we don't already know or don't already have a historically constituted affinity towards, through a shared interest in popular cultural production. The production of new artifacts works to extend personal networks into the public sphere, the place where strangers meet and where the content of worlds we haven't been exposed to are made familiar. Here, in these social media milieus, the public sphere is reflective of, as Jim McGuigan (2005) argues, a networked space where pleasure, affect, and representations of everyday life intertwine with and complicate deliberative communicative exchange.

Several media and cultural theorists have described the development of online/offline participatory cultures, spaces where personal networks are entangled in affectively charged publics, in popular cultural terms (Deuze, 2006; Hermes, 2005; Uricchio, 2006). Leaning on and extending the late Stuart Hall's (1990) groundbreaking argument that the popular is a site of struggle rather than simply a tool for interpellation,

William Uricchio (2006), for instance, optimistically argues that digital production and circulation that borrows from existing popular cultural formations to create new texts, opens the possibility for a networked cultural citizenship. Here, interestingly and importantly for this book, Uricchio (2006) replaces the concept of public with the concept of citizenship to stress the political implications of digital connection.

Cultural citizenship is a term that has made its rounds across anthropology and media studies and is taken to mean the tactics that people in unequal power relationships take up to voice the desire for enfranchisement within and beyond the national framework they find themselves in.[1] Cultural citizenship, of course, is a reclamation of citizenship, which, related to Habermas's (1991) conception of the public sphere, is a descriptor for a liberal democratic notion of participation tied to the nation-state that often obscures subnational and transnational processes of connection. By linking cultural citizenship with the digital network, Urrichio (2006) offers a new take on citizenship within and across borders.

Uricchio (2006) essentially argues that cultural citizenship, which has often been defined as struggles for political enfranchisement within national contexts, is now magnified through the rhizomic networks of web 2.0, so that people across borders can share their struggles. The process of sharing to connect, Ulricchio (2006) argues, is enabled in the production and circulation of multimodal texts that make local struggle visible and translatable across historical contexts. In other words, to return to the interrelated concepts of the public and the network, Uricchio's (2006) argument on the import of digitally enabled cultural citizenship across borders suggest that publics located in national and subnational contexts can be influenced by networks that extend beyond them. Importantly, Uricchio's (2006) refocus on the production and circulation of everyday struggle as citizenship reformulates Stuart Hall's (1991) enduring conception of the popular. Stuart Hall (1991) theories concerning the popular essentially refutes the Frankfurt schools assertion that the culture industry deterministically fashions a single and class reproductive reading of the popular. Hall(1991) asserts, instead, that people engage in alternative reading strategies that reformulate the state or industry determined

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[1] For examples see Dolby, 2005; Hermes, 2006; Marr Maira and Soep, 2009; Siu, 2001.

meanings of popular cultural detritus that circulate in the public sphere. However, as Juan Flores (2000) rightly states in his work on popular music in the Black Atlantic and the Caribbean, the popular, since Stuart Hall's intervention regarding the culture industry, has redefined the popular as a site for critical reading and "any productive agency or oppositionality on the part of "the people" is effectively reduced to its ability to consume in a differential and critical way" (5). Yet, if we take the worlds of web 2.0 as an exemplar, we can see that popular cultural *production* in the 21st century becomes a site of agency in our contemporary moment, a means to audio-visually describe oneself into the world and create connections within and across borders as a result.

Global Hip Hop: Networked connection, alternate modernity, and aesthetic citizenship

Hip hop may be the most obvious and global example of a networked public that exists. Hip hop, since its inception and subsequent diffusion, has created localized practice contexts in various parts of the world. As hip hop has gone digital it has allowed practitioners of its forms -- B-boying (dance), MCing (rap), DJs (music), and graffiti (visual arts forms) -- to create networked relationships that defy social and physical boundaries. These relationships, based on a shared interest in hip hop cultural production and performance, crosscut the physical and the digital, creating what Manuel Castells (2002) calls portfolios of sociality, face-to-face relationships that result in online social network exchange, and vice versa. As digitally enhanced hip hop connects practitioners across space and time creating what James Spady et al. (2001) has called a virtual hip hop cipha[2], it works to create persistent channels where hip hop's historical discourse, its origin story, its internal debates, and its claims to representation, are iteratively produced, circulated and reevaluated at dizzying speeds across time and space.

Hip hop's discursive history is rooted in the Black and Latino/a American experience (Alim, 2004b; Clay, 2003; Perkins, 1997; Richardson, 2006, 2007). Its forms

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[2] The cipha is a hip hop term that signifies the possibility for spontaneous individual creativity within a shared circle of practice. The term cipha originated in hip hop's terrestrial oral and kinesthetic circles of practice, where MCs or B-boys would jump into the circle of practitioners and audience members to perform, usually adding to as well as critiquing the previous performance (Spady et al., 2001).

and practices emerged amongst Black and Latino communities in east coast cities in the mid-1970s in a moment where spatial segregation coupled with a dire lack of employment opportunities as a result of deindustrialization created a need for creative expression that celebrated Black life and resisted social invisibility, economic disconnection, and political disenfranchisement. In hip hop's early years, its cultural forms – kinesthetic practices (B-boying), visual practices (graffiti), MCing (poetry), and DJing (musicality) -- offered, for its youthful progenitors, a means to articulate conditions inside the U.S.'s systematically disenfranchised Black and Latino communities situated in the urban U.S., while simultaneously celebrating life within these places by offering opportunities for public participation and collective knowledge production (Chang, 2006; Clay, 2003; Rose, 1994).

As hip hop circulated, initially through localized reclamations of public space – the park jam, the club party, the graffiti piece, B-boys from, say the South Bronx, performing in midtown Manhattan, and eventually through the analog technological possibilities for capture and circulation available at the time exemplified in the mixtape (Ball, 2013) -- two things happened. First, there emerged a distinct discourse of, about, and on hip hop within its practice communities, a discourse that worked over time to codify its forms and its internal ideologies. Second, hip hop attracted the attention of the culture industry, which, as it picked up hip hop's musical forms and styles to market as commodities, worked to extend the reach of hip hop. As a result of the amplification that came with the culture industries involvement with hip hop, hip hop's practice networks originally grounded in local public performance and in low-fi media circulation, went global. This spread, of course, not only created a global market for hip hop but worked to seed its cultural practices and its discourse – its ideas on history, time, place, space, urbanity, and the 'real' -- across the world.

By now anyone who has had an interest in hip hop has come across its internal definition – that hip hop is comprised of four (some say five to include knowledge) practice elements: B-boying (or dance), graffiti (or visual practice which is necessarily on the street and illegal), MCing or rapping (hip hop's poetics) and DJing (hip hop's musical backdrop, its postmodern play of sound cutting, splicing, and juxtaposition of samples

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over beats). As hip hop dispersed since its beginnings approximately 40 years ago in the east coast cities of the U.S., this four (and five) element discourse of hip hop has travelled globally, working to shape what Pennycook (2007a) and Chang (2007) have described as distinctively local hip hop communities that form the nodes, if you will, of a larger global hip hop nation (Alim, 2009, Morgan and Bennet, 2011; for critiques of this idea of a hip hop nation as a reproduction of all of the problematics of modern nation states and its colonial antecedents, see Jared Ball, 2011). Members of localized hip hop scenes, as they pick up hip hop's practices and discourse, work to reshape its meanings, definitions, origin stories, to reflect local concerns (Pennycook, 2007a). Importantly, as hip hop's discourse and practices have travelled, there is an implicit notion that participation in the borderless hip hop nation requires production, a notion that is reflected in Morgan's (2011) notion of a commitment to "hip hop's multimedia arts culture"(177). Yet, hip hop and its styles, its aesthetics, have also travelled as a popular cultural form through corporate sponsored mass media circulation, creating a larger passive participatory field of viewers, listeners, and putative consumers of hip hop's living legacy.

Tricia Rose (2008) argues that this larger, even global, audience or public, rather than engaging with the originary forms of hip hop that celebrated life and articulated struggle, has been subjected to an image of American Blackness that is predicated on the culture industries fantasies of misogynistic violence and community dysfunction, a fantasy that it utilizes to fuel the desires for a hip hop commodity (also see Anthony Neale, 2013 for an account on the crises of representation regarding the American Black community brought about by hip hop).   The global spread of a problematic commercial hip hop has created the context where, in Asante's (2008) recent appraisal of contemporary hip hop's lack of political valence, one can go to Paris, France and see the lurid images of a half naked gangsta rapper in a designer store on the Champs-Élysées, or travel to Accra, Ghana and be greeted as a Black American, by a teenager on the street with, "what's good, my nigga?" This kind of hip hop narrative traces how an industry propagated dissemination of hip hop music and styles circulate problematic assertions of American Black culture or, at the very least, apolitical constructions of hip hop based on vulgar consumption. This narrative, when read against a hip hop narrative that asserts hip

hop is a discourse of practice that is inherently political insofar as it connects the local to the global and historicizes inequality through its aesthetic sensibilities, opens an important research problem that has not been examined in studies on hip hop, its perspacity to reimagine the urban.

On the one hand, scholars have focused on how hip hop has travelled as a discourse of practice across the world that works to fashion a networked cultural citizenship, and in doing so, retains some of its historical political valence as it allows young people in several localized communities to express their contingent struggles and aspirations through hip hop's practice forms, as the recent uprisings during the Arab spring demonstrated where Tunisian and Egyptian rappers became the voice and the soundtrack of the revolution (See Chang, 2007; Morgan, 2011 for a discussion on hip hop and the Arab Spring). On the other hand, scholars have asserted that hip hop, in its travels through commercial broadcast and product placement, continuously reasserts problematic representations of American Blackness (Asante, 2008; Rose, 2008) steeped in colonial pasts and presents (Ball, 2011). As a result of this seeming dichotomy, scholars, with important exceptions[3], have either focused on the internal discourse of hip hop and its workings that putatively link the amorphous global with the solidly material 'local' in ways that, by and large, celebrate the inherent political possibility of hip hop's music. Or, scholars have primarily engaged with hip hop as mass mediated popular cultural texts that bear critique and critical engagement as an anti-colonial discourse that has since its inception, been coopted by market regimes[4].

Damani Partridge (2013), however, offers another reading of global hip hop's mass mediation that bridges the celebratory networked participatory cultural reading of hip hop with the more cynical reading of hip hop as a means and method of control, one which opens new interpretative possibilities. Partridge (2013) argues that hip hop's global popularity is undergirded by its ability to offer the possibility to produce images of an alternate modernity. Specifically, Partridge (2013) utilizes an ethnographic reading of

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[3] Exceptions include Brad Weiss's (2002) work on the cosmopolitan construction of hip hop in barbershops in Tanzania and Derek Pardue's (2008) work on state sponsored hip hop in Sao Paolo, Brazil.
[4] U.S. hip hop literature, in addition to cultural critique, also includes the exceptional ethnographic work of Marcyleina Morgan (2008) and the collected body of work on hip hop pedagogy.

young Turkish and African men in Germany who take up visible signs associated with American Black masculinity, signs garnered not only through mass mediation but through contact with Black American servicemen stationed on the bases in Germany, to argue for the salience of American Black popular culture as an aesthetics of an alternate modernity that doesn't take its visual cues from a European construction of the aesthetic, the visual, the synesthetic, but, rather, draws on the Black American experience to construct its visions of the present and future. By doing so, Partridge (2013) calls for an attention to the "unanticipated effects" of the sorts of borrowings that Stuart Hall (1990) describes as diasporic aesthetics.

Hall (1990) in his discussion of African diasporic art production suggests that their collective bodies of work over the past several hundred years and across geographic contexts in the Black Atlantic create a cultural anchor for the African diaspora who bore the middle passage. Describing the historical significance of diasporic artistic practices, Hall (1990) suggests that this cultural anchor provides stability to a globally dispersed African diaspora who are otherwise adrift and without connection to a terrestrial homeland in a historical moment where the nation-state is a key feature in defining one's identity to place. In this reading Hall (1990) implicitly establishes that the audience of African diasporic aesthetics are those who can claim the experience of the Black Atlantic as their own. Partridge (2013) argues, however, that other audiences find power in African diasporic aesthetics, aesthetic constructions that never had them in mind, suggesting the need for a closer look at how hip hop and other African diasporic artistic practices provide image making possibilities for those who cannot claim the Black Atlantic as their historical legacy but seek a way to render an alternate image to the normative experiential world produced by dominant European discourses and depictions of the good life.

Partridge's (2013) argument for an attention to Black diasporic aesthetic's global appeal as an alternate means for self-making and collective recognition, particularly for those experiencing marginalization in their particular historical contexts, reflects Kamani Clarke's (2013) argument for a greater investment in anthropology regarding how cultural citizenship is being configured within the Black Atlantic and beyond through the

utilization of the diasporic aesthetics *of* the Black Atlantic. This theoretical investment in the cultural flows of Black diasporic artistic practice, when applied to hip hop, requires a break from the local-global binary of some of the earlier hip hop studies that focused on the local/global relationship in hip hop and a recognition of the historical and contemporary world system context of colonialism, imperialism, and currently, global capitalism, that hip hop circulates and operates within. Moreover, it quite clearly points to a need theorize hip hop as an aesthetic practice, a practice to reimagine and affectively understand oneself in the world. I suggest that Partridge's (2013) suggestive essay hints at the political and social import of recent theorizations of decolonial aesthetics and their relationship to the global uptake of Black diasporic arts of resistance – specifically hip hop.

The concept of decoloniality (Mignolo, 2011, Lockward, 2013), one that emerges from decades of anti-colonial theory and the poetics of postcolonial sentiment, contends that the struggle for decolonization continues long after the formal processes of political and economic decolonialization have taken place. For decolonial theorists the aesthetic, described by 18th century philosopher Alexander Baumgarten as a field of the senses, the site where affect rather than reason governs cognition and sociality, is the site for decolonial struggle (Adler, 2002). Mignolo (2011) asserts that as (post)colonial subjects in various historical contexts confront normative and dominant frames of sensory experience constructed in the colonial period and cast as modernity, a struggle ensues. This struggle is not necessarily overtly political but is experienced, is ontological in nature, and is made visible in the aesthetic field where the persistent racial and gendered logics of colonialism dominate the senses. If we look at the postcolonial literature of the 20th century produced by the formerly colonized, for instance, the works of Chinua Achebe, Hanif Qureishi, or Zadie Smith, the aesthetic order of colonialism as it has morphed into contemporary global capitalism takes center stage as it constructs the everyday social spheres of the characters that inhabit their fictions. This normalized field of experiences becomes the backdrop for the characters who populate their stories, the space where their phenomenological experience of race, gender, class, and migrancy appear in dialogue, conflict, and resolution. These literary texts share a great deal of

similarity with the more popular cultural texts of hip hop, insofar as their subjects and objects, their agents and pawns, all struggle with and within their historically produced, fractured and sensuous lifeworlds.

By invoking theories of decolonial aesthetics in relation to digital hip hop practices and aesthetics I recall the work of cultural studies, particularly the work of Stuart Hall, regarding the popular as a space for contestation as well as consent in the metropoles of Great Britain and the U.S., places where, as Lockward (2013) rightly argues, the 'former' colonial subject resides as a result of the vagaries of history. In the Western metropole, the birthplace of hip hop as well as other diasporic arts of resistance, the (post)colonial and settler colonial subject works to fashion an alternate rendering of the present and the future, one that intuitively seeks to dismantle the problematic past. In some cases this is sought after by casting pre-colonial indigenous ways of being into the future, in other cases it is approached through the formulation of an urban aesthetic that reclaims the desolate landscape of the post-industrial city and, in so doing, makes the subject of these landscapes appear. In so doing, the subject rips or tears into normative assertions of her 'othered' personhood. Here, by calling for an attention to the aesthetic, Mignolo (2011) and Lockward (2013) bring to the fore an attention not just to the ways (popular) artistic production, in its images, poetics and so forth, represent historical struggle but rather to the kinds of sensuous and fraught lifeworlds where creative significations arise and work to disturb colonial thinking. Conceptualizing decolonial aesthetics as inseparable from lived experience, as a result, recalls Fanon's (1952, 2008) invocation of the body and its senses as the central feature of political life and the site of struggle for decolonial projects that attempt to delink subjects from notions of European western modernity and its aesthetic field by creating new ontological, epistemological, and political trajectories. As Mignolo (2011) asserts, cultural production that arises in the lifeworlds of those who are invisible signal a desire break from oppressive discourses and their related aesthetic fields typecast as modernity as well as call attention to a rejection of historical categories with negative value.

Critical theorist Jacques Ranciere (2001, 2007, 2010), in much of his work on art and artistic practice, echoes some of this sentiment regarding the primacy of the aesthetic

in our daily lives.   He argues that our ability to know the world through our senses is normalized through historically constructed social processes – the family structure, school, work, mass media -- that work to reify particular power relationships, such as class, race or gender hierarchies. He suggests that art and creative production, in the western tradition of the avant-garde, has always had the potential to destabilize the realm of the aesthetic insofar as it has sought to defamiliarize normative ideas of the social rooted in the senses. Art specifically and cultural production more broadly, work to jar the senses into new ways of seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, touching so that the socially produced world we live in is experienced anew.   Simultaneously, as I have suggested in the previous discussion on global hip hop, art and cultural production, as it creates representations of alterity, works to create new solidarities, new relationships, new connections that make possible networked citizenship across borders by allowing historically disparate subjects to imagine, utilizing Berlant's (2011) term, a shared affect world. No doubt the digital, as I have argued, works to offer the opportunity to a greater number of people the opportunity to disrupt their own and others notions of the normative through aesthetic production, and in so doing, works to create new, unforeseen networked publics.

Yet, citizenship, when linked to the aesthetic, also bears another reading. If we take up Aristotle (Gerson, 1999), who argues that citizenship should be based on the abilities and qualifications of the individual to contribute to economic, political, and social life of the polis, we get a different take on aesthetic production and belonging in our digital age and neoliberal moment. Indeed, if we start with an analysis of citizenship in the megacity, as Ong (2007) argues, as dependent on the assets that subjects can mobilize for recognition and participation, then from this vantage point, aesthetic citizenship suggests another criteria for belonging, a criteria produced in a moment where the image and its propensity to herald the future is central to development. I argue throughout this book that it is precisely the power to defamiliarize through the production of alternate visions of modernity, that creates value and thus offers the youthful hip hop producers in Delhi that I will introduce in the coming pages new opportunities for participation in a wider public sphere. In this broader field of analysis, we can see that,

on the one hand, hip hop's affective force creates new solidarities and networked connections between people across borders who utilize its forms to decolonize aesthetics in their immediate lifeworlds to create shared affinities. However, in the pages that follow, I show how contesting the kind of normative aesthetic regime unfolding in Delhi with hybrid aesthetics of hip hop and its vision of what Mignolo (2012) calls an alter-modernity, generates value beyond something we could call political.

What I became interested in specifically during my stay in Delhi, are the ways in which the multimodal products that are produced and circulated by migrants, refugees, and transnationals in Delhi's hip hop scene, because they render social worlds and social bodies that previously have been invisible or subject to negative denotations, visible and vibrant through hip hop's aesthetics – come to have value. The value of the aesthetic material my participants produced, simply put, created opportunities for them to engage in various networked worlds beyond the social worlds they inhabited. These opportunities for participation emerged within and beyond hip hop's globally circuited participatory culture precisely because the images they produced of their lifeworlds reflect an alternate rendering of modernity in ways that offer the possibility for suturing the two Delhi's that currently exist, the visible and formally developing Delhi, and the invisible and informally developing Delhi (Joshi et al, 2013). I will describe, in more detail, these putatively distinct demarcations of Delhi and their origins in the next section. What is important to hold onto from this discussion is that hip hop's practiced aesthetics simultaneously disrupt social norms in Delhi that cast difference in unequal terms even as these aesthetic disruptions are subject to capture and subsequent valuation.

To state it, perhaps, more clearly, I argue that the prosumer digital productions and public performances of the young men in my study have the power to work as critical texts, to disrupt social, cultural, and class based mechanisms of seeing, hearing, feeling, and so on in ways which make visible the powerful divides that exist in the city, divides that are constituted at the intersection of class, caste, gender, and race. Yet, these cultural texts also, because of the value they generate *as* aesthetic renderings of the world, have the potential to get subsumed in several ongoing projects to reenvision the city and the nation in utopic terms. In either case these productions work to create new forms of

participation, belonging, and social connection even as they make visible existing exclusions. I call this dual process, where the production and circulation of one's aesthetic lifeworld leads to the extension of networks while it also creates new possibilities for engaging with a public sphere that requires, even demands, new images to create value – aesthetic citizenship. In the next section I open up a discussion, which I follow throughout this monograph, regarding how the changes in Delhi articulate with and against the emergence of hip hop amongst the non-elite of the city.

Neoliberal Delhi: Migrants, Youth, and Urban Change

Since economic liberalization in the early 1990s, Delhi has undergone an intensification of development processes that began during the colonial period (Hosagrahar, 2007). These moves to develop the city have resulted in several infrastructural public-private projects that have yielded, in the last decade, a new metro system, several new roads, malls, shopping centers, as well as speculative real estate development projects across the city. The sweeping changes in the built environments of the city, however, are not just the result of formal processes of development (Roy, 2007). As a result of a surging in-migration that brings migrant labor pouring in from several states proximal to Delhi, political migrants and refugees from across South Asia, and, more recently, transnational migrants and students from East and West Africa, several informal development projects along with unauthorized housing colonies have sprung up in the heart and on the peripheries of the city, where service labor, manufacturing labor, small entrepreneurs, refugees, and international students make their lives and take part in the uneven opportunities that global capital has produced.

For Delhi, the enormous influx of migrants from all over the country and, most recently, from other parts of the world has, along with the sorts of policy, planning and development initiatives spurred on by the local government and by private interests, reworked the spatial landscape of the city, allowing the city, for better or worse, to acquire the title megacity. Here the mega in megacity, as Ong (2007) aptly notes regarding the expansion of existing in Asia, is not only an adjective used to describe its sheer physical size or its swelling population but one that aptly describes the aspirations

of the cities elite as well as its newly migrated denizens as they seek to fashion lives that exceed the horizons of possibility that they have left behind.

The intertwined narratives of migration and development in Delhi's recent history, both of which speak of desire, promise, and aspiration, however, is not a new one. Indeed, the city's narrative since India's independence has been one that has tangled migrants' hopes, dreams, and memories of places left behind with the elitist vision of urban modernity, inherited from the west and put forth by Delhi's planners and developers since the beginning of the 20th century (Kacker, 2005). The many migrants who have come to the city in trickles, streams and floods and who have made their homes in Delhi over the last 60 years, come to Delhi for a host of reasons (Hull, 2011). Partition and the violent birth of the nation, for instance, precipitated the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Hindu and Sikh Punjabis fleeing what is now Pakistan to make their homes in the city. These exiled Punjabis settled in large numbers in the western and northern parts of the city and their settlements are still distinctly visible and discernable as Punjabi enclaves.

One can walk about large sections of Western Delhi, for instance, and hear Urdu inflected Punjabi that index the history of these migrants, now reaching the threshold of living memory, that connects them to the villages, towns and cities in what is now Pakistan.   In more recent times, Delhi provided a safe haven for the Kashmiri pundits, who fled Jammu and Kashmir to Delhi twenty odd years ago when a renewed insurgency in the state, in effect, exiled the minority community (Kaul, 2012). In addition to those caught in the throes of violence that arose from explicit political change in the region, since the birth of the nation many migrants have arrived to the city from the rural hinterlands of India to partake of the promise of the metropolis, the promise Nehru set forth in his vision of a technocratic, industrial and modern India (Nehru, 1963). Jobs, the promise of work, and the possibility to step out of what Appadurai (1996) allegorically refers to as "the glacial pace of habitus for the quickening beat" of modernity, urged migrants from villages into urban centers seeking the help of kin, caste, ethnic, and religious community members to ease their way into new livelihoods. This shift in population from the rural to the urban, the mass movements of people from the villages to

the city, however, has been particularly drastic since India's economic liberalization in the 1990s, which set adrift an estimated 300 million rural inhabitants seeking refuge and economic possibility in India's growing mega cities and emergent regional urban centers (UN DESA, 2010) and shows no signs of abating. Delhi, along with other first and second tier urbanities across India, have absorbed these migrants, seasonal workers who come to the city for a short time leaving their families behind in their villages as well as entire families seeking a new life in the city. According to recent estimates, Delhi, as a result of the swell of migrants and the spatial remapping of the city to include farmland in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, has nearly doubled in population since 1993 (India Census, 2011).

The newer waves of migrants who have travelled to make Delhi their home in the last decade have come from various locations within India that previously had little representation in the city. Ramaswami (2012), for instance, documents the emergence of a growing migrant population from the state of Bihar who labor as factory workers in the several industrial zones scattered throughout the city. There has also been the influx of people from the northeast of India fleeing political unrest in their region brought about by the rise of Maoists in rural areas and their skirmishes with the local landowners and national security forces, as well as those seeking economic opportunity in the capital city of India. Northeasterners from Bengal, Chattisgarh, Mizoram, Sikkim, Assam, and Nagaland have all made their homes in pockets scattered around the city often choosing to live close to the long settled and recently arrived Nepali migrants (McDuie-Ra, 2012). However, in the present historical moment, it is not only those who within the national context or even within the region, who aspire to make a new life in the cities of India. A global economic and political realignment that began in the post-cold war period and gained momentum in the late 1990s has located India and its cities as a desirable destination for transnational migration. The rhetoric regarding the global political and economic ascendance of India, the shifting geo-political climate since the end of the Cold War, and the mutating needs of capital, has resulted in the flow of international migrants to the country, and specifically, into the first tier cities of India – Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore. Migrants from Afghanistan, West Africa -- Nigeria, the Congo, Cameroon,

The Ivory Coast -- as well as from East Africa -- Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda -- have all made their home in India in the last five years. Some have come as political refugees. Others have come as entrepreneurs, seeking to capitalize on the increasingly available south-to-south trade opportunities between Africa and the subcontinent. Others have come from the several West and East African nations represented in Delhi for education, a route to a life in Delhi that has been forged since the colonial period. All of these recent migrants, refugees, and transnationals, as non-elite newcomers to the city, face the harsh realities of a politics of difference in Delhi, a politics located in the intersections of class, race, ethnicity, and gender. The politics of difference in Delhi, and indeed in India, is not a new one, as I shall discuss in later chapters. Caste and gender privilege has long been a feature of India's hierarchical social life. Since independence, ethnicity, language, religion, and regional belonging have all exacerbated perceptions of difference in the growing cities of India. This increasing urban diversity lead planners in the early years of independence, particularly in Delhi, to argue that the single most important issue facing urban India was the need to create a common sense of urban place (Hull, 2011).

As the current waves of migrants, both international and intranational, flow into Delhi they move into available spaces for habitation, the informal or unauthorized colonies that, as I mentioned earlier, have cropped up with the folds of the existing city and on the peripheries of the emerging city. Two such unauthorized colonies that house migrants international and intranational migrants are where all of the participants in my study lived and, in the year and half I lived in Delhi, became the primary terrestrial sites in my study. These settlements, when seen against the planned construction of malls, new housing complexes marketed to Delhi's growing middle class, the metro, as well as the expansion of the city's borders so that peri-urban villages that once lay outside the city are now in captured in its sprawling urbanity, create a paradox. One the one hand Delhi has, as its planners and private interests have, since liberalization, envisioned in their bid to make the city a world class destination for roaming capital, become more transparent, fluid, knowable (Roy, 2011). The metro system, for instance, now connects central Delhi to all of its historical edges in the South, West, East, and North of Delhi as well as to Noida, Gurgaon, and Dwarka, the developing urban peripheries of Delhi that

have spurred the need for a new name to capture the scale of the city as it reaches across states – NCR (the national capital region). The metro has, as a result, not only facilitated practical efficiencies, such enabling the flow of labor from one part of the city to the other, but has also resulted in the efflorescence of a new imaginary in Delhi, a growing sense that the city can be traversed, explored, and therefore known. It has become, in effect, a symbol of the aspirations of city planners and developers of the city who see themselves as midwives of a futurist Delhi that meets, possibly even exceeds early modernist visions of the ordered, rational, and ultimately knowable city (see Roy, 2011, Holston, 2008).

Yet, precisely because of the influx of new migrants, labor to build the new city, workers to serve the new businesses, would be entrepreneurs to take advantage of emergent trade opportunities between India and its neighbors in the global south, and refugees who flee from several war torn countries in the region and beyond, the city has also developed in its folds, untranslatable pockets, settlement communities where migrants from all over the nation state and several countries come to make their home. Unlike the migrant settlements of Delhi's 20th century, which arranged themselves according to regional affiliation and became visible places where one could locate migrants from particular communities, say the Punjab, or Kashmir, or Bengal and so on, these spaces are not easily prone to categorization. As their demographics continuously shift based on the economic and political conditions of the moment, as their borders are constantly being re-imagined by its residents, and as building regulations and planning ordinances rarely penetrate their folds, these colonies and their residents become spaces that offer a difficult challenge developers, planners, politicians, and demographers as they seek to cast Delhi as a global city. As a result, these settlements and their communities become virtually invisible in mainstream accounts except for those occasions of rupture where the 'slums' or 'ghettoes' of Delhi are mentioned in sensationalized news media coverage.

The physical and cultural changes that result in this dual process of development, on the one hand a rational and planned knowable city, on the other hand, a spontaneous, superdiverse unknown city, circulate in the mass media to produce an image of Delhi as a

city that is at once imminently world class and in crisis. It is in this context the young men in my study produce multimodal representations of themselves, their spatial communities and their city steeped in hip hop's aesthetics. On the one hand, these aesthetically saturated productions make the invisible city and its inhabitants visible in ways that are inherently political. On the other hand, these images, because they render invisible places and people in global hip hop's familiar images of urbanity, these images accrue value in ways that displace the initial dissensus, or break from normativity, that the self-generated visibility produces (Ranciere, 2010). Indeed, it seemed obvious that, in my time in Delhi, these images from below worked to create a fledgling imaginary of Delhi as a place, a city that is not fractured, fragmented, and broken but rather one that is connected, fluid and forward looking.

The chapters ahead look specifically at how unevenly produced and deeply entangled opportunities for political, economic and social participation emerged within and outside a hip hop nation for members of the three crews I spent over a year and half with in the physical terrains of Delhi as well as in the electronic terrains of web 2.0, as a result of the value their aesthetic productions generated as they circulated in the public sphere. To see how opportunities for participation emerged within networks of a locally available global hip hop and extended outward into a more amorphous public sphere required that I traverse the digital and physical worlds of the young men in my study.

Doing Digital ethnography in Delhi's hip hop scene
The notion of a digital or multimodal ethnography has emerged in the last five years as an interdisciplinary concern, as scholars, ensconced mainly in interdisciplinary departments, have sought to methodologically conceptualize how to engage with the impact digital technology has on the lives of people in ways which are reflexive, theoretically robust, and that recognize the dialectic relationship between the digital and the physical world. New approaches to ethnography that take account of the digital have been theorized partly because digitally capacitated human interaction has demanded it, but also because of the robust interest that the digital has generated in the academy, interest that has produced studies that have swung the pendulum of qualitative research across the social

sciences and the humanities towards an almost fetishization of all things digital and networked (Jackson, 2012). The advent of big data studies that extract large bundles of web based qualitative data to engage in quantitative analysis on a broad range of topics including internet democracy, online terror networks, diasporic virtual publics and so on, as well the explosion of digital ethnography's that solely focus on internet contained social worlds, say for example Tom Boellstroff's (2009) work on a virtual gaming site, Second Life, or the empirical studies that any of the media scholars of networked publics have undertaken – have pushed anthropologists, sociologists and others who utilize ethnographic methods to begin to develop new analytics for, in Dhiraj Murthy's (2010) words, a more balanced engagement that takes into account the ways the digital and physical social worlds dialectically shape on another (see also Sassen, 2002 regarding the need to create new analytical frames to engage with the growing salience of the digital in everyday life). The idea of what Sarah Pink and John Postill's (2011) call an ethnographic 'place' that is constitutive of the physical and the digital has emerged in these discussions, a site where one can trace, across virtual and physical terrains, the discontinuities of representation, social performance, and the opportunities and limits of participation. The participatory culture of hip hop in Delhi, as its networks straddle the digital and the physical, emerged as a ethnographic 'place' I found myself entangled in as I spent time in Delhi's hip hop scene. Over the course of 18 months, I got to know the members of three crews of young men between the ages of 13-23 whose members were comprised of political refugees from Somalia, economic low-caste migrants from states close to Delhi, and migrants from Nepal and the Northeast of India. The focus on young men in this study in relation to my conceptualization of aesthetic citizenship is important for two reasons.

First, by focusing on three diverse groups young men in the margins in contemporary Delhi, I enter into a mainstream discussion regarding the shadowy specter of lumpen men in Delhi's public spaces, young men, who are cast in the mainstream media as a threat to the moral and social order. By engaging with these diverse groups of young men, I reveal a more complicated picture of how masculinity is being produced in the city, a picture that contradicts the simple rendering of young economically

disenfranchised men in the city, the children of migrants, as the disaffected and the dangerous. Moreover, by engaging with the synthetic category of migrant hip hop involved youth, I reveal a more diverse Delhi in the making, one that destabilizes accounts of the urban Indian subject as different based on caste or religion – the two social categories that have defined research on the subaltern in the Indian context. By including Afghani, Somali, Nigerian, and Northeastern youth in my work, I seek to produce a more complicated picture of Delhi's margins, one which reveals global connection and emergent forms of inequality.

Second, by focusing on the ethnographic engagements I had with the young men in Delhi's hip hop scene as they forged connections in surprising ways with local activists, international hip hop artists, branding agents, and so on, I exclude the few young women who I go to know in the scene as well as the female siblings, friends, girlfriends, mothers, and aunts of these young men whom I passed time with in Delhi. This exclusion, particularly in light of theorizing an aesthetic citizenship, suggests a reinforcement of the image of the citizen cum cultural producer as decidedly male, a retrenchment of patriarchal notions of citizenship and representation founded in the western tradition of liberal democracy. However, there are some important ethnographic circumstances to this exclusion that complicate this reading. First, the young women in the scene whom I met, for instance, the two B-girls and the one graffiti writer who was generous with their time and energy and with sharing their experiences of hip hop, were all from middle class and well settled Delhi families. They did not live in the invisible settlement communities where all of the young men I engaged with made their homes. Their access to the hip hop scene, as young women, was predicated on a different class construction than their female peers in the settlements.   Indeed, the sisters of the young men whom I did spend time as well as other young women I met in the settlement were not allowed the kind of latitude to roam or to explore that the young men had. By and large the young men in my study had considerably more freedom to explore alternative trajectories than their female peers, the exceptions being the young women from West Africa and a few young women from the Northeast from the two settlements whom I met when I went with from time to time with some of the young men to check out the hip hop

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club scene in the city. The majority of the young women I did meet in the settlements, the children of migrant labor, refugees, and transnationals, were expected to go to school and follow a more conventional path to adulthood. They were not allowed to roam the public spaces of Delhi as the city's streets, markets, and gathering places were seen as unsafe and unsavory. Nor were they allowed to socialize with young men their age in unrestricted contexts, much less talk to me for extended periods of time.

These limits, of course, did not give them the license, even if they wanted to, to participate in the terrestrial events in the hip hop community. As a result, the public hip hop events in Delhi were male dominated with a few girlfriends, sisters, and the exceptional B-girl, or graffiti writer, in attendance.   The limited possibilities for engagement in fleshly events translated into limited appearances in the virtual world. Occasionally a young woman would pop up in an online discussion and say something about a young man's photo, video, or lyrics, but rarely would they produce their own hip hop inspired multimodal products. This differential access to popular cultural production based on gender as it intersects with class, created a hip hop practice world in Delhi that, in many ways, reflects hip hop practice communities around the world insofar as hip hop has had a persistent problem in reproducing a class inflected gender inequality and in spreading misogynistic messages (Morgan, 2008).

Moreover, the male dominated hip hop events reflected the general climate of Delhi's public spaces, spaces which are dominated by young men, and, as per main stream media, are experienced as unsettling and unsafe by young women. Indeed, in the year and half that I lived in Delhi the image of the city had been defined by incidents of rape and violent attacks on young women, prompting the epitaph that Delhi is the rape capital of the world. The diverse groups of young men whom I got to know in the settlement communities all, over the course of the year, had much to say about the reputation of Delhi as the rape capital of the world, about hip hop and masculinity, and constructed notions of gendered subjectivity through these publicly circulating filters. Throughout the book these young men's commentary on gender and its relationship to class and, in some cases, caste and race, will emerge. What is critical to take with you as you read the pages ahead is that aesthetic citizenship made possible through hip hop's

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alternative aesthetics coupled with digital technology, as it emerges in Delhi, is deeply classed, raced, and gendered. The particular intersections of class, race, and gender that emerge in the pages that follow reflect the complicated and contested notions of authenticity and 'the real' in hip hop's discourse. They also reflect Delhi's particular history and the ways in which contemporary notions of White European modernity as well colonial discourses on caste, gender, class and race continue to impact the ways which social spaces, whether virtual or physical, are constituted. The hip hop scene in Delhi, thus, reflects the ways in which place shape social norms even as they give rise to contestations. With regards to gender, youth in the hip hop scene, with the exception of Northeasterners and West Africans, reflect particular notions of gendered possibility that are deeply ingrained within the social fabric of Delhi.

Rana Sengupta (2014) argues in his recent book on Delhi, *Capital*, that women in South Asia have always been seen as the guardians of culture, stalwarts against colonial hegemony (See also Chatterjee, 2004). Where the colonial male subject was forced to interact with the colonial enterprise to making a living, coerced to dressing differently, speak English and so on, the woman was kept at home, apart from these colonial trappings, to enact a chasteness, a way of being seemingly unmarked by the colonial regime of power. In important ways, for many of the working and underclass families in this book who hail from rural Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarkhand, and Somalia; this gendered separation held firm. In effect, many of the young woman I met in Khirki and Humayunpur, in contradistinction to the young men, stayed within their kin, ethnic, caste, or religious community, and often within the confines of their homes, and traversed the changing worlds of Delhi only to go to school and back.

The young men I met from the settlements, however, cast themselves through practice as part of a large and diverse hip hop scene in Delhi that put into contact transnational migrants, the children of service labor, and middle class young youth through spatial events -- regular underground B-boy jams, club nights, and corporate sponsored and battles – that quickly translated into an ongoing social media connection and produced a network of Delhi based hip hop practitioners. Importantly, this formation of a rhizomic community of hip hop practitioners across difference is a new phenomena.

Only in the last five years has digitally enhanced hip hop in India worked to create new connections across historical difference in ways that depart from Dhiraj Murthy's (2007, 2010) accounts of the electronic and putatively western popular art scenes in urban India – specifically Delhi and Mumbai -- which has been the domain of elite urban cosmopolitans.

This network of practitioners in Delhi, as they made themselves visible through public announcements on web 2.0 that herald the regular B-boy jams and corporate battles that take place regularly in the city, were able to connect into a larger network of hip hop practitioners across national borders. Indeed, MCs, graffiti writers, B-boys, and beatboxers from all over the world, during my time in the city, would arrive in Delhi seeking out the public hip hop events announced on social network sites or discussed in fifth estate media (non-corporate) producers in Delhi to engage with Delhi's local hip hop scene. As a result, these events became spaces for cross-national, cross-cultural contact and for the young people in the Delhi hip hop scene, the opportunity to extend their networks of connection. Importantly, echoing Jenkins (2006, 2008) theorizations of participatory culture, to get invited into these networks that extended across the physical and the digital required participation, in this case, the production of hip hop's aesthetic forms.

My ability to develop meaningful relationships with these young men, to enter their digital/terrestrial networks, was formulated on two axes. First, was my perceived status as a male 'elder' in a larger hip hop universe. As an Indian American growing up in New York City in the 1980s and 1990s, I dabbled in all of the practices of hip hop, graffiti writing in my early teen years, MCing when I got a bit older, and music production in my early 20s. Moreover, hip hop, more than just a practice form, was the backdrop of my everyday life. My understanding of my position as an immigrant 1.5 generation Indian in the U.S., the very metaphors, gestures, clothing choices, I utilized to sign myself into social life, was deeply and profoundly shaped by hip hop. As an educator in my twenties and early thirties, I practiced, although I didn't know it at the time or at least wouldn't have been to name it as such, a hip hop informed pedagogy to engage students. These experiments in and with hip hop, coupled with the embodied

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history I brought into Delhi, created an opening for me to engage with the young men that I met – a space for conversation, for dialogue around all things hip hop.

However, the DSLR camera I brought served to create a more powerful and persistent connection and provided an important opening for me to enter their world of performance, production, and circulation. As I got to know young men and women from across the city who were involved with hip hop, including the young men who I would eventually spend the majority of my time with, I brought along my camera, which became an almost talismanic icon that dangled around my neck or sat in a giant equipment bag on my back. While the young people in Delhi's hip hop scene already utilized the inexpensive cameras on their cell phones to produce and circulate images of their practice, my professional equipment became the ways in which they imagined they could hail a larger, global hip hop community as well as an as of yet unknown audience. As the young men who I eventually developed closer relationships with sought me out to film their experimentations with hip hop, they began to invite me to Facebook, Soundcloud, Twitter, and ReverbNation, to hear the productions they had made, to see (and like) the images they had uploaded, or to share the music videos that I had assisted them in making. They, in short invited me into their network. This network, as it is situated in the physical and the digital, allowed me to engage with not only their engagements with each other, with their families, with other hip hop practitioners in Delhi, or with hip hop practitioners across the globe, but to see what they circulated on the web for an imagined public of unknown viewers and listeners.

In a nutshell, my invitation into their crisscrossed digital and terrestrial networks allowed me to track the ways in which their hip hop performances and circulations created new opportunities for them to engage within and beyond a hip hop community of practice. Once within the network I was able to pay close attention to the contexts in which they produced their digital artifacts, the circulation of the artifacts they produced, and the subsequent effects of their circulation. That is, by following the networks into the digital and physical spaces where they intersected and parted, I was able to excavate the complicated ways in which production created new possibilities for participation.

The network, now imagined in our digital age as the digital itself (Castells, 2002),

allows us to engage with new analytical possibilities regarding how new affinities develop, how new social worlds, the publics and counterpublics we touched upon in a previous section (Frasier, 1995; Warner, 2005), arise and congeal around circulating content. This recent, some might say, hyper-focus on the concept of the network, similar to the hyper focus on web 2.0, as a distribution channel for ideas, images and the aesthetic and pedagogical arguments tied to their semiotic forms, as the distinguished communication professor Elihu Katz recently suggested in a plenary talk at the annual International Communications Association annual meeting, does not by any means suggest that the notion of the network is new. Katz, playfully discussing the spread of Christianity as a networking phenomena, argues that networks and their cross hierarchical, cross categorical possibilities have existed, been conceptualized and utilized since our earliest historical records. That is to say, humans have long understood that social hierarchies, what Deleuze and Guattari (1987) call the arboreal structures of our collective human experience rooted in what has been constructed as primordial origin stories that link people to place, are shot through with horizontal or rhizomic social arrangements that link people, places, and things across imagined difference.

The contemporary turn amongst academics to the network as an analytic concept, as Annelise Riles (2000) suggests, is rather a move to grasp the profound shift in the interconnectivity of our contemporary world as a result of technology that challenges older anthropological knowledge frameworks that rely too heavily on already known and bounded categories to understand social life and rely on an inside/outside perspective of the social for the anthropologist to make any sort of credible claims in the field. It is also offers a challenge to the postmodern notion of discourse, which, while offering a powerful means to describe how norms come to be, how knowledge and power function in bureaucratic, state, and other institutional and non-institutional frameworks, leave actors glaringly out of the picture. The network, then, as a as a heuristic device, offers the opportunity for the ethnographer to follow social relations across seemingly compartmentalized ideas of difference, it allows one to see what representational forms are being circulated as content that makes and unmakes social worlds. However, even more importantly it allows for a reflection on how these representations are being

reflected upon by those in the network. That is, networks and the media they circulate in our present moment allow us to see not only who belongs to the network, what circulates within it, but the kinds of iterative self-reflexive assessments members of the network make of and about themselves.

Yet, Riles (2000) argues that a focus on networks in the social sciences has limited itself to the circulation of the content in the network, which has resulted in a deferral to the same analytical traps that have confounded our approaches to the complexity of exchange and interconnectivity in our contemporary historical moment, approaches that still are over reliant on what we already know about race, class, ethnicity, or any one of the other prime or master categories we seek to know in the field. She argues for a methodological shift towards the idea of networks arguing that in order to effectively utilize the concept we must turn the network inside out. I argue this rhetorical gesture to turn the network "inside-out" fundamentally calls for an ethnographic engagement with the network that seeks to engage with (digitized) content and interaction as well as the phenomenological and aesthetic lifeworlds where bodies and lives are situated, echoing Dhiraj Murthy (2010), Sarah Pink, and John Postill's (2010) calls for a balanced ethnographic engagement across digital and physical terrains.

First, there must be an acknowledgement that as ethnographers who are tracking networked relations, we are already deeply entrenched in the affinity networks we study. There is little that cordons us off from those who we would call our subjects. Indeed, this became quickly obvious to me at the start of my project, as the first people I met in the hip hop scene in Delhi were people who I was already connected to based on my affiliation to an activist and arts community in Brooklyn, New York, where I lived for several years. This mutual tie to Brooklyn's arts and activist scene, along with our shared experiences of being Indian American, allowed us to connect in Delhi when I first reached out to them asking them for help to connect me to the cities burgeoning hip hop community. Indeed my personal connection to the two of them led me directly to where they made their home, one of the two unauthorized migrant settlement communities that would eventually become my primary terrestrial locations for my study.

Another clear reminder of the lack of separation between my study participants

and I was how quickly during the time in the so -called field my Facebook page became saturated with their content. How quickly my comments on Facebook cast for an audience that I didn't assume would include the participants in my study drew their 'likes' or, at times, their written comments. Moreover, as I started producing content with several participants, for instance music videos for the songs they wrote, these artifacts revealed how the intersubjective moments we shared in dialogic production, as they circulated on Youtube and Facebook, blurred the distinctions between my networks and theirs. The comments that these videos received, comments in several different languages from viewers in at least three different continents, revealed how quickly networks of people are intertwined, how effortlessly the affiliations of several people are linked through the production of material content. Moreover, it revealed the sort of self-revealing 'talk' congeals around an artifact that complicates what we might already know about a particular epistemological or ontological terrain.

Second, and as importantly, Riles's (2000) invitation to turn the network inside requires the ethnographer to engage in the moments where the network seeks to extend itself and the ways in which this extension occurs. This process of extension, I argue, can only be apprehended in the moments where the production of content and its imminent journey into a hip hop networked public extends into public spheres where other interests seek content, takes place. To turn the network inside out, then, forces us to look at the moments and places where multimodal production mediates terrestrial social life and, in turn, social life creates new representations for circulation through the network and into the larger (and smaller) public spheres where mainstream media, the culture industry, and formal politics coexist.

In each chapter of this book I work to open these moments of digital mediation that connect the digital to the terrestrial to locate precisely what opportunities for participation in the social, economic and political life of Delhi the young men in my study gain access to through their engagement with global hip hop. Put simply then, this monograph is about how hip hop is taken up by diverse migrant men from the settlements as a means to self-fashion their lives in the belly of the capital city of India. It is about how their struggles, aspirations, and histories are rendered in hip hop's forms that 'go'

digital and are circulated beyond their immediate terrestrial performance. It is about how hip hop creates opportunities for migrant youth living in seemingly isolated settlement communities to solidify their already existing relationships with each other through the practice of hip hop, to make new relationships across the city, and even to reach out, to extend their networks globally by creating artifacts of their practice. But it is also a story about how, as hip hop makes immigrant youth of various backgrounds visible, it itself becomes visible as a representational form in a larger public sphere that has market, political, and social value in Delhi and in India more broadly. This becomes clear as the stories that follow reveal how several different interested parties, branding agents, journalists, filmmakers, entrepreneurs, and of course, researchers, seek to utilize the content these young men produce for their own projects of value (Miller, 1997).

In the first chapter I focus on the images that I encountered as I was invited into the web 2.0 worlds of the participants in my study and theorize how these images, steeped in remainders of the Black urban experience, give an indication into the kinds of utopias or alternate modernity imagined through and with hip hop that these youth produce for themselves and for their friends in the city. I argue, that these images, reflections of the young men's self-fashioning projects become the building blocks for the kinds of claims that the youth in my study can make to an aesthetic citizenship, membership claims that rest within a hip hop nation and extend into participatory possibilities beyond its boundaries. In the second chapter I discuss the complicated politics of belonging that arise as global hip hop practitioners who are attracted by the multimodal representations of hip hop in Delhi that circulate on the web 2.0 come to Delhi seeking to engage, and ultimately, to impart their ideas of what global hip hop is, who its legitimate subjects are, and what it can represent.

As these German, Italian, French, Swiss, English, Czech, and Indian American hip hop emissaries (including myself) intersect in the Delhi hip hop scene, friction occurs that reveal a contested terrain within global hip hop that positions the young people in Delhi between two visions of a legitimate hip hop, one that I argue pits historically situated understandings of hip hop as a decolonial practice against a more universalist and less politicized view of hip hop. In the third chapter I explore how activists in Khirki

mobilize the image making practices of hip hop as a means to imagine a different idea of development for Khirki and for Delhi, more broadly. I argue that this inclusion of hip hop creates opportunities for several young men, B-boyers and MCs I got to know in Khirki, one of the two unauthorized settlement communities that I spent considerable time in during my stay in Delhi, to participate in creating a rendering of a future Delhi even as it reveals the ways in which this futuristic Delhi constructed through hip hop imagery might work to gentrify the very communities that the youth live in. In the fourth chapter I explore how, as youth from one crew of B-boyers and MCs in Khirki utilize the mall as a public space to practice B-boying and MCing, they create a spectacle that interrupts their normative social roles in Delhi as service labor even as this spectacle invites digital capture that, ultimately, tames their otherwise political claiming of space and renders it a part of the commodity flows of the mall. I argue that if we consider access to public space as an integral part of citizenship, these young men's aesthetic performances should be seen as a rights claim – a claim for participation that is ultimately, in the neoliberal moment, ratified within the capital intensive spaces of the mall precisely because of its aesthetic appeal and its possibility for digital capture and circulation.

In the fifth chapter I explore how the image making practices of hip hop involved youth works to create possibilities for employment in Delhi's burgeoning nightlife scene and youth culture industry. I argue that if we look at these young men's hip hop practice and its image making power as immaterial labor we can begin to see the ways in which hip hop, and for that matter any creative or artistic work, can be captured within the workings of late capital as it relies on the production and circulation of qualitative renderings of authentic life, pleasure, beauty and experience -- to inculcate desire. In the sixth and final chapter I explore how hip hop becomes, as it gets picked up in a globalizing Delhi emerges as a "critical site for the negotiation of race, for the marking of racialized borders, and for their subsequent displacement and rearrangement" (Dolby, 2001:9). I focus on a crew of Somali refugees in Khirki to discuss the ways in which notions of race, particularly notions of race tied to Africa and to global Blackness appear in the new social topographies of Delhi. I argue that, throughout this book, race,

as it intersects with caste, and ethnicity, provides the young men I got to know in Delhi's hip hop scene a differential set of possibilities for participation.

I conclude this final chapter by discussing the collaborative filmic projects that arose as a result of my engagement with the digital, focusing on the film I produced with the Somali crew on race and place in Delhi. Specifically, I delve into the ways in which the already productive space of digital creation that existed in the Delhi scene coupled with my entry into the scene with my DSLR camera conspired to create the possibility for developing a critical hip hop film pedagogy that relies on the hip hop principle of the cipha – a collective space where individual creativity can have expression and receive iterative feedback from an engaged audience to create what Jean Luc Nancy (1991) has argued, in his recovery of the term community, is communis where *a priori* conditions of belonging are put aside in favor of shared singularity.

"…What is at stake in millennial utopias is how ontologies of difference come to be absorbed and assimilated into a master narrative of development" (Roy, 2011:18).

"The dialectical image is an image that emerges suddenly, in a flash. What has been is to be held fast – as an image flashing up in the now of its recognizability" (Benjamin, 1999:473).

"The objective condition for global connectivity is, in remarkable and pervasive ways, defined as a circuit of imagery" (Weiss, 2002:94).

"Since other people, both kinfolk and strangers, can only be apprehended by images – stereotypes of gender, race, ethnicity, etc. –the problem of migration is structurally, necessarily, bound up with images"(Mitchell, 2011:59).

We sat waiting at the mouth of the metro station for a young rapper in Delhi's underground hip hop scene to meet us, finding a sliver of shade on the edge of a parapet where we could stand and talk a bit before he arrived. Jaspal Singh, a sociolinguist from Germany whom I met early in my days in the Delhi hip hop scene, had connected with this emerging rapper at a hip hop concert featuring international and local hip hop acts a few weeks prior and called him down to South Delhi for an interview and a conversation about music production.   Singh generously, as we were both just getting ourselves fully immersed into our respective and overlapping research projects, invited me along for the meeting. As we sat waiting, watching the steady stream of commuters ascend and descend down the long escalator leading to the station, taking in the scent of roasted peanuts that a small vendor kept smoldering in a small stall next to the station, Singh told me how he was planning to set up a small recording studio in his new apartment where he could invite youth to come record their raps and learn to produce beats.   Studio time in Delhi, as anywhere else in the world, is expensive. Moreover, at that particular moment, there were not many professional recording studios available in Delhi for young people to experiment with their hip hop inflected musical ideas, even if they had the money to spend.

The idea of a providing studio space, he reasoned, would not only give him the opportunity to develop relationships with young aspiring musicians in the hip hop scene in Delhi and to capture the kinds of articulations of their lifeworlds that they made

available in their lyrics, but would allow him to offer something back in return for the kind of access that they provided him into their youthful subcultural world. This small studio on top of a family house on the edges of Khirki, eventually and for several months, became the meeting ground for participants in each of our studies to connect and, eventually, to collaborate on music and video production, furthering the notion that there exists a quintessentially Delhi hip hop scene. The studio also became a powerful trope of what 'could be' that I, because of my involvement in the scene and because of my relationship with Singh, became closely associated with in Khirki. Over the months I became a regular presence in Khirki many youthful African migrants had heard through the grapevine that I made videos, films, and 'did' music and sought me out to discuss 'studio time.' Long after Singh left to return to Germany I still had young men and women from Khirki who would, through shared networks initiated and developed during my languorous loitering sessions in the settlement, reach out to me and ask me to help them record their original music, hip hop inspired or otherwise.

I then, as we leaned against the parapet trying to make ourselves comfortable as we continued to wait for the rapper to arrive, told Singh about the music video I had filmed for a group of hip hop youth in Khirki the previous summer and how, until the moment where this group had needed me to shoot this video, I faced a difficult time getting in touch with them or having them take my interest in them, as an academic, seriously. The lure of the camera, I argued, allowed me access much like his music studio would, as they both represented the exciting possibility for semi-professional self-production and circulation. Utilizing our experiences in the field Singh and I discuss, in an article in press, the relationship between ethnographic access and reciprocal desire – what we argue is the necessary mutual interest to create robust and productive encounters in the field. Essentially, situating our discussions in contemporary theories regarding the psycho-social aspects of desire (Lacan, 1968, 1998) we argue that as ethnographers seeking to engage in cultural worlds in the 21st century we would do well to think about what we bring to the table in our engagements as those we would seek to know in our shrinking world are not necessarily content and perhaps even ambivalent to the trinkets we offer as gifts or with the abstract idea that they are contributing to knowledge

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production in western academic contexts (Dattatreyan & Singh, forthcoming, See also Jackson, 2012, 2010, Clifford, 2000 on collaborative anthropology).

In this chapter I touch upon how my professional camera equipment and its promise of greater visibility, coupled with my perceived aesthetic sensibility and access to a larger hip hop world as a hip hop doyen visiting from New York's glorious hip hop past, scaffolded the emergent relationships with my youthful interlocutors and provided the grist for a deeper engagement with the concept of the image and its relationship with what I call aesthetic citizenship in the age of neoliberalism. The interest that my camera and I generated in participants, who initially saw my camera and I as a means to produce hip hop music videos, render high quality portraits and group photographs, or to film their B-boying in public spaces, eventually transformed, over the months we got to know each other, into a set of collaborative film engagements that allowed a smaller set of my youthful interlocutors and I to develop what I call instantiations of a critical hip hop cinema. While I save the detailed discussions regarding the collaborative film engagements for my concluding chapter where I, for instance, worked closely with the Somali youth in my study to conceptualize and produce a film on their experience of race in Khirki in a moment where the spatial community was imploding due to racialized violence directed mostly towards the West Africans living in its folds; I will discuss, in the final section of this chapter, what sorts of opportunities (and pitfalls) the camera allows for constructing a shared anthropology in the 21st century, the kind that Marcus (2012) argues is the future of the discipline.

The primary thrust of this chapter, however, is to focus on the image production that my participants made on their own with their cell phone cameras and the images we made together where they directed the composition -- prior to any sort of imagining of an explicitly shared and putatively critical image-making endeavor. Here the image making and exchange occurred as I got to know the crews of young men in my study, as they requested me as a Facebook friend or as we travelled to different parts of the city and they asked me to shoot, was, at first, the backstage of my anthropological endeavor as I sought to wend my way into the lives of migrant youth who saw promise, excitement, and possibility in my interest in their mobilizations of the diasporic aesthetics of hip hop.

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I initially understood these image making projects and perhaps even the time in the studio as the surface, the glassy thin layer of interaction that I had to negotiate in order to deepen my engagement, to get at the heart of a story I thought lurked under the surface, a story about racial exclusion, class alienation, and a gendered aimlessness that our shared interest in hip hop and the popular simply opened the door to explore more fully.

Over the days that became months that I passed, I realized that these literal images and their metaphoric relatives were central to understanding not only the role of hip hop in their lives as migrants in their changing city but the ways in which modernity is constructed and contested, as Weiss (2002) so eloquently states, in 'circuits of imagery.' This, of course, meant that the images that they created, the visually evocative lyrics that they wrote, or the dances that they performed in public spaces, weren't simply portals into their 'real' lives, these images reflected the ways in which these youth imagined and made possible their connections to each other and with a larger world. The images, I suggest, become the building blocks for the kinds of claims that the youth in my study make to an aesthetic citizenship; the membership and participatory possibilities that are ratified through their audio-visual products.

It is in this light I more precisely wish to theorize the digital image by placing its visual indexicality in conversation with the conditions of its production to articulate more clearly the relationship of the image with the struggles for belonging, participation, and possibility by migrants in the context of a developing Delhi. I suggest a careful look at the images I was either party to producing or was that was shared by the youth in my study, gives a telescopic view into precisely what emerges in and around these photos and video clips that might accrue social, political, or economic value in Delhi for the aspiring B-boys, graffiti artists, MCs, DJs and (eventually) filmmakers in my study and the ways in which these youth were deploying hip hop to create value in their acts of immaterial labor. Indeed, the youths' gravitation towards image production or to the music studio for that matter, clearly suggests their cognizance that "to matter in today's global economy is to do immaterial work, to be the innovators behind trends..." (Luvaas, 2013: 129).

While in a later chapter I engage with several examples of how these images are harnessed as youth self-fashion themselves as innovators or trend setters that do the work of branding Delhi as world class, in this chapter I focus on how these images open up the qualitative nature of the utopias or alternate modernities that the young people in my study imagined through and with hip hop and produced for themselves and for their friends. The transformative power of the image to create and connect worlds, to act as material artifacts of local and global connection, is central to my discussion (Weiss, 2002). Indeed, the images produced in random photo shoots turned each of these young men, who mostly spent their days, outside of their time practicing hip hop, waiting for something to happen, out of school, without a job, victims of violence, into engaged subjects and cultural producers. These images also transformed Delhi into a playground of the sensible, an exciting landscape where laughter, friendship, courtship, and even violence could be thematized. These images, when coupled with pithy captions or textual exchanges between friends on Facebook, constructed Delhi as a place where belonging, participation, and even dissent are made possible for migrants and refugees living on the seeming peripheries of the city. Indeed, these image-text complexes reveal the ways in which the prosumer is now able to shape public meaning in ways Roland Barthes (1978) examined decades prior when theorizing the relationship between image, text, and sound produced by the culture industry.

My participants requests for friendship on Facebook initially exposed me to these images as did our initial forays in shared or collaborative image making projects, say in taking portraits or in making music videos. The latter proved to be the initial staging ground for critical conversations the youth in my study and I on why they chose, for instance, particular locations over others to take their portraits and action shots for the music videos they enlisted me to shoot. These initial critical conversations, as I discuss in the conclusion of this chapter, partially reveals how understandings of race, class and ethnic difference operated amongst Delhi's diverse migrant populations. Moreover, these dialogues revealed the different set of interests that the young men had when it came to making narrative films in each of the two crews I worked with on filmic production, the mostly Somali crew and the mostly Nepali and Northeastern crew. Finally, I suggest that

the nuances of the truth claims found in the already circulating images of and by these youth, whether produced by the Nepali crew or the Somali, give an indication of how the youth in my study are responding to the current struggle to define the future of Delhi and the ways in which these struggles are played out in the public sphere, a public sphere that has necessarily expanded due to greater access to technology (Sundaram, 2011, See also Pinney, 2008 on the photo as modernity's cure and poison). These images thus not only reveal the ways in which these youth engage in several projects of value concurrently underway in the city, but work to foreshadow what sorts of narrative constructions each group gravitated towards in our collaborative film projects, a point I will return to in the conclusion of this chapter.

What I would like to do for the remainder of this discussion is, rather than, as is tempting to do, follow the image making performances of the youth in my study or the images themselves as they move into flight, where they, in circulation generate 'outside' interest and quickly become involved in various kinds of immaterial laboring practices, is to tarry in the images and short videos that they made and I initially made with them and the kinds of immediate feedback they generated from their friends on Facebook that in large part pushed me to recognize the importance of the visual field in their aspirations for participation and belonging and their articulations of exclusion in the first place. Essentially, I argue that these playful yet politically charged portraits, locate the youthful actors in hip hop's historical past and, simultaneously, in Delhi's changing spatial terrains and their promise of the future. It is this suturing of hip hop's past and Delhi's future that I argue the image reveals itself as central to the construction of the developing city, as a kind of historical actor in its own right (Mitchell, 1989).

Image, Capital, Consumption
I begin with two bold theoretical conceptions of the image as the drivers for my discussion, first, the notion espoused by W.J.T. Mitchell, that the image is a kind of historical actor and, second, that the image is a rendering of a "dialectics in a standstill," an ambiguous yet potent rendering of utopia – a world yet to come -- constructed on the terrain of the past (Benjamin in Roy, 2011; Mitchell, 1994).   At the juncture of these two

theoretical statements, I argue that in our contemporary moment the digital image reveals the historical actor within the context of an unfolding process of development, in this case the development or modernization story of Delhi (Roy, 2011). The image and the visuality that it suggests thus becomes the space of contestation as well as a site where value is produced, the space where certain historical actors are revealed while others are concealed to forward particular stories of the city's mutations. It is this doubling of difference and value located in the images that these youth produce, the children of invisible labor, refugees, and otherwise marginalized youthful denizens in the city of Delhi, that I wish to think through in this chapter. In so doing, this discussion draws from almost a century of argumentation regarding the power of mass produced and circulated images that renders the visual as a space for manufacturing consent (Adorno, 1991) or for interruption and contestation (Hall, 1990; Mirzoeff, 2011; Puar, 2007).

The image, from the Latin, *imago*, for and foremost, evokes a sense of the visual, what can be seen and discerned by the eye and, importantly, captured and circulated in an artifact, whether it be a denotative text, or an image qua image. However, the idea of what can be seen and captured also evokes the notion of the imagination, the potential, as Benjamin rightly notes, of what could be. The image, whether in its 'to be' state or manifested in an artifact, also suggests the conditions of its own production. The conditions I refer to are the particular power relations that cause the eruption of a particular image at a particular moment in time. A classic example in anthropology's history of this relationship between power, the imagination, and the birth or eruption of a particular image is found in John Rouch's controversial film, *Les maîtres fous* (The Mad Masters). In the film Rouch captures a West African Hauka ceremony where the spirit of a British colonial authority takes possession of the film's subject, who, under the control of the spirit, kills and eats a dog on camera. While some have lauded Rouch's representation of 'mimetic faculty' as a powerful tool for critique of colonial and imperial systems (Taussig, 1993), others, including Marcel Griaule, Rouch's teacher and mentor, were horrified at the images that Rouch captured and the ethical dilemma they produced (Stoller, 1997). Here, in this example, it becomes clear that the term image doubles, first, as the visual enactment by the film's subject of colonial authority, second, in Rouch's

capture and circulation of event. As a result of this doubling the image evokes power

relations not only in the appearance of the 'original' image, where the subject takes on

the spirit of the colonial officer, but in the capture and subsequent circulation of the

image, which provokes discussions regarding its ethics of representation and the power of

the filmmaker, in this case, to offer the open text of film for European audiences that

work to putatively retrench the savage slot (Trouillot, 2003). However, importantly, not

all interpretations or readings of *Les maîtres fous* include both possible readings. While

Taussig (1993) suggests Rouch's capture and representation of this image speaks of the

power of memesis, the ability it provided in mimicry to launch a powerful and effective

critique at the colonial regime, for Griaule, and later, for several African filmmakers and

critics, the capture and circulation of this image positioned Rouch as an imperialist who

viewed Africans as "no more than insects" (Henley, 2009). This representational

dissonance, where Taussig (1993) interprets the image's relationship to power as the

initial memetic performance while Griaule and others focus on the images power in

circulation, reveals the complexity of the relationship between the image, the

imagination, and the centrality of representation in struggles for power and visibility.

     The term that the discussion above regarding Rouch's filmic representations of

cultural practice, ritual, and power hinges on, of course, is mimesis, which, in Ancient

Greek, means to copy, to imitate. The term, when applied to human history and sociality[5]

has been used to describe the ways in which copying, making a facsimile of, or otherwise

attempting to take on the properties of something which is externally available through

the apprehension of signs, yields a certain power to the copy to the point where the copy

might embody the full representational power of the original. While memesis has long

been a focal point for philosophical discussions that concern learning, teaching and

artistic representation, the crisis around memesis and the power of its possibilities surface

in the moment where the possibility to reproduce images became mechanized and

mobile. In possibly his most cited work regarding the fate of Western classical art in the

age of mechanical reproduction Walter Benjamin famously argues that the reproduction

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[5] The term memesis has also been utilized extensively in biological and evolutionary sciences.

might even surpass the auratic power of the original image, itself only a facsimile of its original inspiration if a more authenticated one because of the credentials of its maker -- through its ability to reproduce itself indefinitely. Benjamin, in his assessment of mechanical reproduction, highlights both the promise and the danger of the image in its circulation, its ability to accrue power simply because of its propensity for movement. However, Benjamin, by focusing on the mass production and circulation of the image perhaps misses the crucial context of its eruption. Here Michael Taussig's (1991) words on mimesis are instructive, as it suggests a closer look at the moment where the images emerge in the first place. He writes "the wonder of mimesis lies in the copy drawing on the character and power of the original, to the point whereby the representation may even assume that character and that power", here referring to the initial eruption of the visual that relies on either the human body as its canvas, human expression as its medium, or human performativity as its mode (5). It is this relationship between the initial eruption of an image and its circulation where I wish to tease out W.J.T's Mitchell's (1989) theory of the image as a historical actor, a force capable of inciting the imagination to make visible new renderings of utopia.

However, before we can discuss the image as a historical actor, we must confront the problem of the image, whether in its eruption in situ, or in its circulation, and its relationship to the notion of the real. Indeed, whether we take the memetic performance or the copy in circulation we run into a particularly irascible philosophical and empirical problem that memesis or its more banal double, imitation, forces us to confront. Taussig (1991) and Benjamin, in their respective discussions on memesis, echo a familiar refrain that has been repeated since Plato, that the notion of a copy must reference something that is original. The notion of an original, of course, points to the idea of something *real*, essential, tangible, as opposed to its binaried opposite: illusory, just on the surface, insubstantial, vacuous. The discussion on the real in relation to mimetic function, the possibility to create fascimiles of 'the real,' has been a topic that has generated considerable angst amongst 20th theorists who argue that, since the age of mechanical reproduction, the notion of the real, of the original, has been lost in the explosion of simulacra made possible through new communicative technologies (See Baudrillard,

1981; Lyotard, 1979). This angst, we remember, in part stems from Marx's (1999) argument that any circulation or reproduction of 'the real,' abstracts, rather than something existentially real, or apriori to our cognitive abilities, the labor that undergirds the (re)production in the first place.

Indeed, the scholars of the Frankfurt School, drawing from Marx, made several early arguments regarding the effects of technology on the imitative processes of memesis, and, in the early 20th century decried the power of what one its members, Theodor Adorno (1991), called the culture industry. Adorno (1991), and his peers, witnessing the rise of totalitarian states, the continued expansion of capital, and the ways in which new communications technologies created the possibility of mass consensus and promoted the disciplining of labor, vehemently critiqued the capture of peoples' imagination through the power of imitative technologies. Adorno (1991) writes, "[the] imagination is replaced by a mechanically relentless control mechanism which determines whether the latest imago to be distributed really represents and exact, accurate and reliable reflection of the relevant item of reality" (p. 55). In this passage, Adorno (1991) posits that there exists something real that can hardly be apprehended through images that are mechanistically produced and unevenly distributed. However, he makes, perhaps, an even more sinister claim, arguing that the culture industry is a control mechanism that effectively replaces the imagination, the ability for us to formulate images of our own making.

Postructuralist thinkers continued this line of argument suggesting that memesis takes as its beginning a fixed meaning, an array of signs that are immutable, that are essential, that are real, and obscures them in their proclivity for reproduction. Baudrillard (1991), for instance, explains this phenomena as the production of the hyperreal, images that only refer to other images ad infinitum, where the original referent is lost amidst the trafficking of representations all in relationship to each other, but not in any relation to any actual thing, event, or person. He exemplifies the hyperreal using the televised representation of the first Gulf War to show the distance between the actual suffering of war, the experience of those on the ground, and the array of images that represent what is real through mass media. Here the hyperreal, for Baudrillard (1991), not only works to

colonize the imagination but also works to anesthetize the audience's moral sensibilities. Several scholars, who suggest that the idea of an originary reality as the basis for image production obscures the constructedness of 'reality' in the first place, however, have critiqued Baudrillard's (1991) deeply pessimistic stance along with the postmodernist insistence on the obfuscation of the real made possible through the mass production and circulation of the image.

Martin Jay (1998), for instance, argues that these sorts of philosophical musings on an originary fixed meaning that can be located in the image are but language games that obscure the continuously changing meanings of signs as they are deployed and received (See also Hall, 1992 on the trouble with encoding and decoding). This critique places the Marxist inspired writings of the postmodernists *as* ideology, and by introducing the notion of reception, alternative readings and contestation, reconstitutes an agentic subject capable of reading and even making images that deviate from a proscribed set of meanings, of working within an as yet unrealized hegemonic field rather than being overtaken by false consciousness. We can, perhaps, take this line of argumentation to its outer limit and surmise that the past that meets the future in the image is a past that is indeterminable, one that can be reformulated and repositioned in several different narrative trajectories. In other words, 'the real' is always subject to reformulation. However, this outer limit, where meaning regarding the past, reality and so on, are constantly being renegotiated, is unsatisfactory as it leaves a certain doubt regarding the contingency of meanings and the role of significations that remain and circulate in discourse); most broadly defined to include all the signs, linguistic, visual, and so on, as they come to acquire particular meanings (Hall, 1992).

More recently Rey Chow (2012) suggests that the arguments put forth by the Marxist inspired theorists of the mid-20th century and rearticulated by scholars since regarding representational technologies and their capacities to create disjunctures in reality, that, in effect, create a kind of Marxian false consciousness, miss something important about the nature of mimesis. Chow (2012) suggests that rather focusing on the real of the image, what she calls "static representations of (past) plentitude," that memesis should be conceptualized as the sign that remains when historical loss is

represented, whether knowingly or unknowingly. Here Chow (2012) puts forth a theory of imitation that at once confronts how power determines the production of the image in the moment it's produced, and how the signs that are utilized to create the image are remainders of power relations of the past. From Chow's (2012) standpoint it seems that the mimetic function is, rather than the production of images from a fixed reality, the possibility to generate new images from existing culturally and historically saturated signs, signs that travel and inspire the individual and collective imagination rather than, as Adorno (1991) suggested above, mechanistically derail it. By explicating a theory of remainders, Chow (2012) also forces us to reexamine the idea that notions of the real and therefore ideologies regarding the past, are ultimately mutable or are simply language games. By suggesting a sign that remains, Chow (2012) opens up the possibility to reexamine the image in the broader context of visuality that recognizes contingency, the reproduction of power relations, and the power of the image to create what some have called communities of sense (Ranciere et al., 2010).

Let us return, for a moment, to my earlier discussion of Rouch's *Les maîtres fous* to make more tangible what Ray Chow is arguing. Recall that the film's subject, as he enacts the spirit of colonialism to perform sacrifice, creates an image that doesn't point to a fixed notion of the real, of the colonial experience, but rather to a visually graspable, even grotesque array of signs, that point to historical loss and the depravity of inequality. These signs, deployed in performance, and seemingly fixed in Rouch's image capture, travel, and accrue new meanings or values that are not based solely on the original enactment of colonial authority and the terror that ensues but rather hinge on the power relations of representing that loss. Here, the sign that remains is that of colonialism, whether the original actor knew he was enacting this sign or not, and whether Rouch recognized his capture of the sign implicated him in its continuing salience.

It is at this juncture where we must return to the discussion regarding the relationship between the image, in its initial 'performance, 'its subsequent circulation, and its capacity to shape our individual and collective imaginations. Appadurai (1999) argues that the imagination is the social fact of our contemporary period. As a result of an uptick in global migration and a barrage of media circulations of images of social life

elsewhere, these circulations, rather than colonize the imagination, create a greater propensity to imagine, or put together possible combinations of past and future, to construct new social lives, social worlds, and social possibilities (and limits) than there ever has been in the past.   This individual and collective rumination of the image, rather than being fully disciplined or entirely emancipatory, Appadurai (1999) suggests, creates a space for contestation of existing meanings to enact possible futures. Images in their circulations, through a now globally distended digital public sphere are, thus, staging grounds for ideological battles, spaces where existing meanings, what we could call *stagings of the real*, are contested, reformulated and tested again. The propensity to imagine has always existed, argues Appadurai (1996,1999). However, in the past, social imaginations were heavily influenced by charismatic leaders, great artists, shamans, priests: the designated and deigned cultural producers that fashioned the images by which the people could imagine social worlds, worlds that included demons, gods, and angels, all of whom could act and have agency. Appadurai (1999) argues that what makes the possibility of the imagination unique in our present moment is that it has been unshackled from its historical constraints and is now accessible to the ordinary (wo)man. Put simply, the capacity to imagine has been met with a newfound capacity to produce images that simultaneously reflect several horizons of possibility.

The advent of small frame capture technology and digital circulation on the internet, for instance, creates a new space where the flood of images that were once controlled by corporate interests, governments, and so on, now allow for a greater participation in the production of images. Yet, these mass circulations produced by individuals are not divorced from the larger public or publics. Here, embedded in the broader visual field, the sign that remains, located in the image, reveals itself as central to defining the grounds for contestation. In the case of *Le Maître Fous*, the sign that remains is colonialism. I argue that in the hip hop inflected images that my youthful interlocutors' produce, the sign that remains is one that indexes development, an elitist postcolonial discourse that continues to fashion images of utopia based on an aesthetic of European modernity, a discourse that seeks to shape postcolonies in the image of the west.

Here, it would do well to return to the central context of this discussion, the production of images by displaced or migrant youth in contemporary Delhi. Ananya Roy's (2011) work on the image in relationship to the discourse of development in urbanizing Asia offers an important entry point. Roy (2011) situates her discussion of Benjamin's notion of the image as a 'dialectics of a standstill' to discuss the mutations of the development discourse in Asia as it seeks to find new spaces of possibility. Specifically, she elucidates the millennial angst that has emerged as a result of the incomplete or failed processes of modernization and development in East and South Asian megacities, indubitably visualized in statistical enumerations, the production of categorizable populations and the envisioning of space from above through processes of planning, coding, and constructing the city.   She suggests that capitalism, in its historical adventures, has always required an image of a primal past to create its value and produce its futures, its utopias, so as to argue that what is to come will be distinct from what came before. She coins the term millennial utopias to point to the spaces where capital seeks to extend itself amidst the ruins and failures of its previous exploits and the kinds of images that are necessary to recover these new sites of entrepreneurial possibility for capital's expansion. These visualizations of space and place, she argues, are fashioned in the development discourse as well as in popular discourse, as sites of the past that share one common visual thread whether they are located in developing urban contexts or in the rural countryside of postcolonial nation-states – they are all images of the ruins or failures of capitals previous adventures that fetishize either the ingenuity of those who live amongst those ruins or the fecundity of the ruins themselves. These images of the primal past as creative or fecund poverty, she argues, provides the kernel for a reformulation of capital's futures, the imagery necessary to consecrate top-down development projects.

Roy's (2011) exemplars, the images she utilizes to further her argument, however, are all fashioned 'from above.' That is, in all the images she chooses to engage with as exemplars of the kind if envisioning process of creative and fecund poverty are the visualizations made available through the imagination of elite cultural producers. A quick perusal of the images she shares with us to make her argument, whether the 'empty' images of built environments (in her description of the photographer Gill's

artistic renderings of incomplete office and residential towers that signal failed development in East Asia), those populated by popular cultures global heroes (as evidenced by the photos of Bono, the global rock star extraordinaire, as he carries his Luis Vuitton bag into the African savannah), or the artistic reproductions of *juggad*[6] by emerging Indian artists, create a vision of a millennial utopia that evacuates the subject. That is, the future that is promised in these images, one could argue, is one where there is no remainder of the social 'other,' save for their artifacts or the spaces they used or could have occupied.

By utilizing the elite imaginings of professional artists, or corporate designers to make her point, Roy (2011) no doubt reveals the ways in which capital creates its utopias not simply by imagining time in the future tense but by constantly seeking new spatial frontiers for colonization, a critical point in the context of this monograph if we consider that part of the appeal of hip hop, as I mentioned in the introduction and deepen in later discussions, is to produce a marketable aesthetic of otherwise undesirable urban space, the ghetto, the slum, and so on. However, Roy (2011), in choosing these particular images to make her argument for capital's development discourse, reduce the very spaces that the images index to a haunting, where the territories of capital's possibility can only be populated by ghosts. What if, however, those who are subject to development's master narrative, those "ontological positions that are absorbed into its master plan", are actually producing images of their own (Roy, 2011:18)? What sorts of images would they fashion and how might they simultaneously offer a dizzying contradiction, interruption and evocative complement to the master narrative of development?

Benjamin offers a final instructive to thinking through how the image posits the relationship between the sign that remains of the past and its harkening of an imagined future (See Pensky, 2004; Buck-Morss, 1989 for discussions on Benjamin's dialectics of standstill). Benjamin, in his discussion of Paris in the early 20th century, offers a provocative musing regarding the nature of the image. He notes, "the dialectic image emerges suddenly..,what has been is to be held fast"(in Roy, 2010:38). Here Benjamin

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[6] A Hindi term that refers to the creative bricolage that under-resourced communities engage in to create built environments.

offers a reading of the image that places its emergence between imagined futures and what 'has been.' Thus, the image, what can be seen in photographs, films, videos, or even denoted in text, becomes a proxy for the social imagination as it seeks to suture the past with the future. For the youth in my study the construction of visible images was central to their self-fashioning processes within the changing contours of the city they lived in. The image became the means to map their bodies into social space, whether the space was denotatively available in the image or not, a point I will return to in the next section when I discuss the emergence of the *selfie*, or self-produced image that is ostensibly made for Facebook or other social media sites. The past and its dialectic relationship with the future in the images that these youth produced, however, were not visually constructed in the past of their respective stories of displacement or even in Delhi's or India's colonial past, whether urban or otherwise. Rather, it was, through hip hop's diasporic aesthetics, constructed through the visual icons that evoke the west's own failed urban utopias, its racial segregation, inequality, violence, inequality, and hip hop's cultural forms, as a cultural response to those failings. In other words, hip hop's simultaneous claims to a failed modernity and a quintessentially urban utopia from below became the opportune dialectic by which to construct their versions of themselves and their city.

Selfies and Hip Hop: Fashioning Utopias

The four of us walked on side of a large road on the way to Sunil's house, tucked in the edges of a makeshift set of structures on the edges of Humayunpur. The young Nigerian woman, Praise, was visibly nervous as she had rarely ventured out of Khirki and had never, in her year and half in Delhi, been out of the familiar surroundings of Khirki without the presence of her Nigerian friends. She, at my behest, had come to record a track in Sunil's makeshift studio located in the back of his father's small Shaivite shrine. After she had phoned me several times requesting me to help her record her music I finally acquiesced and asked several budding music producers in the Delhi hip hop scene, all of whom were inspired by the studio that Singh set up, to acquire equipment and start recording their and their friends' music. Sunil was particularly receptive to my request as

we had been working together closely, along with some members of his crew in Humanyunpur, to make a short film on the business of hip hop in Delhi, and had grown close as a result. He was also receptive because the Nigerian woman wanted to record her own Christian inspired songs with hip hop beats to sell back in Lagos and Sunil, a Nepali Hindu, had recently converted to Christianity so that he could convince his girlfriends' parents from Assam of his sincerity regarding his intentions with their daughter.

Along with the three of us, as we walked through the small courtyard and into Sunil's house, was a 14 year old Nepali B-boyer named Kama. I had not seen him or his crew (who resided in Khirki) in a few months and we greeted each other with enthusiasm when we saw each other, exchanging a hip hop styled 'pound' and a half hug. He laughed "Kya Kaiese hain, bada bhai? (how are you big brother?)" I looked him up and down. He looked taller since I had last seen him. His t-shirt, under a short vest, was tattered at the sleeves. He wore *chappals* on his feet and a pair of shorts even though the weather was getting chilly. We talked about the changing weather, about getting sick when it gets cold and then he said, and then he said, " Aap mera apne Facebook photos dekhne?" (Have you seen my Facebook photos?). We talked for a while about the images he wanted me to look at, whether he was practicing his B-boying or not and if he was going to be participating in any of the B-boy competitions that were coming up. Before we parted he reminded me to make sure I took a look at the pictures of his 'flare moves' that one of his friends took of him in front of one of the many graffiti pieces scattered in the lanes and larger arteries around Delhi. His insistence that I check out his pictures on Facebook in those instances of greeting and parting, drives home the centrality of image making and circulation in the lives of the youth in my study, the ways in which they harnessed hip hop to create images of themselves to circulate amongst their friends and beyond, and the importance of Facebook and other social networking sites as a spatial repository for these traces of their movements, engagements, and relationships.

The importance of image production and circulation in their lives, particularly images that refer to the self, however, isn't unique. Over the last few months, during the time that this chapter was conceived and written, there has been much buzz on the

internet around *selfies*, self-portraits taken on a cell phone camera that have a fixed focal length measured in the length of ones arm. The meme, 'selfie' and its referent, the millions of self-portraits that float in cyberspace and that has garnered media attention for its now ubiquitous presence on social networking sites, indexes and indeed accrues its value, much like any of the mass produced and circulated images before it, on the indexical quality of the photographic image. Indexicality, a term formulated by Charles Pierce that gestures to the way signs connect the referent to a phenomenon. As Pinney (2008) notes, "just as smoke indexes fire so photography indexes the play of light on objects in front of the camera's lens." In other words, the photo is a sign, what some have called a trace to stress the materiality of the relationship between the celluloid and chemicals utilized in analog photography, of a particular time/place/subject (Sontag, 1977). In the digital age, while there is no material component to the fabrication of the indexical representation, what does remain is the image that congeals an event, a body, an object, in perpetuity and perpetuates the notion of an objective reality that can be captured and utilized as evidence of what was and proposes, as Benjamin rightly suggests, what could be. Here the sign that remains is laminated onto the very bodies of the migrants in front of the lens as they pose in hyper-masculinized hip hop poses, regaled in hip hop paraphernalia. This sign that remains of hip hop's origin story, one that harkens to the failed promises of western cities, is also a sign of the future, a possibility that hip hop provides for a renewal created in the aesthetic projects of the displaced. Here the male body, indexed by the selfie, becomes central to the discourse of development as a space for reformulation, remaking, a space to construct utopias or to formulate crises.

The selfie, a digital age term that more broadly refers to the self-portrait, takes what was once a close quartered rumination on the humanness of the elite subject, the famed painter, the scion of a royal family, and reclaims it as a practice for the masses. This reclamation of this aspect of what Mirzoeff (2011) calls the right to look, the efforts of the historically marginalized to make themselves visible through various strategies, no doubt has its historical antecedent prior to the advent of the digital camera. The advent of inexpensive photographic technology over the last 100 years has made it possible for the

expanding middle classes and the aspiring working classes in Europe and the U.S. as well as the emergent postcolonial bourgeoisie to experiment with constructing images of themselves as modern subjects. However, in our contemporary moment the viral dissemination of technologies of capture that allows, for instance, the youth in my study to engage in the practice of self-portraiture and share the virtually instantaneous results of this practice through internet based social networks, raises new questions regarding the role of self-generated and self-circulated image production in our contemporary world. While anthropological work has focused on how image production in the history of the discipline and in more popular culture renderings work to reify the difference of the cultural other (Minh-ha, 1989; Renov, 1993), several anthropologists of the visual have argued for a closer attention to the image making projects of those who have historically been subject to the ruthless needs of capital and the cultural diffusion it propagates. These projects, by and large, focus on indigenous media makers to imagine the parallax effect that ensues with the 'native' is behind the camera rather than subject to it (Ginsburg, 2009).

The selfies the male youth in my study created, however, are neither the careful renderings of professional indigenous media makers nor bear resemblance to the portraits of the primitive Other taken by anthropologists, photographers, and so on. Rather, they are the self-imaging work of migrant youth as they imagine themselves in the urban world they have found themselves in. These selfies occupy the space/time of Facebook, Instagram, and other social networking sites, moving and creating conversations within the web of networks that these youth belong to and beyond both in virtual space, and, as Kama and my conversation above attest to, in terrestrial space. It is worth noting here that I had never planned on doing any sort of social media or digital analysis as part of my fieldwork but, without much thought or deliberation on the ethical or practical challenges of constructing Facebook relations in the field, by becoming friends with most of the youth in my study on Facebook their images began to colonize my Facebook feed, forcing me to take a closer look at what it was that these young people were producing and circulating of themselves to others. Indeed, given the collapsed distance between my interactions with participants in cyberspace and in the streets of Delhi, it seems that

any anthropological venture in our present historical moment, particularly one that focused on youth cannot help but become inundated in the webs of significance that internet based social media produces. These virtual webs of significance are constructed on the mimetic performances, the eruptions of images of those who seek to create personas that can live successful lives in the virtual that, in turn, lead to success in the terrestrial worlds they inhabit. They are, in effect, the auto-ethnographic overtures of cyborg subjects who seek audiences, who revel in casting their sameness and difference simultaneously at their known an unknown audiences.

The selfies that I saw emerge on my feed daily could be read as public meditations on the self, as the visual evidences of the kind of experimentation in selfhood the youth in my study where taking on and making visible for further collective exploration of what it means to be alive in 21st century Delhi. Clothing, posture, facial expression, and any other adornments (tattoos, caps, earrings, and so on) put forward the embodied self as both the context and the subject of the image. In these images, more often than not, the gaze of the subject or object of the photo is focused on the lens of the camera, producing the effect of a self- conscious subject looking back at her audience a capture that reflects the postmodern moment where the audience and the subject are already assumed to co-exist in collapsed time/space, where the audience and subject could be one and the same.

The selfies that the migrant youth in the hip hop scene shared several other characteristics in common in addition to the particular and peculiar fixed gaze of the subject as he looks at his unknown audience from the past. First, these images were highly stylized, some utilizing post-production effects or built in effects found either in the cellular camera or in the free downloadable software that comes with an account on some social media sites, or *photogenia* in Barthes's terminology, to highlight a contrast in color or in light (1961, 1977). Second, the male bodies that self-featured in these images all performed circulating notions of a hip hop coded American Black masculinity to construct their images. Young Somali, Nepali, Northeastern, Afghani and Nigerian men wore sunglasses, baseball 'snapbacks,' colorful print t-shirts, in their photos. They all grimaced or wore a straight-faced expression, confrontationally 'grillin' the voyeur

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behind the camera lens, often themselves. Hip hop's version of cool, bordering on nihilistic masculinity, bristle in these images and yet it would be difficult to claim that the imagination of these youth had been colonized by the diffusion of hip hop's popular imagery of male bravado. Rather, I suggest hip hop's popular imagery allowed the young men to mobilize the signs that remain of hip hop's urban past to claim a confident, even aggressive visibility in Delhi, even claim Delhi as their own.

This claiming of Delhi's spaces or places is evident in the ways in which all the participants in my study would post photos of themselves in full hip hop regalia and, in the case of the B-boys, in the middle of a power or flair move, where enough of the background, the context of the shot, would become visible. These shots, taken by their friends passing around a cell phone, revealed particular choices of backdrops common across the youth in my study. Delhi's parks and archeologically relevant sites became a favorite space to make selfies as were sites where Delhi's graffiti artists had recently put up a new piece. Clubs and social gatherings were also typical spaces where selfies were produced, where the colored lights of the night time gathering coupled with the moving limbs of others in the club created a disorienting effect of hypermodernity made visible in its cacophonous fragmentation. The outdoor courtyards of the shopping mall also became a site where many youth who lived in Khirki chose to make images of themselves in situ. In addition to these outdoor spaces the youth all shared an interest in producing selfies in interior spaces where recording technology was displayed in the background. Microphones, keyboards, turntables, mixing devices, even computers, became the favored backdrops of several of my participants. This relationship between the stylized male body and the very conscious choice of backdrops, when made available, reveals development figured on the bodies of those who live in the settlement communities that are otherwise invisible in the city's discourse of change. Here the migrant male body becomes the site for the past and the future, the site where development takes hold, where utopias are produced. This becomes more poignant if we consider that in their choices of photo locations there is a studious avoidance to depict the spatial communities where they live as a suitable backdrop. This point is one I will

return to in just a moment, when I discuss how this avoidance became a point of conversation when I began to shoot music videos for some of the youth.

First, however, it is important to note that the ways in which these images claimed Delhi and claimed the possibility for participation diverged along ethnic lines. These divergences couldn't easily be read solely in the images themselves. The images, after all, all shared the common feature of showing bodies reworked in hip hop's aesthetics and, revealed, when the backdrop became visible, similar contexts for their production. However, as these images made their way to Facebook, often they had captions. Moreover, the images that the youth took of themselves and posted onto Facebook for others to see accrued comments below from their friends. Barthes (1977) in his work on the photo in mass media circulations argues that simulacra require text to arrive at certain readings and that the mass media has utilized the caption to do just that, provide particular suggestions by which audiences can read the images provided. The captions and the comments posted on Facebook certainly created a connotative field for interpreting the photo, however, because of Facebook's iterative quality, the comments did not close the reading of the images but rather, invited further articulations of possible meanings as well as the opportunity to contest meanings articulated. Finally, these images were nestled in a series of other images and texts that the youth posted, images and texts that gave a clear indication of how they created their relationship to hip hop and utilized hip hop to forge their relationship to Delhi, relationships which diverged based on ethnicity.

The selfies and portraits of the Somali crew from Khirki, for instance, were embedded within their other posts on Facebook that directly referenced contemporary American hip hop or issues in Somalia. Tucked between a post of a video of either a mainstream or underground hip hop star, followed by a story on Somalia, an image depicting Somalia, or an exegesis regarding a representation of Somalia, these young men's selfies and portraits would emerge with captions or comments that pointed to their status as Somali refugees in Delhi. One of Hanif's selfies, for instance, revealed him in the back of a car with a New York Yankees cap with a caption that read "desi nigga." Desi is a term utilized in South Asia and amongst its diaspora to signal belonging to

South Asia and Nigga, a word that is the reappropriation of the term nigger in the Black Atlantic that is utilized in hip hop to signal solidarity, connection, a shared experience of racialized oppression (Anthony Neale, 2013). The two terms, taken together, pose an important reflection on what it means to be an African who has grown up in India, and forms a formidable claim to the city and to the country. Here Hanif, by casting himself as Desi and a Nigga underneath the image of him looking into the camera with his red and black Yankees hat cocked to the side, resists the kinds of racialized exclusions that he faces as a Somali in Delhi by making his experiences of difference central to his image making project that seeks to claim Delhi as his own. Importantly, his resistance to exclusion is centered on claiming a global Black subjectivity vis-à-vis hip hop while simultaneously claiming to be of India. The comments below the photo and the caption from a diverse set of friends in English, Somali, and Hindi, further reflect the complicated subjectivities that the Somali youth have to negotiate in Delhi and the ways in which his diverse friends read these negotiations. The future of Delhi, in these readings of Hanif's caption and photo located in the commentary, show the ways in which contact creates for important new imaginings of the future, constructed on visual tokens of the past. His Somali friends, in English and in Somali, for instance, highlight the claim to Black solidarity in their comments that repeat nigga while his Hindi speaking friends (Nepalis, Northeasterners, and so on) highlight that Desi Nigga is a perfect term for who he is, an African who is also Desi.

Delhi, in this case, becomes the site for the production of new ontological possibilities made visible in the aesthetic renderings of the youth in the city. Interestingly, Facebook also allows for an ongoing discussion that the meanings of certain pictures read with and against captions and other textual remnants not only through the possibility to comment on the image itself but the possibility to text chat or video conference. While working on this chapter in my home in Delhi I had my Facebook page open. Whenever I did this, members of the three distinct crews I spend time with often reach out to chat with me. Hanif, when I was writing this section, reached out to ask me for some advice concerning a hip hop music track he was producing with another MC in Khirki, a migrant from Uttar Pradesh. I took the

opportunity to ask him in our text chat about the Desi Nigga caption in relation to the picture he had posted a few weeks prior.   He said, " yeah man, I use desi nigga because all my Indian friends do call me desi nigga lol."   I said, "that's crazy." He said, "yeah, but still I liked it, lol." The interpenetration between speaking subjects, between Hanif and his 'Indian' friends and between Hanif and I on Facebook, reveals the ways in which language that signals new ontological possibilities gets produced and taken up by subjects in ways which reveal a simultaneous othering and inclusion. When these linguistic terms arise and are attached to the images of the body, this linguistic play reveals the centrality of race in the lives of Africans in Delhi and the ways in which the images produced work as a sign of affirmation and resistance.

The primarily Nepali and Northeastern crews, however, approached their relationship to hip hop in markedly different ways. The captions under their selfie images, rather than highlighting their connection to a homeland or articulating a connection to global Blackness vis-à-vis hip hop, focused on utilizing hip hop's aesthetics to articulate and negotiate their relationships to friends, those in their circles. Indeed, with the Nepali and the Northeastern crew members my initial forays in engaging them around their narratives of migration and their experience of difference in Delhi, in contrast to the African migrants, were initially met with stone faced silence. Most of them said, when I asked them where they were from, replied that they were from Delhi several times before they were open to discuss their or their parent's migration stories. Race and ethnicity, also, were not deliberately or openly discussed, either in the captions or in the comments on their Facebook pages, or in the regular conversations I had with them about their experiences in Delhi. Only after a prolonged connection with them did I begin to hear their stories of racial exclusion in the city, and more often than not, these stories were told to me when I had an opportunity to talk with crew members one-on-one. The images and the surrounds in which they were embedded on Facebook, however, did reveal how hip hop worked to formulate the ways in which they constructed their ideas of aesthetic citizenship within a context of already existing discourses of visual difference. For instance, many of the postings of the young Nepali and Northeastern youth, in between uploads of their own often dramatic selfies, focused on images depicting B-boys

and B-boying events in Korea, Japan, and China. Moreover, the Nepali and Northeastern youth, who are East Asian in appearance, regularly posted up images of Japanese animations and other popular aesthetic products produced in East Asia.

On one occasion a Nepalese B-boy who had just returned from his ancestral village in the mountains of Nepal showed me, on his phone, images of his family's farm in Nepal, followed by images of Japanese animated young women. These images, eventually, made it up to his Facebook page and received affirming comments, "looking good, beautiful", etc.; rather than commentary that further articulated the relationship between Nepal or Nepali speakers and Delhi. Another distinctive feature of the Northeastern and Nepali youth's Facebook textual posts attached to photos was that there was almost always an emotive context, where romantic love had been lost or unrequited, where friendship is troubled or conflicted, or where someone is simply feeling down.   In one such post, a Nepali B-boyer posted about his love for his mother in English along with a selfie where he is, perhaps ironically, posing hard, his face expressionless as he stares into the camera. The comments below the image are in emoticons, little hearts that signal appreciation for his outpouring. This was in stark contrast to the Somali crew who didn't post anything regarding lost love or for that matter love, nor really engaging in obviously emotive gestures on Facebook accept to 'big up' their crew. The Nepali and Northeastern youths' obvious departure from the cool veneer that bell hooks (1984) laments in her writings on Black masculinity, is a central feature to the textual surrounds of the images that belie their visually available memetic performance of Black male bodies recovered vis-à-vis hip hop.

While writing this section I was also hailed on Facebook by a B-boy named Niraj from the Nepali/Northeastern crew in Humayunpur who asked me to 'like' an image he had posted about a week back, a well-crafted selfie obviously taken with a better quality camera by a friend of his. In this image, Niraj is posing in a café. He wears a plaid button up shirt with only the top button fastened, an ode to a North American Cholo style[7] whether he knows it or not. The centrality of likes, and the economy of liking

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[7] Cholo is a term that emerged in the Spanish colonial system to refer to mixed blood creoles. Cholo, in the twentieth century, was reappropriated by Mexican Americans to describe their ethnic subcultural world.

images and accruing comments, particularly ones that affirmed the quality of the image, on Facebook became important during my time amongst migrant youth in Delhi's hip hop scene. The like button on Facebook, or ReverbNation for that matter, where one could upload musical tracks, became an economy of possibility that the youth in the hip hop scene in Delhi had all subscribed to wholeheartedly, although they did not all actively petition for likes on their pages, at least from me. Niraj's recognition of the value of the image in the social milieu of Facebook reflects how participants in the hip hop scene from marginalized backgrounds recognized the broader value of the image in the contemporary moment, the recognition that the image at once represents social, economic, and political capital in its representative power.

If we return, briefly, to the development images that Roy (2011) poses as the grounds for millennial utopias, the claiming of spaces undone by the previous adventures of capital that had still, despite it all, managed to persevere, then the question that now arises is where do these images, these selfies of migrants, refugees, diasporas, and several other travelling kinds from below, position themselves within the project of a world class Delhi? Are these vibrant images of migrant, refugee, and transnational bodies counternarratives to Delhi's project of development, do these youth's claim to visibility signal a push against the kinds of top-down development narratives that seek to, as Roy (2011) absorb and assimilate "different ontologies? Or, are these images performed and cast in ways that are ripe for absorption, ripe for casting Delhi as a node in global capital's expansion, a means to caste the city as suitable multicultural for its claims to world class status (Ong, 2011;Sassen, 2002)?

In the chapters ahead I explore how these youths' image making processes that reveal emergent or futuristic ontologies in Delhi borne on the past of the western cities, are utilized by several different actors to promote utopic possibilities for Delhi and, in some cases, for all of India. These utopias, or narratives of possibility, rely on the flexibility of the aesthetic renderings of themselves and of the city that these youth produce and on the power of the alternate modernity that they convey. However, these narratives, because they fixate on casting Delhi's potential future within the Indian nation state, cannot help but exclude the story of those that are visibly outsiders or who don't

have claims to the national geography of India. Here the African refugees, migrants, and transnationals, regardless of language proficiency or nationality, as I will show, are excluded in projects of value that seek to caste Delhi's future utilizing images from Delhi's underground hip hop scene. My interest in making what I call critical hip hop cinema with the Somali crew arose as a result of this realization of these exclusions as well as a result of witnessing the kind of violence rejection of difference that these young men faced in Khirki. The desire to collaborate in visual knowledge production also arose, in part, because of my own deeply held beliefs that the kinds of self and placing making work that these youth were doing with hip hop opened the door to more critical discussions regarding their personal futures and their embodied pasts. That is, as an educator and hip hop enthusiast I felt beholden to not simply studying these youths' deployment of hip hop's forms but to creating a shared space by which hip hop could provide the platform for critical teaching and learning.

Conclusion – Collaborative Image Making
The morning of the day we decided to shoot Sunil and Suraj's music video we were all online chatting about where to meet and to shoot. I was interested in shooting the video in Humanyunpur as I wanted to capture the street scenes where Sunil lived, the rich diversity of the colony and the breadth of visual culture as it created juxtapositions of graffiti pieces next to poster art that depicted larger than life Aedes Eygpti mosquitoes with warnings about Dengue fever written in Devanagari and English below them. Sunil and Suraj, however, had other ideas. They both wanted to go to Haus Khas Village, an urban village in South Delhi that has been taken over by a different species of urban gentrification in Delhi, one that, rather than exemplifying the mall as the new space for upward social mobility, created a walking urban oasis for Delhi's young and wealthy out of an ancient village, a space filled with boutiques, chic restaurants and cafes. This village had one other additional draw to it in that it lies adjacent to Deer Park and the Haus Khas ruins, a space where Delhi's past offered a quaint backdrop to their futuristic tattooed bodies as they B-boyed and rapped into the camera. Up till that moment I had simply watched and listened to what my youthful interlocutors' shared with me.   I, in

effect, played out the time worn methodology of participant observation. However, in that moment I decided to engage, to discuss why they chose one space over another for their videos, what they hoped to accomplish in certain depictions over others, and so on. What followed was a series of conversations with several different youth around the relationship between making videos that would garner 'likes' on social media networks and the translation of these likes into paid opportunities in the near future. One MC argued that if he could just turn out videos once or twice a month that got a lot of attention then he could get two or three performance gigs a month that would pay him 15-20,000 rupees in total. I responded by asking him how the focus on making a surplus of videos that would garner 'likes' would impact his artistic practice.

The decision to engage in these sorts of conversations marked the beginning of a deeper engagement with the young men in my study around their relationship with hip hop and with the image making projects they undertook under its aesthetic strictures, conversations which culminated in the critical filmic interventions that I developed with the Somali crew from Khirki and with the mostly Nepali and Northeastern crew from Humayunpur. These films arose as a result of what the youth in each crew were most interested in discussing when discussing hip hop. For the youth in the Somali crew, through our discussions about hip hop, about hip hop's history, and about their own historical trajectories that brought them to Delhi, race was the most important issue that they wished to explore. For the Nepali and Northeastern crew, their battles to earn a living and their interest in earning a living through their hip hop lifestyles, were central to the kinds of stories they wished to tell.

The privilege to engage with putatively subaltern subjects creates a responsibility for anthropologists to constitute our projects in ways that not only refrain from producing harm or that seek to unveil the particular conditions of impossibility that our subjects face in their everyday lives however fraught the project of recovery is with issues of representational egress, but potentially offer something of lasting value to those whom we seek to work with. While these offerings certainly do not have to be a central thematic in the write up, it is clear that these sorts intersubjective deepenings that often occur in the backstage of what we perceive as our ethnographic engagement, need to be

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given privilege of place as they importantly reveal the sorts of political impossibilities, partial recoveries, and erratic disjunctures that occur during the process of fieldwork (Jackson, 2010).   The endeavor to dream up some manner of shared knowledge production is but a species of this apriori desire to engage with our participants more ethically and to, by directly engaging, reveal more of the backstage of anthropological work that, at the very least, puts the intentions, biases, and limits of the anthropologist in the foreground. The programmatic decision to make engagement a central thematic in ones anthropological project, however, becomes particularly tricky as the intentions of the anthropologist, in her efforts to create with and for their participants, are not always borne out in the process or in the products that are result of collaborative works and are often met with criticism in the academic world for their, for lack of a better term, intellectual and political naivety (See Navajo Eyes debate for example, Ruby, 2005).

Nevertheless, despite the risks, in my work I envisioned my contribution to the youthful community of practitioners in Delhi's hip hop scene, particularly the migrants in my study, both explicitly and implicitly, through and with my camera. Drawing from and reformulating Jean Rouch's (Henley, 2009) notion of a filmic shared anthropology, I argue that in contemporary Delhi film offered the opportunity to fashion the kind of Brechtian defamiliarization, the reversal of the other and self, that Cicarello-Maher (2006) suggests has been infused in hip hop's political program since its inception. The sort of explicitly critical pedagogical work that I undertook with my participants rearticulates both, although constituted on different axes, hip hop's and anthropology's quintessentially 20th century programs of engagement and critical knowledge production. Yet, undoubtedly, these filmic endeavors or the music recording sessions in Singh's studio for that matter, also create new challenges in terms of representation. Indeed, the very notion of collaboration begs the question regarding whom or what is inadvertently made excluded or made invisible in the process of constituting a collaborative venture. Moreover, the anthropologist, doubling as a cultural producer, also has the complicated task of negotiating a split positionality and must also be ready to critique the very grounds of contact that she has created. In the next chapter I discuss how my interest in and challenges with creating explicitly pedagogical hip hop engagements, in fact,

mirrored the efforts of several diasporic Indians and Europeans involved in India's hip hop scene who saw themselves as ambassadors of hip hop to India and desired to help make what they considered a distinctive Indian hip hop scene visible. Here the stakes of envisioning an Indian hip hop scene clashed directly with the more localized notion of a Delhi hip hop scene which included migrant ontologies that uneasily pushed against the notion of a simple 'Indian' national imaginary. Moreover, the temptation for the Indian diaspora to indulge in an ideology that either simplified class politics to a vulgar Marxian binary or that universalized hip hop's message to the point where it no longer had political valence created friction within Delhi's hip hop scene that Singh and I navigated, as diasporic researchers and hip hop doyens, on different frequencies of sincerity.

"Travel suggests, at least, profane activity, following public routes and beaten tracks. How do different populations, classes and genders travel? What kinds of knowledges, stories, and theories do they produce? A crucial research agenda opens up" (Clifford, 1996:2).

"The desire to acquire new skills and knowledge is inextricably linked to who we want to be as people" (Hull and Katz, 2006:43).

"Belonging somewhere has an essential relationship to involvement"(Heidegger, 1987:420).

It's a Sunday. I am waiting on the corner of the main road in front of Nehru Place[8], the veritable technology market mecca of Delhi where white market goods compete with grey market stalls that line the edges of the central plaza in the interior courtyard delineated by commercial and office buildings of various sizes, shapes, and states of disrepair. I had lost my phone the day prior so had to rely on the word of a potential informant, a young Indian man named Salim who had emigrated to Switzerland as a child and had returned to Delhi a few years prior and gained some fame as an aerosol artist in the city, that he would meet me that morning on a pre-designated corner in the market. He had mentioned, when I was first introduced to him the night before in his home close to Khirki, that he wanted to scout for walls to do a new piece and was open to speaking me for a bit about the history of hip hop in Delhi and my more pressing interest regarding hip hop's infiltration into Delhi's working class migrant enclaves if I was willing to join him on his scouting mission. After waiting for over a half an hour on the corner, I became restless. The market was quiet on this particular Sunday morning, most of the shops were shuttered and an uncharacteristic hush covered its normally cacophonous plazas.

I was about to give up and walk back to the small apartment where I was staying close by when a small beat up van came tearing around the corner with Salim's head

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[8] Nehru Place became an important destination for me during my time in Delhi as it was the place where one could make, for instance, hip hop 'mixtapes' in mass quantities for cheap prices, or buy the necessary equipment that I left behind in the U.S. for video production. While I will not go into the techno-material relationship between hip hop and copy culture in Delhi in this monograph it is worth noting that the relationship between technology and cultural production in the 21st century makes places like Nehru Place central in the mapping of a changing youth culture in the city.

poking out of the window. I quickly jumped in and, as a German hip hop track played on the makeshift stereo system in his vehicle, we drove to find parking and then headed to a coffee shop on the top floor of a building inside Nehru Place, one of the ubiquitous Café Coffee Day franchises found all over India, where we could sit and talk for a bit. Once we found a seat he quickly launched into a monologue about his life as an Indian in Switzerland, his forays into hip hop in the city of Zurich, the history of hip hop in Delhi, and the current happenings in the Delhi scene. I had to scramble to turn on my voice recorder and interject the purpose of my research and with due diligence obtain his voluntary consent for participation. None of the technological fumbling nor the ethical posturing on my part dissuaded Salim, as he, without missing a beat, related the history of the scene that, according to him, goes back to 1991 when a certain famous local DJ first started playing hip hop in the small elite clubs of Delhi after going to the U.S. to pick up the necessary vinyl.

He then began to tell me about the contemporary moment, the inclusion of a larger base of practitioners who hailed from the working class colonies of the city and the incredible promise that the scene held for the future. In particular, he focused on detailing the role that he, other Indian diaspora and several Europeans, most notably Germans, have had in developing the contemporary underground practice scene in Delhi – particularly around graffiti writing, B-boying, and turntablism. To make his point he focused on describing his role in organizing the Indo-German Hip Hop Project – a project conceived and implemented by German aerosol artists and turntablists in 2012 and that has continued in various cities across India that utilizes the resources of the Goethe Institut, what is known as Max Mueller Bhavan in Delhi – a German cultural institution dedicated to, according to their website, presenting contemporary German culture in India -- to work with up and coming graffiti artists, B-boyers, in Delhi's underground hip hop scene over the course of several months.

The conversation, started out brightly with a lot of hopeful talk about hip hop's growth in Delhi specifically and in India more broadly, and the necessary role that hip hop's travelling emissaries have in developing the various practices of hip hop amongst interested youth. However, the talk turned gloomy when he began to discuss how the

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projects under the banner of the Indo-German Hip Hop Project were interrupted by some of what he proclaimed was negativity brought on by other global hip hop entrants into Delhi's scene, namely Indian-Americans who worked closely with some of the youth in the so-called slums and who partnered with the German and German-Indian hip hop practitioners to produce events for Delhi's youth practitioners.

> There was a lot of hate and friction created in [Delhi's] graffiti scene [by those coming from outside, from the U.S.] and hip hop is based on peace, unity, fun. We, in Europe, go over a piece[9] if we can do something better. It just shows your character. Then the [Delhi] kids started going over peoples' pieces because they saw the older guys [from the U.S.] doing it. The kids we were working with in Delhi. So, I immediately noticed that there was a negative influence from U.S. based teachers coming over. They came from the west and brought this with them. The whole hip hop scene was starting to get a negative influence. Not from Peter [a German aerosol artist] who was really bringing a positive influence. He got these kids down here from a crew in Berlin, they are neutral kids, they love everyone, they are really talented. So, around the time this project was happening this girl from the U.S. kept going over other peoples' pieces. So, finally, we were at the Begumpur[10] hall of fame. I was with this guy who is also from Germany who does street art. And I saw this girl from the U.S. tagging over everyone's piece. And one of the kids [from the Khirki based crew], Multan, had tagged over a German guy's piece. So, I saw this and I couldn't control my anger. If she [the girl from the U.S.] is representing like this, this is not the right way to do this, going over peoples' pieces…Then [the Indian American MC from the U.S who is the boyfriend of the girl going over everyone's pieces] said, man, you are from Europe man. You don't know shit. Were from America man, where

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[9] A piece refers to a long form work of graffiti art. Pieces are differentiated from throw ups, which are quick but large character references to pieces and tags, which are small writings of ones graffiti name, usually with a marker.

[10] Begumpur, located in the far south of Delhi, is yet another historic urban village where hip hop visual culture makes its appearance.

hip hop started. This is where hip hop originated. You are from Europe. We do throws up over pieces and don't give a shit. So shut the fuck up, you don't know what graffiti is. I didn't say anything. I thought if I talk sense to a fool and he might call you foolish. Then I heard Javan [an Indian American B-boy in the scene] was talking about me. He said, "you know Salim, he's a rich dude. He's not really street enough." You know, it hurt my feelings. I was not born with a gold spoon in my mouth but I had to work for what I have…I realized that [the Indian-American MC's] actual agenda is to show this image of India to sell his album. That when I figured out, woah, he wants to stand in front of a bunch of poor Indian kids to show that is what I am supporting. He is really good at enacting a political stance. He is more American than he is Indian.

Travelling kinds, to use Clifford's (1996, 1997) broad category, works well, at least for the moment, as a catch all term for the several varied actors described above who have come from abroad following "public routes and beaten tracks" to engage with Delhi's hip hop scene in the contemporary moment. These international popular artists follow a precedent that began just after India's economic liberalization, when the electronic music scene in Delhi and Mumbai rapidly gained visibility as a result of an increased flow between the U.S, Europe and India. Murthy (2007, 2010) provides an account of how elite subcultural music and arts producers in urban India connected with diasporic Indians who came over to Mumbai and Delhi just after India's economic liberalization in 1991 to engage in collaborative projects. The cross-pollination that resulted through this contact between the returning Indian diaspora and the youthful elite in India's cosmopolitan cities created a vibrant electronic music phenomena that put India on the map for popular cultural production that wasn't Bollywood focused but rather drew on elements of traditional music and coupled it with technologically enhanced beats to create a globally marketable product of ethnically Indian popular music that has attracted attention across national contexts now for last two decades. It also, according to Murthy (2010), bolstered a secularist political response amongst youth living in India's cities to the rising tide of Hindu nationalism in the country, suggesting that the presence of the diasporic

travelers not only created an impact on popular cultural production in urban India but that they influenced the national political climate of that particular time period.

However, only in the last 5 years, per several of the sources in the music scene and amongst the youth I spent time with, have quintessentially black popular cultural forms of hip hop been picked up in the urban spaces of South Asia and the production of these forms been taken up by non-elite enthusiasts and practitioners[11]. These forms, no doubt, have penetrated the folds of urban India as a result of greater internet access. The countless times I sat with the young men in my study as they showed me, amongst other things, the latest mainstream and underground American hip hop videos on Youtube, or B-boy battles in France or Korea, attests to the power of the virtual web to forge a virtual global hip hop community and produce the kind of possibilities of aesthetic belonging I have referred to as aesthetic citizenship throughout this monograph, a citizenship founded on the ability to produce images that enable participation through the value accrued through actual and potential circulation. However, it is the efforts of travelling kinds, the self-proclaimed and self-styled prostelyzers of hip hop, as they utilize an older order of space/time demolishing technology, i.e. the airplane, that have had the greatest impact on the contemporary hip hop scene in Delhi. Importantly, these travelling kinds, myself included, not only bring their vision of hip hop to the nascent hip hop scene in India, or forge new networks between practitioners across geographical contexts – they come to represent the beginnings of a hip hop scene – to act as pioneers by creating pathways for images of the hip hop scene in Delhi and in India to circulate more broadly. As a result there is, as the above excerpt from my conversation with Salim illustrates, a jockeying for position to represent the image of hip hop in Delhi, in India, and beyond. As this positioning for the opportunity to represent hip hop in Delhi ensues, these travelling hip hop emissaries articulate their particular notions of hip hop's history and its continued salience in a contemporary globally connected world.

This chapter concerns itself with the ways in which returning Indian diasporic and

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[11] The exception, of course, is the relationship between The Sikh diaspora and Punjab. Sikhs, because of their particular diasporic status within India and their global dispersion, have been engaged in hip hop music production for quite a bit longer than the rest of India. Chandigarh, the capital of Punjab, has been a hotbed of hip hop music production for at least a decade amongst non-elite producers and performers.

European *hip hop emissaries,* more or less temporary actors in Delhi's hip hop scene, deploy different strategies concerning the history and import of hip hop to hail subaltern hip hop practitioners in Delhi in their bids to represent the scene to a global hip hop nation and beyond (Alim, 2009) and, in so doing, reflect two distinct visions of what constitutes a global hip hop authenticity (See Macleod, 2006 regarding the notion of authenticity in hip hop). Here the category of the traveller quickly decomposes into fragmentary slivers of differential experience as a result of their varied and overlapping class, ethnic, and racial experiences that hip hop emissaries bring from abroad into India. The two ideologies that suggests the foundation for a purported hip hop authenticity in Delhi are made visible through the social performances of these travelling hip hop emissaries as they utilize their experiences of hip hop in the context in which they came into contact with its practices, its social texts, and its images, to argue for particular gloss of hip hop's horizons of possibility. As is evident in Salim's recollection of his confrontation with the Indian American MC, these performances takes on greater significance if we consider that they reveal what Stuart Hall has called the macro and the micro politics of the popular (Hall, 1998). As Hall rightly argues, "what matters is not the intrinsic or historically fixed objects of culture but the state of play in cultural relations" (Hall, 1998:449; see also Forman, 2013).

What Hall (1998) suggests and what Salim's testimony reveals is, of course, that hip hop is not a fixed cultural object, nor is authenticity an achievable state, but that in sincere social performance (see Dattatreyan, 2013; Jackson, 2010), in this case within the cultural strictures of hip hop, there emerge distinct historical discourses that cling to the trajectories of travelling social actors as they seek to stamp their imprimatur on the nascent hip hop in India scene and to harness the images that the scene produces to promote their own interests in India and abroad. Moreover, the exchange that Salim describes also reveals a macro-context that is 'bigger than hip hop' even as hip hop continues its global spread – the continued salience of the popular as a way for displaced people to articulate their experience of the colonial structures that persist in contemporary global capitalism, to exact critiques on the very limits of travel that bodies and discourses can make before they lose salience, mute histories. However, the notion of a context for

the popular that is larger than the popular itself becomes even more poignant if we consider that hip hop's global spread allows for a kind of amnesia, an imagining of its forms of historical resistance located in the history of North America as practice, as a universal available to all – and therefore produce an image of the conduits of this said universalism as remarkably and, perhaps, disturbingly akin to Hegel's world spirit on horseback. This imagining of hip hop as a universal, as an ultimately flexible form that supersedes cultural synchrony and historical diachrony, also mirrors what Povinelli (2011) calls late liberalism, the ethical stance at the heart of neoliberal globalization, which celebrates the circulation of the unburdened human in the discourse of human rights. In the remaining pages I will first delineate the ways in which these two hip hop ideologies co-occur and create friction between travellers who come to India to purposefully seek out and influence the burgeoning hip hop scenes found in its cities. Here I argue that the ideology/theory of hip hop that these travelling kinds bring to the Indian hip hop scene cannot be separated from the ontological experiences of the travellers as situated, historical subjects.

I will then conceptualize how travelling kinds who seek the narratives of hip hop in Delhi, myself included, intersect with the other travelling kinds who populate this narrative: the migrants, refugees, transnationals, and so on, whose social, economic and political constraints mark the contours of a shifting Delhi that encompasses more and less than the national imaginary of an 'Indian' hip hop subcultural world. Here I will elucidate how the theories and ideologies of hip hop exported from the west are appropriated, challenged, and subverted by the youth in Delhi. Specifically, I will explicate how the localization of discourse, in this case hip hop, effectively "undermines a discourse's claim to "theoretical" status" (Clifford, 1998 December 7) and makes the ideologies embedded and challenged in discourse visible (van Dijk, 2010). I will conclude by discussing how, as I sought to navigate the often challenging position of being a researcher cum hip hop emissary with the other hip hop flaneurs and with the youth in the scene, I managed my own image, which could never really stand alone but always was embedded in a particular discursive history that influenced the interactional frameworks where I located myself. I suggest that my Indian diasporic positionality,

particularly with other diasporic actors in the field, complicated my field work in ways that made all too clear the fault lines between and within the ideological frameworks that clung to hip hop's discourse. Throughout these sections I argue that semiotic features that produce the possibility for an aesthetic citizenship, as they congeal in particular images, become sites of contestation for self-proclaimed members of a global hip hop nation regarding who can populate the frame, what the signs within the frame mean, and who, ultimately, has the ability to represent the image of an instantiation, in this case of a Delhi hip hop scene, to a wider hip hop public.

Hip hop ontologies and the dispersion of ideologies
Hip hop emissaries bring two distinct if overlapping ideologies to bear on the hip hop scene in Delhi. The Indian American 'hip hop emissaries,' some who travelled back and forth between the U.S. and India, others who, as a result of particular state politics, made their homes in India; utilized what could be considered a decolonial discourse to situate their own ontogenetic history with hip hop and make claims to the images of the young peoples' practice of hip hop by arguing for hip hop as a delinking praxis. Take, for example, Salim's recollection above, where he was told by Indian-American practitioners that authentic hip hop stems from an American experience rather than a European practice, implicitly centralizing the black American struggle as the progenitor of hip hop and the claim to those struggles as rooted in the experience of engaging with hip hop in the U.S. The MC who deployed this tactic with Salim in other personal encounters, in his lyrics, and in the popular press, argues for a brown and black hip hop. In so doing, he underscores hip hop as a decolonial discourse that links the experience of non-White, formerly colonized people across borders. Indeed, several of the Indian American hip hop practitioners that I met, most notably the Indian American B boy Javan, dubbed themselves organizers of the political sort whose work was to create new forms of solidarity amongst those who have been marginalized by (western) history. In their partially articulated notion of social movement, the historical roots of hip hop that live in Afrika Bambaataa's and the Zulu Nation's notions of hip hop as a liberatory epistemology, or in KRS One's notion of hip hop as a moving knowledge, a way to

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articulate the historical connections between contemporary post-colonial subjects'
lifeworlds to the effects of capitalism through practice, became a central discursive and
material concern. Moreover, Indian Americans returning as hip hop emissaries clearly
imagined their historical connection to India vis-à-vis hip hop. This allowed them to
create a pan-Indian imaginary that specifically connected hip hop to a quintessentially
Indian decolonial discourse. As one Indian American MC poignantly notes in one
interview, "The craziest part is that hip hop culture is what brought me to India. It wasn't
Sikhism or Indian classical music. I was tired of looking for brown folk making hip hop
in north America and I found them all in here (Sengupta, 25th, 2013). For these Indian
American hip hop practitioners in Delhi's scene, hip hop couldn't, except uneasily,
include those that they considered White people in its fold. Nor could it easily include
those who had grown up in privileged class positions, whether in India or abroad. Class
and race for these self-appointed gatekeepers of hip hop in India, thus, became the basis
for an authentic participation in a borderless hip hop urbanity.

 Clearly, in Salim's tale above, his authenticity is questioned because he grew up
in Europe and, therefore, doesn't know about 'real' graffiti culture nor, because of
accusations that he is rich, can he participate in a legitimate Indian hip hop community.
While he is also Indian diaspora returned, something of the European nature of his
involvement in hip hop coupled with his purported class position delegitimizes his
position. Salim's bittersweet testimonial of his own involvement in the Delhi scene
points to how the cultivation of hip hop in urban India for the Indian American actors
who positioned themselves as gatekeepers of hip hop, created a careful and controlled
even somewhat paranoid approach to legitimize so -called locals and those from the
outside who could engage with the working class youth from the settlements, those young
people who, for the gatekeepers, represented an authentic platform for 'real' Indian hip
hop to develop. The irony of course, is that those that wished to confer legitimacy to a
local scene in urban India perhaps unwittingly construct a quintessentially nationalist
Indian hip hop that relies on the image of the urban slum to legitimate its place.

 The ways in which these self-styled Indian American gatekeepers legitimized
their status and rationalized their position to those in the networked scene and to larger

publics, unfolded in two distinct ways. First, they drew on the ideologies and theories of 20th century decolonial thought which allows them to interpret the image of the subaltern youth performing and producing hip hop as a particular species of political statement – one that draws a connection between, as one Indian American put it, the slums of the U.S. with the slums of India. For these diasporic prostelyzers, these Indian American hip hop practitioners from North America, hip hop is seen as the natural political vehicle for those from the streets across the world, heirs to the failed promises of modernity and urbanization, and comes effortlessly to the youth in India's slums. In one Delhi based Indian American's words, "Hip hop came naturally to them. It connects us people from the street, in South Africa, Korea, Palestine, the US and India" (Mitra, S. March 28th, 2011). In this metaphoric connection the speaker visualizes the street as the connecting force between marginalized people there is an implicit harkening to a history of linkages between formerly colonized peoples, urbanization, and the effects of capitalism. Moreover, he naturalizes hip hop practice in India's so-called slums, suggesting that the incorporation of hip hop cultural practice amongst the youthful urban poor in our globalizing era is obvious, even autochthonous. By making this assertion, diasporic actors from the U.S. necessarily positioned themselves as closer to the street than their European counterparts, whether diaspora or not, and drew on their biographies of immigration in U.S. urban contexts and their personal connection to black cultural practice and production to make this point.

Second, the Indian Americans drew on their Indianness to further legitimize their position as the natural cultivators of an Indian hip hop scene. Performances of Indianness were subtle, at times, and overt in others and drew upon notions of hip hop as an indigenous form to legitimize its presence amongst the Indian urban subaltern (See Pennycook, 2007a, Alim, 2009; for a discussion on the localization or indigenization of hip hop). Language and other semiotic code switching usually marked the ways in which Indian-Americans attempted to straddle their positions between worlds and create new worlds through practice. This code switching was most evident in the ways in which Indian American hip hop emissaries would engage with other travelling kinds, whether from the U.S. or from Europe, where the performances of indigeneity overlapped with a

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performance of American urban cool. This turn to Indianness and the pan-Indian national imaginary to enunciate a legitimate hip hop authority in Delhi, of course, created a situation where the notion of a borderless Indian nation overshadowed the particular issues of discrimination that ethnic and racial newcomers to the city who participated in the hip hop scene faced on a regular basis, a point which I will come back to in the conclusion of this chapter. Taken together, these overlapping performances of identity, of legitimate Indianness on the one hand, and legitimate hip hop status that was located in a particular class position on the other, created a vision of Indian hip hop that could only be located in the country's urban 'slums.'

The Indo-European and European hip hop practitioners who engaged with the ground-up hip hop scene, however, stressed the universality of hip hop, the ways in which the arrival of hip hop practices to India promoted, in Salim's words, "peace, harmony, and community" on the street, a metonym for the public spaces of the city. In an online article detailing the efforts of the Indo-German hip hop project, for instance, hip hop is described as, " art forms [that] are sometimes also referred to as 'street culture.' Street culture thrives in urban centers around the world and does not discriminate between rich and poor because the aim is self-expression and free access to art" (Mehta, 2012). Here, in this rendering, the street does not naturally belong to the subaltern, to those *from* the street – but, rather, the street becomes the public meeting place where deliberation across difference is made possible through public art. In this universalist construction of hip hop and, we might argue, valorization of art as an inherently democratic practice, historical blackness and the particular histories of North America are not necessarily salient except as a narrative device to situate the origin story of hip hop. "Hip hop started in the Bronx…" was an opening line I heard from many of the European hip hop practitioners who came over to engage with the scene as well as almost all of the middle class Delhi based organizers of hip hop events, who parroted a particular history of hip hop that they, undoubtedly, learned through the diffusion of underground hip hop discourse vis-à-vis the travelling kinds and engagements with the internet (See Singh, in preparation).

Hip hop, rather, was expressed by the European and Indo -Europeans as an artistic

craft and practice accessible to all, disembodied, disconnected, and unburdened by history. Hip hop, for these actors, was available to anyone who wished to engage in its forms with persistence – a universal that is easily adaptable to local conditions but one that requires expert knowledge to advance itself properly. Here hip hop actors, as Salim attests, can be neutral (recall he used this term to describe the writers from Berlin), or outside of the politics of ideology or the history of place. What little of the history of hip hop that these actors almost perfunctorily performed, focused on the discourse concerning the four elements of hip hop and their link to the abstract conception of knowledge echoed in some of the global hip hop literature that celebrates the spread of hip hop as flow and valorizes the notion of the cipha, the virtual and real space where participation in a hip hop universe occurs, suggesting movement and engagement as unmitigated by the vagaries of local or global power dynamics (Mitchell, 2001; Spady, 2006).

Moreover, the European Indian and the European graffiti writers, MCs, and DJs I met expressed that the Indian urban context, along with China, was a frontier, a place where the walls of the city where not surveilled and open for graffiti, where talented B-boyers and MCs were everywhere but as yet 'uncorrupted' by ideas of the marketplace, where new ideas, born in the public sphere could be made visible. The ideological hip hop that these practitioners extolled didn't address the relationship between historical conditions that create inequality and promulgate an enduring politically active hip hop but rather focused on the possible development of the nascent hip hop communities of practice in India and the ways they could be expanded and supported. This discussion of hip hop's future in developing Asia was seen by some European DJs as a fertile ground for further establishing their own hip hop fame and, for the enthusiastic youth in Delhi, promoting "a culture of hip hop in the country which is democratic, inclusive and sustainable in the long run" (littlei, 2012). One DJ from Germany, also involved in the Indo-German hip hop project and whom Singh interviewed in Mumbai, even had aspirations of opening a hip hop university in India and China, a place where up and coming practitioners could learn their craft from established practitioners from all over the world.

Moreover, in my conversations with several European hip hop 'heads' in the Indian hip hop scene as well as some of the economically middle class Delhi hip hop practitioners in the scene, hip hop in India was described as a subculture in its infancy because the most highly developed hip hop practice in the Indian context, particularly in the Delhi and Mumbai scene, is B-boying; a technology of the body as opposed to more seemingly complex engagements with hip hop through technological means. Singh and I, as we collaborated closely throughout my initial months in the field, engaged in deep debates regarding the implication of this theory that was purported by the European hip hop travellers. I argued that within it there is an implicit echo of modernization theory and the taken for granted notion that development in postcolonial contexts, in whatever form, must follow the direction of development of the west. Moreover, in their assertion that B-boying, the dance form of hip hop, was but the first stage of development there is a devaluation of the bodily, kinesthetic, and aesthetic ways of knowing that B-boying indexes, a kind of dismissal that falls directly to the critiques of decolonial theorists who argue for a delinking from the program and project of modernity that consistently displaces the body, the sensory, and the social (Mignolo, 2011).

However, to postulate a clear split between the two travelling camps, one Indian American with a decolonial political bend, the other Indian European and European with a universalizing mission, would be facile. After all, both camps were interested in promoting hip hop 'culture' in India and both had a vested financial, ideological and affective interest fashioning an up and coming 'Indian' hip hop scene. This led to several collaborations, both somewhat formal and very casual, in the time I was in Delhi and prior to my arrival, between Europeans interested in promoting hip hop in India or interested, simply, in practicing their hip hop element of choice in India and the Indian Americans who had stationed themselves more permanently in the scene. These collaborations, as in the Indo-German hip hop project described above by Salim (which has become an annual event that not only happens in Delhi but has spread to Kolkata and Mumbai), were fertile grounds for staging clashes between the two ideologies of hip hop at play while also creating a few persistent linkages between the youth in the Delhi scene, the Indian American practitioners, and the Europeans who would come over for shorter

stints. These linkages were forged, even if uneasily, over the shared notion that hip hop, with its do-it-yourself practice ethos, could function as an anti-normative discourse, an antidote to the taken for granted that encouraged self-exploration, the articulation of one's city as a place, and the enunciation of ones experiences as a youthful subject coming of age in a neoliberal world (See Zizek, 2010 on hidden ideologies Ranciere, 2011 on the visible and the invisible).

As importantly, as Indian diaspora returned were also involved in the predominantly European universalist camp, attachments to the Indian imaginary connected, even if uneasily, the interests of the Indian American and Indian European travelling actors to support the development of a Delhi based hip hop scene.   This idea, even if its particulars were in dispute, was a shared notion that allowed Salim and Javan, for instance, to collaborate even as their perceived differences fractured their long term relationship. Or, in a more personal example, while Singh and I, as two researcher/hip hop doyens who are also Indian diaspora returned albeit from two very distinct national contexts had (productive) disagreements about the place of hip hop in India, the history of hip hop, or even the scholarly significance of hip hop as it gains popularity in Delhi, we were able to collaborate closely on the studio project which enabled several emerging MCs to record their music, produce music videos and build relationships with each other and with the several crews we worked with separately and together across the ethnic and spatial divides of the city precisely, I believe, *because of* our shared diasporic history, our shared research positionality, and our deep connection, despite the different experiential circuitry that produced it, to hip hop. Moreover, our relationship, because of our shared interest in participating in academic worlds, worlds that seek to cast themselves as worlds apart from the folk theorizations of the worlds they study, aligned and continue to align in our mutual interest in to produce theory that cannot be superordinate to the social worlds where it arises or to the experiences of those who expound its significance. This shared link to an academic world and shared idea of how we wished to engage within it, I argue, mitigated the impact of any disagreements we had over each other's formulations of hip hop belonging perhaps because, at this stage in our lives, belonging in the academy, superseded belonging in the world of hip hop.

My relationship with Singh could be seen in stark contrast to my relationship with Javan. As we, Javan and I, are both Indian Americans who grew up in working class neighborhoods in New York and experienced similar racial and ethnic frameworks in our youth, the kind that have been described by scholars in the U.K. and the U.S. as one that creates both an affinity across ethnic and racial minorities as well as tensions, clashes, and distance (Nayak, 2003); it would seem that there would be a more clear affinity between us. Yet, as I will describe in the conclusion of this chapter, our relationship quickly deteriorated over the right to represent hip hop and the hip hop scene in Delhi as well as over resources. Moreover, the fact that I inhabit the role of researcher, and even worse, an anthropologist – the symbolic epitome of epistemological, affective, and political vacuity in relation to decolonial struggles, put me in a tenuous position from the start with Javan. For Javan I inevitably came to represent a universalizing position that couldn't help but obscure my own embodied privilege that certainly couldn't fit into his framework for hip hop legitimacy.

Indeed, what emerges as proponents of these two discourses compete for the right to represent hip hop in India and for the opportunity to be represented by 'Indian' hip hop is the ontological incommensurablity between the two ideologies of what constitutes legitimate hip hop practice. I argue that it is critical that the discourse of hip hop as it travels, or any discourse for that matter if we are to draw any lessons regarding travelling ideologies, theories, and so on (See Said, 1986, Tsing, 2009), cannot be detached from the proponents of the discourse – particularly those who occupy nodal, or leadership roles in establishing or extending a public or community through aesthetic production. That is, in order to understand the movement, appropriation, and reinvestment in ideology and theory as it travels and finds a home in a new place and context, we must understand the relationship between ideology and theory as it is interpreted and disseminated by key actors who utilize their own personal experiences of the discourse to make sense of the new context, in this case the Delhi subcultural hip hop scene.

Moreover, what becomes evident is that, regardless of ontological stance, hip hop flaneurs as they engaged with hip hop in India, all sought a static Indian hip hop scene, and therefore, a static Indian hip hop that was quintessentially Indian. Whether the

decolonial political hip hop of the Indian Americans or the more pluralistic hip hop of the European and European Indian hip hop practitioners, both required images of an authentic Indian hip hop scene to complete their narratives that imbricated the products of their hip hop ventures in outside contexts. This search for a quintessentially Indian hip hop scene, of course, led each category of traveller cum hip hop doyen, myself included, to the same locations, to interact with many of the same young people, reflecting the ironies and opportunities of practicing anthropology in the 21st century, where mapping cultural change no longer is solely the domain of the ethnographer but, rather, is a crowded field of those who seek out cultural practice and utilize the very same networks to arrive in the same places (Jackson, 2014; Riles, 2000) .

However, the young people who populated the hip hop scene didn't so easily fall into the reductive nationalist or nativist category of Indian or of the sedentary figure of the urban poor. Indeed, as I have suggested throughout this book, these practitioners were relatively recent arrivals from mountain villages of Northern India, from farmsteads in the Gangetic plains, from Nepal and the Northeast parts of the country, from Afghanistan, as well as from several countries in East and West Africa. Moreover, there were many participants in the scene who were long term Delhites whose grandparents were migrants (a point which they made regularly to indicate their legitimacy in the scene) but who were economically middle class. What became apparent, however, was that for the travelling kinds who were coming to find hip hop in India, whether with a decolonial or a universalizing hip hop mindset, this diversity had to be reduced to fit a much narrower definition of what comprised Indian hip hop. For universalist hip hop contingent, this could include 'Indians' of all economic positions as well as hip hop enthusiasts and practitioners from all over the world who happened to converge in Delhi or Mumbai. Indian megacities, thus, became the space where hip hop was happening, a container rather than a place with particular histories and, critically, a place where other more constrained travelling kinds engaged with hip hop precisely because of their precarious positionality in the city. While this spatial framing revealed something of the kinds of partial cosmopolitanisms that are emerging in the Delhi (and Mumbai) scene, what it didn't allow for was an appreciation of the differential power dynamics of travel

that brought a diverse set of young people from Delhi and adults from afar who would gravitate to hip hop while in Delhi.   Indeed, the universalist position of seeing hip hop as a freely circulating discourse that creates equality or democratic possibility, one that is unmindful of the power differentials between travelling actors, created an aporia by which the ethnic and racial other – the Africans from several different countries and Afghanis who engaged with Delhi's hip hop scene – while they could be included within the scene as it unfolded, couldn't be included fully in its representation.

For those who subscribed to a more decolonial ideology, class and Indianess became the key criteria by which to seek out legitimate subjects from within and without India that could represent the Indian hip hop scene.   The moniker Slumgods, for instance, emerges from this desire to create a localized, national and a global notion of hip hop, a term originated by Javan, who sought a natural home for hip hop in Mumbai's and Delhi's poorer locales and who some in the scene credit for creating the 'most' authentic representation of hip hop in India that challenged, in part, the image of the poorer locales of India's megacities as they circulated in mainstream films like Slumdog Millionaire. Here the distances travelled by various actors, Northeasterners fleeing political instability, Nepalis seeking economic possibility, and so on, is almost completely obscured in favor of a localizing tendency that isolates the urban experience of hip hop in 'hoods and slums' of urban India. Travel is conceptualized in Javan's gloss of hip hop as a process that connects always already existing 'hoods across contexts, as it makes possible and visible the network between unmoving participants in various locales across the global urban sphere who are striving to delink their postcolonial national and regional contexts from the continuing effects of western neo-colonialism. The Nepalis and the Northeasterners, thus, in Javan's and other decolonial diasporic hip hop legitimators imaginaries of a hip hop scene in Delhi, are equalized as Indian B-boyers, MCs, DJs and so on, because they all live in the Indian 'hood'. While there was talk in the margins about race and the racialization of these youth in Delhi and the friction between different ethnic groups who trace their origin to a geographical pre-independence India, in the conversations I had with the Indian Americans in the scene their particular brand of a nationalist decolonial ideology prevented this talk from becoming visible precisely

because it disrupted the notion of a common culture that hip hop purportedly creates, a common culture that in this case is interestingly rooted in at the interstice of a borderless national and class imaginary. Moreover, Africans transnationals, refugees, and diaspora, some of whom engage with the hip hop scene in Delhi directly by attending events, most of whom reflect a semiotic connection through clothing to hip hop on the streets of Delhi, couldn't quite be included, explicitly, under this Indian hip hop umbrella. These youth, when the hip hop scene in Delhi is discussed amongst Indian American travelling kinds, are completely left out of the frame even as sympathy for the larger African transnational community who make their home in Delhi and face state violence, local discrimination, and so on, is expressed 'in the margins.'

What becomes important is how each of these ideological framings regarding the aesthetics of hip hop brought over by hip hop emissaries from afar are picked up, recirculated, and, quite often, reformulated by the youth in Delhi's scene to make sense of their historical position in Delhi's hip hop scene, Delhi, India, and the world. Critically, as many of these young people in Delhi's hip hop folds are also travelling kinds, albeit more constrained in their particular movements as low-caste, economically under-resourced migrants from various places within India, or as refugees from within the region and further afield; they cannot help but modify the ideology that the hip hop emissaries wish to impart precisely because of their own ontological experiences. This also held true for the few middle class youth in the scene I had an opportunity to interact with, who also interpreted and modified the received messages of the hip hop emissaries in ways which complicated what hip hop could mean for participants within the context of a changing Delhi. Here it is important to highlight the difference between the political and the ideological. As Shani (2013) notes, while the ideological can be viewed abstractly as apart from human social relations, it is in its entry into interactional frameworks where it's often contradictory political complexity is revealed. This idea of the political in relation to the ideological also becomes important if we throw into the proverbial soup another category of abstract thought, the theoretical. Here, as Clifford (1996) suggests, theory too is subject to reformulation and rearticulation the minute it moves into socially interactive space.

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Indeed, the youth in Delhi's hip hop scene that I met, whether middle class and long term Delhites, or working class and recent migrants, were catholic about the kinds of ideological baggage that the hip hop emissaries performed, rather picking and choosing what to take up to best forge relationships within the hip hop networks they were presented with. For the young people any kind of connection with the larger hip hop universe or, for that matter, the creative or artistic world, represented intrinsic possibility, an opportunity to learn from others, gain a wider exposure, meet new people and, in some cases, get paid for their skills. The youth in the scene, in many ways, undermined the political agendas of those who would limit their interaction by forging their own connections through the initial contacts made possible in the terrestrial events they attended and through the efforts of the hip hop emissaries.   Through their use of the internet, particularly Facebook, these links were solidified, both with temporary actors in the subcultural world they inhabited as well as with each other. The internet also became a means to represent themselves independently from those from abroad. To take ownership of their image as part of a quintessentially Delhi based hip hop scene in ways that, in some cases, contradicted the kinds of ideological pushes that the travelling emissaries of hip hop were trying to make.

No doubt, the youth in the scene were not unmindful of the politics that undergirded the ideologies of the hip hop emissaries that were coming from abroad and utilized these politics to forge their own possibilities within the Delhi scene. In poignant moments, the youth commented on the politics of those from the west from their own perspectives and positionalities in ways which revealed their cognizance of the larger political and cultural import of the popular scene which they inhabited and the context for its emergence, a changing Delhi that has, in its shifting grounds, exacerbated economic and social divides even as it has provoked a greater social imagination for many of the youth in its folds. While the hip hop emissaries were held with a bit of reverence, particularly as male role models for the predominantly male participants in the hip hop scene, youth also were able to dispel the larger than life image of the emissaries (again, myself included) by pursuing their own agendas that, ultimately, situated us in ways that revealed the ways in which travelling discourses adapt to new contexts, how particular configurations of signs create

a polyglossic aesthetic that can be deployed as the micro level in several different ways to achieve particular ends, and the ways in which nodal figures in a network position and are positioned as they seek to influence a burgeoning field of aspirations.

What became clear was that the influence of the emissaries is diffused across the hip hop scene differentially such that the universalist message of the Indian Germans, the Europeans, in part because of the flexibility of their version of a hip hop discourse that is more inclusive but also because of the financial backing that it had to produce regular events, became the predominant discourse in the scene. However, it is safe to say that the Indian American hip hop emissaries were not without influence, creating events of their own as well as utilizing their own networks to create possibilities for youth, particularly those from the 'hood', to become visible in public cultural production such as internationally circulated hip hop videos, Bollywood films, and cultural showcases in the city and across India. However, the message of postcolonial political struggle in relation to hip hop that these Indian Americans brought with them, in part because they focused on certain youth from the 'hood' over others, and in part because the message was at times rigid, was more easily dismissed, challenged, or simply and pragmatically put into a more pressing and immediate economic, social context by the young people they engaged with.

Here social difference within the context of Delhi located at the intersection of class, race, and ethnicity becomes critical. The Indian Americans, because they focused more squarely on creating a hip hop scene that represented and was represented by the working class migrants of the scene, sought to exert a greater influence on them, to shape their worldviews through the filter of hip hop. Contrastingly, the four element discourse in hip hop and the universality of practice was most readily parroted by the Indian middle class youth in the scene, who engaged more directly with the European emissaries, in part, because these young Indian middle class youth could speak English well. These competing and often overlapping spheres of influence played out within the discourse and actual practice of the practice element in question – B-boying, MCing, graffiti writing, and so on. For instance, the graffiti scene was predominantly influenced by writers from Europe, while the B-boy scene was heavily influenced by Javan and his connection to a

U.S. based b-boying context. Interestingly, in online communities, there was a convergence of discourse regarding the authenticity of the b-boyers in the scene, many of them who represented subaltern positions as they were working class migrants who were from lower caste positions (ST, SBC, OBC, and Dalit) and because they lived in the 'hood. Note the following quote from a hip hop youth forum on Facebook, "B-boys in India have done more for the real hip hop culture than any other fake ass rappers or dj's.... I am proud to work with indian B-boys and Bgirls and I got mad love for them"(Facebook, 2013). This lent a particular kind of credence to the Indian Americans who worked closely with these B-boyers, a credence that they utilized to further their goals of pioneering a particular vision for the scene. The practice forms themselves, as a result, became the site for youth to reformulate the received ideologies of their mentors as well as the site, as Salim's testimony at the beginning of this chapter reveals, for contestation when the disjunctures in each ideological formulation came to the fore. In the next section I will briefly analyze examples of how decolonial and universalist ideologies seep into the talk and gestures of the youth in the scene who directly engaged with the hip hop emissaries and the ways in which the ideologies are remixed by the youthful actors in the scene to position themselves both within the Delhi hip hop subcultural world and beyond.

Delhi's hip hop kids weigh in…

I sat with a young Indian graffiti writer, Bhim, in a Dunkin' Donuts in Connaught Place, the center of Luytens' Delhi and a resurgent commercial hub of the city as a result of an intense marketing campaign to make it a lifestyle shopping destination. The U.S. based chain store was buzzing with activity as the writer showed me his latest pieces and alerted me to the street art festival that was currently going on in Delhi, sponsored by Goethe Institut (Max Mueller Bhavan). He said, however, that the street art festival was boring. "Why" – I asked. "Because the White guys that come here ask for permission to do pieces and the government gives it to them. When we ask for permission we never get it. I would rather do graffiti anyway, its more interesting. You know the difference between the two, right? Street art is legal and graffiti is illegal artwork done in public

places. We are organizing another event at the end of the month as a response to the street art festival that is going to be a graffiti event. Only illegal pieces." He went on to tell me that the strategy he and a few other Delhi based graffiti artists utilize, when they went out to bomb, was to take a European along. The European would be charged with holding the cans so that if the police came, the European would legitimate the work. "Yes, having a White guy along helps a lot," he laughed. He went on to say that the European graffiti artists who came to India also provided another important link, a material connection to the necessary supplies that he needed to make work – markers, spray can tips, and so on. Bhim's narrative suggests a cognizance of the power White bodies have to legitimate otherwise illicit activity in Delhi and a recognition that the networks that the Europeans provide create a critical link for up and coming graffiti artists not only to make work but to circulate their work to a larger hip hop public. As he spoke to me in the Dunkin' Donuts this young man who lived in the suburbs of Delhi and who was from a middle class family, recognized both the universalist and the decolonial projects of hip hop in Delhi, even citing Javan when he talked about the politics of race and the position of White people in the Delhi hip hop scene. However, the network that the Europeans coming to Delhi provided him with regards to his pursuit of graffiti as a practice, in particular, was where he gravitated. Bhim, who has engaged in graffiti since he was in middle school and now, while he finishes up high school, goes out regularly for bombing missions unbeknownst to his family, offered a counterpoint to the narratives of working class Nepali, Bihari, Uttar Pradeshi and Northeastern youth who live in Khirki and who, primarily, engaged with the larger hip hop scene vis-à-vis Javan and the other Indian Americans in Javan's larger network.

The youth in Khirki, for the most part, looked directly to the Indian American crew for direction and, in return, were linked with opportunities for public performance. Salim, in the opening vignette, refers to, for instance, the music video where the Indian American MC includes the boys from Khirki. In this video this crew of youth from Khirki who worked closely with the Indian Americans demonstrate a kind of aggressive performativity that none of the other youth I met in the hip hop scene in Delhi whom I had access to performed. In one frame, for instance, Arun, the youngest member of the

crew of mostly Nepali youth from Khirki, draws his finger across his neck as he looks into the camera as the Indian American MC continutes to rap. This gesture reinforces a hypermasculine aggressiveness found in global hip hop while underscoring the political message of the lyrics of the track, which focuses on ground up indigenous knowledge and its possibility to destabilize the status quo. Recall that Salim argues that this inclusion of these youth in the video was more to bolster the image of the MC abroad as authentically representing a political stance, that these "poor Indian kids" were simply bit actors in this MC's self-promotion.

However, these young men in the crews that interacted more frequently with the Indian Americans saw the situation quite differently. The Indian American MC, like Javan, had been engaged with these young people for several years and made it a point to include them in all of his activities whenever he came to Delhi. Moreover, whenever the Indian American MC came back, much like the Europeans who brought equipment with them or sent materials via parcel post, he brought back necessary and in-demand technology for the aspiring rappers in the Khirki based B-boy crew to produce their music. In one meeting I had with one of the young men from a crew that this MC had interactions with, this material connection between the MC and the crew became evident. As we sat to discuss a video shoot for his latest track he made it a point to bring a mic that the MC had brought for him from the U.S. to allay my fears that the vocals would be recorded poorly. These young men, in part because many of them had unstable home lives, relied more heavily on the support structure that male mentors from abroad offered and gravitated to the Indian American MC when he was able to make appearances not just to have access to a larger hip hop world or because of material needs, but because they genuinely felt they gained male friendship, closeness, and camaraderie. The affective affinity between this MC and the youth whom he engaged with in the 'hood was indicative of his approach to hip hop and its ideologies and the uptake that the youthful crew had as to what hip hop was all about.

Indeed, for this particular crew, hip hop directly equated with friendship, closeness, a relational bond that translated into kin obligation. Of course, the construction of these kin like relationships were not free of an obligation of exchange, as are any kin

relationships as Mauss (1990,1922) so eloquently and emphatically presented in his classitc treatise on The Gift. The images of Indian youth from the 'hood no doubt did, as Salim bitterly argued, bolster the hip hop reputations of the Indian American MC as well as other diaspora who travelled across the stretch of ocean and land between the U.S. and India. This kin or friendship obligation, however, was stretched when members of this crew wished to broaden their engagement with the other hip hop actors (other than the Indian Americans) as well as those who were interested in their story who were not necessarily involved in the hip hop scene at all. Indeed, engagements with 'outsiders' were met with some resistance by some of the Indian Americans. This was particularly true in the case of Javan, the Indian American B boy at the center of the B-boying scene in the city who has resided in India for over a decade and imagined himself as these young men's representative, or at the very least, guardian or protector. When these youth sought, on their own, other channels by which to access a hip hop world or engaged with journalists and other parties who were interested in their stories, there was heavy censure. The youth, however, continued to pursue their own engagements and, in my time in Delhi, this led to frictive moments between the youth and Javan that foreshadowed my eventual break with Javan over issues of representation.

The incident that crystallizes this sort of friction was when a local art organization based in Khirki put the B-boys in Khirki in touch with artists Nikolaj Bendix and Skyum Larsen, who were looking to do a documentary film on working class youth and their engagements with hip hop in Khirki. The film's thematic thrust was to put the narrative they developed in Khirki, Delhi in conversation with a narrative they would shoot in a working class neighborhood of London, to tell the story of hip hop aspiration amongst young men from working class communities in disparate social, cultural, and political contexts. Two of the leaders in the Khirki crew, Sudhir, who we will meet again in a subsequent chapter, and his closest friend Raghan, agreed to do this film and brought in the rest of the crew for dance sequences. When Javan found out about he was furious. He felt these 'White men from the outside' wouldn't do justice to representing these youth and, in one of our conversations about the situation, he asked the poignant question of why White people from Europe and the U.S. continue to come over to excavate the

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stories of the poor in India. "Why can't they come study rich people here?" he rhetorically asked as we walked through the streets of Khirki on a warm summer day in April of 2013. In the weeks that followed Javan grew more agitated, particularly because the youth had gone about making their connections with these two artists without letting Javan know about it. One day he ran into the filmmakers when they were with the crew in Khirki and let them know what he thought about their 'colonialist' project and told them, at the very least, they should pay the youth for participating in the film. I heard about this confrontation, at first, directly from Javan and then, many months later from Sudhir. Sudhir said, recalling his decision to continue working with the filmmakers, "I wanted to tell my story and I am old enough to make my own decisions. They gave me money for the film at the end, once everything was over but it was really boring talking about my life. Documentaries are boring."

Conclusion, or notes for a digital intervention

In the months that followed this incident with the filmmakers, Javan left Delhi and he and I didn't have a chance to talk regularly. He had been planning on opening a hip hop community center in Khirki and, after our initial meeting in the previous year when he first brought me to Khirki, I had promised to help him any way that I could, even if that meant financial support that I would raise through my networks of educators, academics, hip hop enthusiasts, and social justice workers in the U.S. who were interested and intrigued at the idea of hip hop as an educational space in India and were willing to do something to support its development. However, some of his politics of representation regarding the youth he engaged with in the time I got to know him in Delhi made me wary, particularly his interaction with the youth and the two filmmakers that I briefly described in the prior section. While I agreed with some of his indictment of these two artists/filmmakers precisely because his critique bolstered some of my own conclusions regarding the ways in which, more generally, realist documentary has further reduced the postcolonial subject to images of deprivation (Minh Ha, 1989; Ray Chow, 2012), I also felt that the youth in the crew, many of whom were now in the late teens, could and should make decisions regarding the rights to their image under their own collective

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council. If at all there was room for intervention with the youth and a role in guiding them around the politics of representation, the confrontation with the filmmakers on the street with the youth present diminished, if anything, the authority that his word, undergirded by his ontological position as an hip hop emissary from the U.S., held.

Moreover, in the time we didn't interact directly I began to hear from others in the scene about his reluctance to 'work' with me, his reluctance to let me interact with the youth in Khirki who he imagined were under his charge because I was a 'wealthy' Indian American and an anthropologist to boot. Moreover, I started to hear from several sources in the scene that he was casting me solely as a source of money for the center, a patron that had to be kept far away from the youth. This talk coupled with the all his previous dealings I had heard about from others or had witnessed in my time with him, distanced me from him, and for a time, from the crew he laid claim to and directed me towards other youth in Khirki and in Humayunpur.

My engagement with Javan reached a head when he asked me through email, abruptly, to give him an amount of money that he claimed I had promised him earlier in the year. Not quite knowing what to do and feeling vaguely uneasy at the ethically confounding position of being asked, even pressured by someone who I imagined as a key informant for a monetary gift, I offered a sum of money to establish his hip hop center in Khirki (less than what he demanded and he insisted I promised). I also mentioned that I felt uncomfortable that I was hearing through our now shared networks that he was talking about me, and said that after this donation I would simply drop by the center from time to time to interact with the youth I already knew but that I was done with a close interaction with him. This precipitated a long, protracted email battle where, in the end, no money was exchanged and plenty of acrimony ensued. In retrospect it seems clear the breakdown between Javan and I occurred in large part because of a mistranslation in our dialogic performances of what I have a called diasporic sincerity (Dattatreyan, 2013). While in my previous work I have utilized the term diasporic sincerity to locate the politically salient moments that ensue when diaspora return to their putative homelands and engage with those who have never physically left, in this case I utilize the term to describe the kinds of performativity that ensues when two diasporic

bodies intersect in the 'homeland' and feel compelled to perform to each other and assess each others belonging in not one, but two contexts. To complicate this already fraught diasporic exchange within the context of the homeland, of course, is the issue of hip hop, and the kinds of ideologies that cleave to perceived ontologies that I have described in the prior pages.

In Javan's estimation, it seemed my performances as an Indian American from New York who grew up with hip hop but was now a researcher, worse, an anthropologist, could either position me in one of two ways, as a savior or a sellout. As Jackson (2010) notes regarding his work in Harlem in a moment where gentrification was rife and the representation of those who were facing displacement, critical; this positional binary is something that anthropologists working in communities that can claim them as their own often have to contend with as they seek to make themselves known, as they gain access to what is seemingly the so called native anthropologists home, with all of the implicit biases that nativity conveys. Yet, Jackson (2010) argues that this nativist conception is far from the actuality, as class, race, gender, and other forms of cultural binding and exclusion mediate relationships to produce a challenging and at times insurmountable roadblock to what we imagine our research agendas to be and how we actualize our relationships in the field.

The final, and perhaps deepest complication that my 'beef' with Javan produced was weathering the anticipated dissonance that I believed it would create in my research program. At the time that our brittle communiqué transpired, I wondered at how it would impact my relationship with the youth in the scene that I had met through Javan and other hip hop emissaries connected to Javan, and my research agenda. However, the complications that the situation with Javan yielded actually proved rather fruitful as it enabled me to broaden my engagement with the scene and meet several crews of youth engaged in hip hop that wouldn't have necessarily been on my radar because of the indirect influence of Javan to imagine hip hop in India embodied by the youth he engaged with, those who could be represented as the natural localized subjects of hip hop. Moreover, as our falling out was made public across the network of youth and adults in the hip hop scene as well as in Khirki, the friction served as a catalyst for several actors --

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hip hop emissaries, and youth practitioners from Delhi -- to voice their opinions on the ideologies of hip hop currently at play in Delhi, and their particular positions regarding who and what can be a part of Delhi's hip hop scene – which is reflected in part, I hope, in this chapter.

Nor, had it not been for the fallout with this initial key informant, I believe, would I have been able to delve into my relationship with Singh in the way I did because of my initial bias against his European hip hop predilections towards universality, a universality I believed and still argue undermines the significance of the uptake of hip hop as a historical discourse from the U.S. amongst the youth who are socially, economically, and politically marginalized in Delhi. I believe Javan's disappearance forced me to, rather than hold these biases as stable optics by which I would read Singh's research engagement, articulate to Singh my particular positions and thus recognize the limits of my own held beliefs concerning the import of a political valent hip hop in neoliberal India. This ideological self-appraisal was invaluable as it allowed me to develop with Singh, as I have mentioned in the previous chapter, a studio space where both of us could interact with youth who we brought together from various parts of the city, to engage with each other and with us about their lives in the city, their love of hip hop, and their aspirations for the future. The studio space, for Singh and for me, also doubled as a site for collaborative research inquiry, an unanticipated space where our personal narratives of diasporic travel, immigrant assimilation in our respective western contexts, and our love of hip hop intertwined with our beliefs about what hip hop and research is and could be about. Indeed, my notion of hip hop as providing access to a form of aesthetic citizenship, a sense of belonging constructed in the experiential and an actual network of possibility that connects the youth in Delhi to the global hip hop nation in no small part because of their production and circulation of digital images, would not have emerged as the key concept in this monograph if it had not been for the intense friction that my interest to represent youth within the hip hop scene in Delhi inevitably produced and the linkages that this friction, in turn, yielded. These linkages I was privileged to interact with, connections between Delhi's youth and hip hop emissaries from afar, coupled with the kind of connections that the studio and its promise of participation through production

offered, created a rich context by which to develop my project.

I will end this chapter with a few words first, to recap the arguments I presented in this chapter and second, to touch upon, once again, my collaborative film work with the Somali crew that I describe in detail in the final chapter, where I argue that aesthetic citizenship, if it is to be utilized as a productive *methodological* concept, should be utilized in ways which takes the already take contemporary youth's proclivity for utilizing the popular to create images of themselves to create participation and visibility, to fully utilize this interest to reveal the political economies in which images gain value or are obscured from view. But, first let me recap my arguments. First, I have suggested that the discourse of hip hop, or any institutional discourse if we recognize, minding the words of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) that any network can function as an institution insofar as it disciplines particular modes of being as normative, is found circulating in the vast limits of cyberspace as well as embodied in the experiences of travellers. In the Delhi hip hop scene these travellers, who I have throughout called hip hop emissaries, brought two relatively distinct ideologies to bear on the scene, ideologies deeply linked to their ontological experiences of hip hop and urbanity which created new opportunities, engendered frictions, and made visible the kinds of politics around race, ethnicity, caste, gender and class that permeate the Delhi scene and reflect a local and global political context for hip hop's popularity.

These two ontologically saturated ideologies of hip hop, decolonial on the one hand, universal on the other, reveal the ways in which notions of global aesthetic belonging, forged through hip hop, is fractured at the local level in ways which reveal diasporic longings for a class-based borderless nationalism, or for a universalism that stresses practice as a means to engender democratic possibility across difference. However, in both takes on the salience of hip hop, I have argued that the African youth in the hip hop scene, those who attended events, went to the clubs, dressed in hip hop styles, listened to hip hop, and even experimented with hip hop practice, were not being sought after by these travelling kinds as suitable representatives of an Indian or a Delhi hip hop scene. The centrality of the Africans in the political economy of Khirki and their complete absence in the representation of hip hop in Khirki and in Delhi by both camps became a

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central concern as I got to know the struggles of the Somali, Nigerian, Congolese, and Ivorian youth I met in the settlement who participated in Delhi's hip hop scene. My recognition of this absence or aporia created the context for me to work more closely with the Somali crew who eventually collaborated on the creation of the film that focused on the racial tensions in Khirki. This film, which I call an instantiation of a critical hip hop cinema, sought to harness my ideological predispositions towards hip hop as a liberatory epistemology that addresses uneven power structures towards the making of shared images of life in Khirki. While I will go into the specific challenges and possibilities of what Rouch and others since have called a shared anthropology in my final chapter, it is important to note at the conclusion of this chapter on travelling kinds and their ideologies that my own predispositions towards research, hip hop, and the role of image making as a claim to what Mirzoeff (2011) has called a right to look, pushed me towards a particular kind of encounter and engagement that was not much different from the hip hop emissaries insofar as I had a particular agenda for representation, but different insofar as I wished to disrupt the implicit nativity that the hip hop emissaries brought in their engagements with hip hop, a nativity, that when I got to know the immigration narratives of the Africans, Afghanis, Nepalis, and Northeastern youth, struck me as a form of violence.

In the next chapter I explore how the image making practices of hip hop involved youth in Khirki led them to engagements with activists in the community who had a particular stake in the future development of the spatial colony and imagined, in some ways similar to what I propose in the making of collaborative films, that by engaging youth creativity in the process of producing a plan for development they would produce a more compelling account of what is happening on the ground. However, as we shall see, because these activists work are future oriented, the plans they produce creates an account not only of the spatial flows of Khirkis streets and byways, its residences, and public spaces, but utilizes hip hop's aesthetics as they are filtered through the experiences of B-boyers, MCs, and graffiti writers in Khirki, to imagine what Delhi could be. This turn to towards utopias, and so on, undergirded by hip hop images of alternative modernity, open up the possibility to think about gentrification in Delhi and the ways in

which youthful artistic practice engenders problematic processes of social and economic change. Moreover, it allows us an entry point into how 'content' production in the digital age, the aesthetic rendering of space and subject, offers the young men in my study an opportunity to participate directly in urban planning processes unfolding in the heart of Delhi.

"The ordinary practitioners of the city live 'down below,' below the thresholds at which visibility begins. They walk – an elementary form of this experience of the city; they are walkers, wandersmänner, whose bodies follow the thicks and thins of the urban text they write without being able to read it" (de Certeau, 1984:158).

"The identity of place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality (Gupta & Ferguson" 1992: 41).

"If we are to understand the impact of globalization on politics, we will have to look much more carefully at particular places…people inhabiting particular places produce and sustain variegated attachments to space, attachments that implicate them, wittingly or unwittingly, in political relations, discourses and struggles that occur at geographical scales stretching well beyond the local—the arena of face to face relations" (Gregory, 2008: 53).

"The relationship between informality and planners is complicated. On the one hand, informal spaces have been perceived as unplannable; on the other hand, there has been a series of attempts to improve and integrate such spaces" (Roy, 2005: 150).

I sit close to Sudhir, a 19-year old B-boyer and aspiring MC from Khirki who is a member of the first crew I met in Khirki comprising mainly of Nepali, Uttar Pradeshi and Bihari migrants, on a *charpoy* (bed) outside Singh's studio and apartment. On the small patio roof deck clothes hang in front of us on a line. There is a breeze blowing that gently sways the shirts and jeans on the line but not one strong enough to mitigate the harsh heat of Delhi's mid morning sun in March. Singh is in the apartment busily making us coffee. It's my first visit to his place and Sudhir and I sit waiting, facing forward, occasioning the silence with short bursts of conversation in Hindi/English followed by laughter. Sudhir and I had met earlier in the day and, after calling Singh to see if we could come over to 'work' in the studio, took a long winding stroll through Khirki to get to his new place in Malviya Nagar, where he was setting up his studio to work with young people in the hip hop scene. Sudhir doesn't really know the way. I am surprised because he has grown up in Khirki and, by my estimation, should know how to make his way through its *gallis* effortlessly. He explains, when I tease him about his lack of a sense of direction in his neighborhood, that when he was 7 he moved away from Khirki back to his village in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Before he left, he says, much of

Khirki was farmland. "When I came back after 5 years it looked like this."   An unplanned built landscape with buildings cropping up and others, simultaneously, being demolished. As we turned a bend we ran into one of Sudhir's friends on the street, a young man who I estimated couldn't have been more than 14. At first I had no idea that they were friends as this young man trailed behind us, he and Sudhir exchanging a few words here and there before Sudhir finally introduced me to him, "This is my friend. He is a vegetable seller and his family is also from Uttar Pradesh." In our short walk with him to the edges of Khirki I find out he had dropped out of school in the 8th standard to help his father man the family vegetable cart.

Sudhir, as we sit and wait for the coffee and for a chance to get on the microphone and record a few bars in Singh's place, shares a verse he had recently written that he wanted help with. He turns ever so slightly so he is partially facing me and pulls out a worn notebook of rhymes written in carefully written Devangiri script. The flies circle over our heads as he begins to rhyme a story in Hindi where he, like Shah Jahan of Taj Mahal fame, tries to move a girl's heart through gesture. The gesture is not as grand as Shah Jahan's, in this story Sudhir's protagonist gets the girl flowers. She takes them from him and then tells him to get out, to make his way to the streets of Khirki and find his way home. The last verse of the rhyme is in English, "so, now, I am the bloody fool." At first there is some interpretation by Singh, who emerges from the flat with three cups of coffee on a tray and hears the final bars of the verse. He argues that Sudhir is making a gesture towards colonialism by using the term bloody fool.   There is some confusion as we try and figure out, first, what Sudhir means, and then what precisely Singh is suggesting by evoking the colonial period in relation to the teenage intimacies Sudhir shares through his lyrics. Some laughter at our collective confusion follows. As the excitement dies down I tell Sudhir to try and kick the next verse from the girl's point of view. "Why did she reject him? What does she want?" He mutters, unconvincingly, a few words about her wanting a *badaa admi* (big man) and is generally a bit stumped about what to write next. So, he changes the flow of conversation and says in Hindi, "do you want to hear my verse for *Aap ki Sadak* (your road)?" "What is that," I ask?

He explained that he and several of the other members in his crew have been working with an activist group who are conducting a multi-pronged campaign whose goal is to reimagine Khirki's physical space by petitioning local politicians and planning authorities to create walking and biking paths in Khirki that connect it to adjacent communities and to the Metro. In a later conversation with a planner associated with the project, the Aap Ki Sadak project was referred to as "an experiment" that sought to reimagine Delhi's urban spaces from below by drawing on the insights of residents of the colony who currently don't own cars, who are pedestrians by circumstance. The initial idea was to conduct a ground up participatory research study that doubled as a community art project where local's opinions regarding the traffic mayhem in and around their colony would be documented on video and the general flow of pedestrian traffic in the colony would be mapped through survey instruments. They decided to focus on Khirki and the colonies surrounding it because of the relationships that key members of the collective had with the community. To initiate their participatory research plan they enlisted several young people to help cartographically envision this slice of Delhi's urban space, as, they reasoned, young people have the best sense regarding the circulation and movement of pedestrian traffic in relation to vehicular traffic. Finally, the group staged performance public demonstrations, utilizing the B-boys, MCs and graffiti artists in Sudhir's crew to raise awareness about the abysmal traffic conditions on the edges of the colony and to valorize walking and biking as legitimate modes of transport. Sudhir described his and his crew's role in the demonstration: "Do you know the *Mandir* (Temple) on the edge of Khirki? In front of the Mandir, right when the big school on the corner is? We stopped traffic at peak time and did a B-boy set and then I rhymed"

My name is Akshay and I like to keep my city clean

I like to keep it nice and green

Yo, listen now in Hindi

He es sach (this is true)

Listen now in Hindi

kya amir ma ghamand (what is the attitude of rich people?)

Garib me saram (poor people hesitate)

Dono bed bhau ka rakthe baram (both [poor and rich] go different ways)

Many days later, I ran into the artist/activist, Aarthi, who was at the center of the organizing and implementation efforts for the project.   I had met her within the network of relationships I developed in Khirki, my first introduction to her and her work facilitated by the Indian American B-boy, Javan, the second, as a result of spending time in the folds of an international arts organization whose offices and studios have been nestled in the main street of Khirki for over a decade. She and I talked about the Aap Ki Sadak project and about the event Sudhir narrated days prior, where he and his crew stopped traffic on the edge of Khirki. Regarding the event she said, "I was really surprised people in their cars weren't furious. They weren't honking their horns or screaming at us. They quietly listened and watched and some even clapped when it was over. I also, because of the demonstration, had a chance to talk with the school principal. The school, you know, is the biggest culprit in creating traffic jams at the space where Khirki meets Malviya Nagar because of all the buses and chauffeured cars that come to pick up the children at the end of the school day." The principal then, after discussing the impossibility of changing the flow of school traffic, said Aarthi, expressed an interest in having his students learn hip hop dance. And rap.   He had seen his students' interest piqued when the crew from Khirki began their show. Aarthi said that during the performance she had noted the interest of the students from the school as well. She said to me that at first they were just looking at the boys from Khirki up and down and had no interest in mingling with them. After they performed they all started to talk to them in animated voices.   When she suggested to the principal that the youth from Khirki could teach them he said, according to Aarthi, that he could not let those "rif raf" in the building. The parents would be very upset.

There are several strands that lend themselves to discussion and theorization in the descriptive passages above, passages that are descriptive and admittedly scattered across several temporalities precisely because I wish to convey some sense of Khirki as a place, the intersubjective nature of my engagements with the youth in the colony as we

moved through the spaces of Khirki, and the kinds of outcroppings of experience that my engagements with the youth in Khirki made visible. There is the young man and his vegetable cart, for instance, and the limited horizons of possibility for his laboring body in Delhi, the unrequited love expressed in Sudhir's initial verse, or the pedagogical moments that the verse opened up in our dialogue, moments that allowed us to discuss how the verse itself could become dialogic in its engagement with its subject. And each conversation, no doubt, is important. The limited opportunities for work and education that young B-boyers, MCs and their friends faced, somewhat akin (but also quite different because of context) to the male college students in the Jeffrey's (2010) study in the a mid sized town in Uttar Pradesh, created, in large part, the context for their creative engagements with hip hop. The challenge of romantic love embedded in Sudhir's verse, an impossibility tied to economic factors, also was a central thematic for many of the youth I spent time with. This impossible love, unlike the kind of lewd bravado without any sort of actual basis for engagement expressed by the protagonists in the 1998 documentary film focusing on 4 young men in a West Delhi settlement entitled *When Four Friend's Meet,* was grounded in a set of intimacies developed and dependent on the internet and cell phone but difficult to enact in face to face encounters because of lack of money, lack of proximity, and, in some cases, parental disapproval. Finally, there were the pedagogical moments that arose in Singh's studio or, later in my time in Delhi, during video editing sessions in my house. These moments become central in discussions regarding the kinds of connections that hip hop produces for these youth, as hip hop doyens like myself, Singh, as well as artists, filmmakers, and others from abroad and from Delhi are attracted to the aesthetic productions of Delhi's youth. These engagements, within the hip hop world but also in the broader field of artistic production, provided the youth with a random assortment of teachers who, in various pedagogical styles, offered various ideologically charged notions of what artistic practice could and should be, regulatory discourses on how affect and self should be wrought in a 21st century urban moment.

While these threads, no doubt, will be taken up in subsequent writings more explicitly, In this chapter I focus on how Khirki's hip hop practitioners and their image

making practices became a part of the experimental method envisioned by a small group of change makers to engage with development, planning, and urban change discourses from above, a way to visualize and imagine development anew by offering an alternative to the middle class driven car fetish that has taken over Delhi in the last decade, which has resulted in the construction of roads, flyovers, and highways that have reworked the cities' spaces. For the planners, artists, and architects involved in the Aap Ki Sadak project, walking and the kind of sensorial proximity that it offers became the central thematic by which to approach the realization of an alternate urbanity that draws from the new urbanisms discourse that has taken root in the U.S. and in Europe that calls for a scaling down of urban space (Rutheiser, 1996, 2008). To make its claims the Aap ki Sadak project, steeped in a new urbanism ideology, relied on the everyday urban imaginings made available by the young men and women of Khirki as well as the youths' direct participation in the Aap Ki Sadak project. The project's populist ideal hinged on drawing in youth to participate in several different ways.

First, Aap Ki Sadak organizers imagined a cartographic project that drew on the spatial epistemologies of the youngest residents of the settlement, second, they had youth administer a survey project that sought local feedback regarding traffic flows and use of space in greater Khirki. The glue, however, that held these instantiations of what Appadurai (2000) has called, in his work with PUKAR in Mumbai, 'barefoot' research that relies on youthful participation to produce critical epistemologies regarding urban change, was the hip hop image making projects of the B-boyers, MCs, and graffiti artists of Khirki who elevated Benjamin's s flâneur and de Certeau's wandersämnner into an ideal that not only spoke to the everyday ambulations of the settlements working class residents but aestheticized what could be an aspiration for the city's middle class. The Aap Ki Sadak project, in effect, offered a few hip hop involved youth who live in Khirki the opportunity to participate in imagining their neighborhood and Delhi anew through their visible aesthetic products. These images, taken together with the larger youth involvement designed to create a researched based argument from below, worked to make Khirki a visible *place* in Delhi, a place defined in it's ambulatory possibilities and the sensate lifeworlds it makes available.

Here, global hip hop creates an avenue for participation for migrant youth in the local context of Khirki, one that allows them through hip hop's flexible discourse on the urban to engage in the process of development through their visual products. Hip hop thus becomes a means and a mechanism to enable migrant youth visibility within their spatial community and beyond by making visible their relationship with Khirki as a place. The visibility generated as an outcome of their participation, both for Khirki and for the youthful participants in its project of change, are undergirded by public arts projects that have taken place in Khirki, several of which have been sponsored by an international arts association whose main office is located in Khirki. Aarthi, the principal community artist involved with the Aap ki Sidak, had been working in Khirki for almost a decade and during that time had curated several projects under the auspices of the arts organization. These visual products endure and visually punctuate and define several of the streets in the community. Moreover, several of these community arts projects in the last 2 years have included the visual art productions of hip hop involved youth who live in Khirki. Indeed, many of the youth who were involved in the Aap Ki Sadak project honed their hip hop skills as a result of a year long workshop held by the arts organization, workshops that were prompted by the youths' interest and conveyed through their main contacts to the organization, Aarthi and Sudhan, another artist/activist who has worked in the community for several years. These sponsored and official art projects lured Delhi's graffiti artists, some of whom live in the colony, to create several unauthorized pieces that are interspersed with the formal murals throughout the settlement and that leak beyond and into the main vehicular thoroughfares that connect Khirki with Malviya Nagar, Saket, and Haus Rani.

The all too brief history of Khirki as a vibrant nexus of artistic practice illustrates how public art, community activism, and youthful experimentation with popular forms, come together to produce notions of place that eventually serve as the aesthetic basis to enact projects of value that call for an alternative rendering of the urban. I argue that this creative reimagining of Khirki and, ultimately, of Delhi relies on a particular place making strategy in hip hop that obviates what de Certeau calls the tactics of the subaltern as a blueprint for creating an image of development aestheticized from below (de

Certeau, 1984). In this chapter I explore the ways in which these experimentations in urban development from below utilize the visual practices of hip hop that, inevitably, link Khirki to other historically significant urban village contexts in the city, urban villages that have gone through a process of what could be considered an autochthonous gentrification process that have hinged on their value as heritage sites as well as sites of an emergent youthful ethnic and racialized 'cool.' The connection between the kinds of urban renewal strategies like the one staged by Aap Ki Sadak in Khirki and the gradual gentrification of South Delhi's other urban villages suggests that the migrant youth that participated in these projects inevitably put themselves and their heterogeneous community in a precarious position as they make their community spaces aesthetically and epistemologically available to change processes that exceed the benign and, perhaps, even progressive visions of the key members of Aap Ki Sadak. Yet, I argue, that while the visual elements produced by youth, what could be considered signs of a to-be process of gentrification underway in Khirki and for that matter Humayunpur (the other urban village I spent considerable time with migrant B-boyers, MCs, and graffiti artists), are contradicted by the particular political economies that have developed around migrant bodies, specifically the relatively newer African diasporas, in relation to housing in these settlements. These political economies, I suggest, limit the kind of revanchist claims to space of gentrification by entrenching an image of difference in these spatial communities that are buttressed by evident material conditions for endurance.

It is this dual process that becomes visible in the images that the Aap Ki Sadak project produces as it seeks to imagine a future Delhi within the context of Khirki utilizing the aesthetic products of migrant youth. One the one hand this imaginary Delhi, one that is constructed on the grounds of a new urbanist philosophy and that utilizes the hip hop to create its claims, stages a potential process of gentrification for Khirki that potentially may harm some of those it wishes to serve. On the other hand, the fleeting image in performance and in circulation of migrant bodies points to the ways in which hip hop is separated from the very bodies that create its images, as the principal of the school attests to in his desire to have his charges learn how to B-boy and rap but not from *those* rif raf. This separation, I argue is critical to understanding how migrants,

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particularly migrants from within India, are placed within the larger topography of Delhi – as labor who are necessary to create Delhi's newfound possibilities but who must necessarily stay invisible. For international migrants, particularly African nationals, however, the situation is more complicated, as I will reveal in the final section of this chapter.

In the first section of this chapter I briefly discuss the politics of space and place in our contemporary moment more generally. I will then describe the specific place making strategies from above that seek to caste Delhi as world class through deliberate strategies that iconized or made obscure particular people, places, and things. In these examples I will touch upon the centrality of the aesthetic and aesthetic citizenship and tease out how place making, self-making and group belonging and its necessary exclusions are intertwined processes. I will then return to the specific case of Aap Ki Sadak's project and the ways an exploration of the notion of gentrification, a term regarding urban change often utilized in North American and European contexts, when exported to Delhi and in Khirki gives us a clue as to how value is being produced by the youthful denizens of the community and recognized, in the aesthetic outcomes of their productions, by those who seek to experiment with initiating what Ong (2011) and Spivak (1997) have called worldings from below -- the imagining anew of social worlds from those seemingly outside the processes of revisioning urban sociality. I will conclude with offering some thoughts about how citizenship constructed through the popular and made visible through the aesthetic necessarily creates localized exclusions, absences, and aporias.

Place, Aesthetics, and Citizenship in World Class Delhi
Place, argues Radice (2011), is space plus meaning. As people engage in social lives, connect their memories to particular inhabited spaces, the spaces they inhabit, the material effects of that that space, are imbricated with their experiences, feelings, thoughts, and desires. As Jacqueline Nassy Brown (2010) suggests, the process where place slowly acquires meaning and begins to assert itself onto the self-making projects of those who live within its folds is a process that is deeply phenomenological in nature, a

dialectic that is located in intersubjective experiences between subjects who collectively inhabit space and between subjects and the space itself. Nassy Brown (2010), however, also notes how space and place are historically constructed in the envisioning projects of empires, and more recently nations. Thus, the meaning making processes between people who live within a space or between people and the space that they inhabit have been governed by discourses that encode limited public meanings or authorized narratives of place. As a result place is often publicly defined in limits, racial, religious, gendered, ethnic, economic, or political, that serve to create an imagined map of possibility and impossibility within the space and that connect the space to a large contingent and scalar set of spaces. These spatialized limit acts, thought of in invisible borders as well as in material walls, do the work of announcing difference while also creating, somewhat counter intuitively, a distinct relationship between spaces through recognizable division (Low, 1996).

Historically, particular spaces or places of the city have functioned as synecdoche, icons or monuments that give the city its character, while other places fall into invisibility. This process of monumentalizing particular places in the city, or in the nation for that matter, is ongoing and subject to constant revision. Since the 20th century this process of iconization of place takes on two trajectories, first, the recognition and constitution of heritage sites, or places that singularly define the past for a city or a nation (Appadurai, 2000; Meskell, 1999). Second, are the efforts to reconstruct the city as a whole to function as an icon of the global, a conjunctive space that serves to usher in future worlds.

Historically, the efforts to imagine and produce physical changes to the city that would, in effect, serve to usher in a modernity premised on a creating a stable container for human productivity and future possibility primarily, has come from above. In recent history, planning efforts from above across the globe specific to urban contexts have increasingly reshuffled populations, as well as have created new categories of lived spaces to describe the sprawl that has taken, terms such as the peri-urban, the suburban, and the ex-urban. As planners and developers reimagine the city and its peripheries they encode built spaces and the inter-linkages between the spaces with aspirations and desires

(Low and Zuniga, 2003). These encodings of public space mold the material context for meaning making for those who live in the cities' folds.

In Delhi the process of curating place making from above has taken as its most visible form a formalized development project that seeks to create a rational, ordered city through the construction of a physical circuitry of roads and the public transportation. This arterial vision of place is complemented by the public-private projects that have emerged in the last decade that materialize shopping malls and housing colonies that are marketed mainly to the urban middle class. These private and public spaces function as nodes that the recently built metro system and the relatively new arterial roads of the city work to connect, to create a cohesive image of a world-class city in the making. Simultaneously, city planners and officials work to divest the urban poor living in illegal housing settlements, most commonly referred to as slums, in the inner reaches of the city. This assault on the urban poor, historically referred to as beautification by planners, has been systematically pursued since Indira Gandhi's infamous emergency (Tarlo, 2003) but has its origins in colonial beautification and sanitation projects (Hosagrahar, 2007).

Recent anthropological work has picked up on the kind of legal and economic negotiations that slum dwellers, migrants from the hinterlands mingled with Delhi's long term urban poor, have had to endure to fight removal or to guarantee housing promised by the state in the outskirts of the city (Bhan, 2009; Soni, 2007; Roy, 2006). We can see these struggles as instantiations of a political form of citizenship, a citizenship that takes the state as a central actor in defining the relationships between people and space, the arbiter of determining the nature and character of place. Slum dwellers, in these cases, are in direct engagement with the meanings of space that are produced from above and utilize legal channels and juridicial language to either push for a different set of understandings of the land they live on to protect and preserve their relationship, ostensibly, to property or seek recompense for their loss. In many of these cases the sorts of negotiations are predicated and premised on the promises made by developers, city officials, and local politicians, to allocate, in return for voluntary removal, private property in the distant outskirts of the city (See Tarlo, 2003; Webb, 2012).

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The efforts to relocate the urban poor of the city to its outskirts point to the kinds of relationship between informal and formal development processes that continue to push the boundaries of the city outwards while simultaneously re-appropriating space in the center of the city. By utilizing the term informal, Roy (2005) points the ways in which, globally, urban growth has necessitated unplanned, and illegal housing construction for what constitutes the "bottom of the urban economy" (Breman, 2003, See Also Holston, 2008). In Delhi, these processes have created an informal housing market on the edges of the city for the urban poor as well as a series of speculative informal, grey market development projects marketed towards the middle class, most notably apartment development projects and the advent of farmhouse projects in the peri-urban areas of the city. By all estimations, this process of outward expansion will continue unabated and will increase the size of city by 700 square kilometers in the next decade (Delhi Master Plan, 2021). These informal housing development projects, particularly in the prenumbra of the city, create localized political economies of exchange between real estate developers, builders, and landowners, unregulated spaces that leave small claim farmers vulnerable to manipulation (Saini, in preparation; Searle, Dissertation). The realignment of space, in these cases, are profound, as rural tracts are turned, not only into housing developments for the laboring bottom of the city, but into lucrative high rise developments and low rise colonies for the burgeoning middle class. In short, the meaning of Delhi as a place is in flux and the meaning of specific spaces or what were once stable places in the region are increasingly becoming contested zones of engagement. In these zones of contact that bring real estate speculators, developers, farming communities and shadowy middlemen into contact, formal claims to the state as well as public protests are enacted that make visible the kinds of shifting political and economic terrain that leave individuals, families, and communities out of the process for self-determining the location of their livelihoods or the collective meaning of their lifeworlds.

However, these wholesale shifts in the terrain of the city are also producing more subtle processes, granular shifts in the self-fashioning processes of individuals that reveal emergent structures of feeling, in Raymond Williams famous formulation, that point to

hazy as yet undetermined futures, claims of citizenship in the present that have yet to connect to certain ideological pasts to forge potential futures. One way of approaching these instantiations is through James Holston's (2008) work on the localized problematizations of the top down planning and development projects in Brazil. In his work on the autoconstrução in the peripheries of Sao Paolo, he reveals instances of what he calls insurgent citizenship that reveal a right to the city ethos that take on a politicality that is localized and distinctively urban in nature. By deploying the term insurgency, Holston (2008) is able to show how the residents of self-made settlements, what in Delhi would be referred to as *juggad* settlements, refuse the majoritarian politics of representative democracy, instead opting for more localized forms of participation. Holston (2008) argues, however, that this localization of participation creates new forms of violence, new species of hierarchy, which quickly erode its democratic possibilities. Here insurgency as engagement can be visualized in two ways – as a hopeful grassroots effort to create a more just and equal sociality and second, as a form of anarchy in terms most pejorative sense. In Delhi images of what could be called insurgency, participation without obvious political purpose, engagement without intention, are thrown up in the media as inchoate and, as they make their circulations, produce anxiety amongst those who see these insurgencies as a threat (Sundaram, 2011). Saini's (in preparation) work on a fomenting violent masculinity and gang violence in the peri-urban villages of Haryana just bordering Delhi in relation to informal development that often creates micro-contexts for engagement that far exceed the regulatory protocols of the state, will no doubt reveal the affective context for the kinds of self-making projects young men in the expanding prenumbra of the city undertake to reimagine their lives in the 'world class' city making context in which they live, affectively charged aesthetic projects that don't simply, as Ghertner (2011) suggests, mimetically map the fetishes of the middle class onto the consciousness of the urban poor.

Informal settlements like Khirki and Humayunpur, which provide housing to internal migrant workers and, more recently, international migrants but, unlike unauthorized settlements or slums, are connected to or are a part of the cities historic urban villages, pose another as yet unexplored context for development and its

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subsequent reformulation of space as urban place, subjectivity, and outcroppings of insurgency. While contexts and histories of each urban village are unique, what they both have in common a large or increasing population of refugees, students, transnationals, and migrants from, Nepal, Bihar, the Northeast of India and from several nations in the continent of Africa. Moreover, both settlements are encroachments on the remnants of medieval Delhi and the villages that have existed in their shadows for at least a century (Kacker, 2005). Because of their status as urban villages, these two settlements and their counterparts in other parts of the city have been outside the jurisdiction of the Municipal Development Corporation of Delhi (MDC) since India's independence. Urban villages like Humanyunpur and Khirki rely on a local structure of governance to make decisions on building, which has produced a very different trajectory of development for these habitations as they have been engulfed in the expanding city. As the city has expanded, local developers in these villages who are often occupy seats of power in the structures of local jurisdiction and governance, have taken advantage of the urban village designation and available land previously used for farming, to build inexpensive housing for migrants, both transnational and national.

The increasing population of transnational migrants in these settlement areas is in part due to the limited opportunities for these communities to find housing elsewhere in central Delhi due to rampant racism. This racialized prejudice is directed, in particular, towards Africans but also towards Northeastern and Afghani migrants who have more recently moved to the city. What has resulted in these micro-housing markets, because of the limited housing opportunities elsewhere but also, in part, because of the desirable location of these urban villages as they sit adjacent to the gleaming shopping malls and private hospitals of South Delhi, are highly inflated rents and the threat of constant dispersal. This is particularly true for the Africans in Delhi who have limited scope in finding stable housing in Delhi and, in recent years, have found themselves clustered in one of a few colonies in the city where landlords and their agents will rent them flats, usually at higher prices without a legal guarantee for inhabitation. The second important aspect that makes Khirki and Humayunpur unique in the context of Delhi are the kinds of aesthetic productions that youth in the settlements, along with visiting graffiti artists,

muralists, and so on, have produced on the walls of the community. The presence of public art on the street, coupled with the fashionable, often hip hop inspired dress that many of the young men and women, particularly from the African diaspora and the Northeastern states of India, create a particularly vibrant image of an emergent cosmopolitanism from below in the city. In this regard, Khirki and Humayunpur reflect a process of urban change that has already occurred in a few of South Delhi's now upmarket urban villages in so far as they represent a particular kind of aesthetic that is permeating particular pockets of the city.

These upmarket South Delhi's urban villages, also connected to heritage sites in the city, have been reimagined by a new breed of developers who have worked with local authorities in the villages to rebrand the legally protected urban villages as sites for a different sort of development project that draws on the new urbanist discourse that stresses walkability and available public space as key features of its tenets (Ruthheiser, 2008). The appropriation of historical villages for urban place-making projects that seek to re-create, in part, a hybridized urbanity that draws from European aesthetic sensibilities regarding urban heritage and post-modern urban design, has accelerated considerably in the last 5 years. Two urban villages in South Delhi, in particular, have become sites for a kind of development project that relies on the historical context of the village to construct a quaint retro-modernity that builds on notions of European urban space that values the walker. However, the image of the walker in these instantiations, rather than the celebratory narratives of everyday ambulation that de Certeau (1984) points out or the explicitly political derives of French situationists imply, are tamed, and the ambulatory possibilities of these villages provide a narrowed field of experience decidedly titled towards the cultivation of tastes and the enabling of consumption. Indeed, The newly renovated boutiques, restaurants, bars, and music venues, of which there new offerings weekly, mostly cater to the young or the self-described cosmopolitans of the city and to the increasingly visible international cadre of internationals working in Delhi as they an offer alternative, to the mall, for pleasure made possible through consumption and the construction of an aesthetically familiar sociality.

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Recently, one urban village located on the edges of the ruins of the Haus Khas Madrassa and Deer Park Lake, has become a flash point for friction amongst long term residents, who have decried the regular crowds of South Delhites, tourists, and international labor, who make their way into the village in the evenings to revel in its playground of social fantasy. Haus Khas Village has been undergoing a gradual gentrification process since the 1980s (Tarlo, 1987). This process, however, has reached a fever pitch in the last five years as the area has come to be known, in the popular media, as the Greenwich Village of Delhi. In a recent effort, an NGO in concert with some of the remaining resident villagers of Haus Khas, tried to shut down the villages many illegal restaurants and bars arguing that the existing legal restrictions on commercial businesses in the village has been flaunted, as a result creating a sanitation problem that the villages infrastructure cannot handle. This effort to bring attention to the kind of unregulated developments, the rampant construction of bars, restaurants, and nightclubs in the village resulted, in a very temporary shut down that was overturned soon thereafter. Business went on. The political economy that has spawned the development of these urban villages poses an interesting set of questions concerning the relationships between the local Zamindars, landowners whose claims to property extend prior to the constitution of the Indian state, developers, and in Haus Khas Village's case, the NRIs (non-resident Indians) who are returning to create lifestyle businesses in partnership with local partners. However, this story is beyond the scope of this chapter and perhaps, though I will touch on some of the issues of a local political economy of property regarding Khirki, outside the scope of this monograph.

What does become important, however, is how the aesthetic productions of Delhi's hip hop involved youth become a central feature in the upscale urban villages described above. In Haus Khas, for instance, there is a set of walls in the edge of the village where graffiti artists ply their craft. This 'piece wall' is part of a larger constellation of commissioned mural art that can be found throughout the urban village. The youth in my study would often travel to Haus Khas to hang out and my early ventures into this urban village were underwritten by my research endeavor to trace hip hop in Delhi. I found myself several times in my first month in the city in one of the

many informal bars in the village listening to local DJs, the inheritors of the elite electronic music scene that Dhiraj Murthy documents in his work on the Delhi and Mumbai music scene (2007, 2010). Later, as I got to know several B-boyers and MCs from Khirki, I would go with them to an open mic night in one of the elite bars of the village just so they could spend 5 minutes rapping to youthful audiences, middle class college students that they otherwise would not interact with. The night would end and I would pass the kids a 100 rupee note, auto fare to get back to Khirki. I then, as I walked towards an auto to make my way home, would wonder at how the kinds of developments that have reshaped Haus Khas would effect Khirki, sandwiched between two historical urban villages in a central location in South Delhi that have already gone through drastic changes. Moreover, once I found out about Aap Ki Sadak, I wondered at how activist interests in Khirki, encapsulated in but not isolated to Aap ki Sadak project with its deliberate goals to create a more sensible, in the most phenomenological meaning of the word, development program articulated and, perhaps, alienated the needs of Khirki's diverse migrant communities. My mind alit on the murals and graffiti of Khirki that marks a tensile link between its version of urban life and Haus Khas village and its fully realized mutation into a walkable heritage village.

Gentrification, Cosmopolitanism and fracturing aesthetics from below

Urban geographer Neil Smith (2002) argues that gentrification, a term that emerged in Europe in the late 19th century to describe a class based urban 'renewal' process that systematically disenfranchises the poor, the working class, and the racial other has now gone global. As the property values of first tier cities across the globe skyrocket and as particular notions of urban lifestyle take root in cities that imagine themselves world class, a micro-level development process has fomented that complicates and thickens the top-down planning strategies of city officials and planners and that alters the meaning making processes of those who live in the communities that become sites of urban change. The market thus creates contexts of flux that are under anticipated by official planners, contexts that are driven by an increasingly differentiated set of needs and desires of the urban middle class. Smith's (2002) Marxist inspired argument regarding

the globalization of gentrification is a bit overstated as it can't help to totalize, ahistoricize, and delimit the role of cultural processes in urban change. Indeed, we can see that in the case of Delhi, as in other cities across the world, claims to space have not been rendered solely in economic or functional terms, i.e., proximity to the city center, a lower cost of entry into private property ownership, and so on, but have also been predicated on the meanings attached to place and space that create value (Canclini, 2004; Sassen, 2002; Castells, 2000). That is, gentrification in the age of neoliberalism is, in part, predicated on the value for particular urban spaces that are produced through the cache of meanings that circulate in the public sphere regarding particular places. These contextual particularities create unique processes of urban change that, while linked to more global processes that neoliberal policies produce in urban contexts as the state recedes in its role to regulate the market, must be approached at the granular level if they are to be understood.

Khirki poses a particularly interesting site to study urban change precisely because of its relationship to the heritage sites located in its periphery, its proximity to the sprawling mall compound just across the main thoroughfare, its burgeoning migrant population, and the remnants of artistic practice that are strewn along the streets and in the shop stalls throughout the village that are sponsored by the very active arts organization on the settlements main street. In Khirki's main thoroughfare, just above sightline, graffiti pieces cling to the walls next to 'fine art' mural projects. Vehicular traffic cannot move easily through on singular dirt and gravel path and four wheel traffic cannot move at all through the *gallis* that radiate out from this central pathway. This central road sits in the heart of the informal settlement, what used to be, as Sudhir noted, farmland attached to Khirki Village, a several hundred year old now urban village located just adjacent to the settlement. Importantly, this land is still under the control of the zamindars of the village, a few families who have great influence in the construction and the occasional deconstruction of buildings in Khirki. Just southwest lies Haus Rani, another several hundred-year old urban village that today mostly houses Muslim families who arrived during partition, a sizable Afghani migrant population and an increasingly visible Somali refugee community. In the northwest Malviya Nagar, a colony built soon

after independence, looms with its large open aired bazaar and several gated residential enclaves. To the north lies the Satpula dam site, an architectural marvel of the Lodhi dynasty rivaling the Roman built aqueducts that is now left, like many of the ruins scattered across the city, to the adventurous, the needy, and dispossessed.

Shop fronts run by members of any one of the sedimented layers of migrants that now call the settlement home line this main thoroughfare. There is the open air barbershop, where an old TV blares and small crowds of Bihari laborers pass time smoking beedis between work and sleep. Just behind the barbershop is a graffiti 'piece wall' created under the auspices of one of the many public and community art projects that have taken place in the settlement. Further down the street is corner where West African men and women hang out on the corner to catch up with their friends, business associates, within their unstable and transient transnational community. Just adjacent to this corner is a Nepali restaurant where workers avail of inexpensive meals before they return to their laboring jobs. The B-boys, MCs and DJs who live within Khirki's diverse spatialities tell stories of the settlement and its adjacent spatial terrains in their poetry and in their embodied performative practice of B-boying which they practice in the small park spaces within and just adjacent to the settlement. They also invest meaning to its spaces in their visible art work, some of which was produced under the auspices of the arts organization in the community, others as a result of their or enterprising visitors from abroad or from greater Delhi, experimentations with illegality and public art. The stories I heard in poetry, prose and apprehended in their visual productions are linked to specific locations within greater Khirki where incidents, both humorous and grave, take place in these young peoples everyday lives in the settlement. There were commonalities in these stories told by the hip hop involved youth. All of them, for instance, discussed how they were often chased out of the small colony parks on the peripheries of Khirki when they congregated in the park for too long. All of them also expressed great interest in passing time in the large shopping mall across the street. However, their stories diverged around the kinds of exclusions they would face as newcomers to Khirki and Delhi. Sudhir and his crew, for instance, were rarely chastised for being outsiders in the colony while racial difference for Hanif and his Somali and Afghani crew was an everyday theme in the

stories they told of their movements through Khirki.   The variability of their stories across ethnic and racial difference painted a complex picture of the kinds of political economies that made Khirki distinct from Haus Khas or any of the several other urban villages currently undergoing what could be called gentrification precisely because of its diversity.

Indeed, Khirki's diversity produces a unique vision of a pedestrian everyday urbanism, a vision of a cosmopolitanism from below that is developing in several of Delhi's folds as it takes in unexpected migrant communities from Africa, Afghanistan, the Northeast, and so on.   When filtered through the image making projects of youth engaged with hip hop these images promote a vibrant and defamiliarizing image of Delhi as already cosmopolitan (See Binnie, et al, 2006, for a way to approach cosmopolitanisms from below). This decidedly pedestrian cosmopolitanism emerges in Khirki, in part due the built environment that makes it so, with its winding gallis that do not allow for vehicular transportation, but also because of the economic status of its residents. Pedestrians by circumstance, the denizens of Khirki flow through the gallis of the settlement encountering each other in their narrow channels, creating grounds for friction and social exchange.

Youth in Khirki, of course, spend far more time in these *gallis* and in the various nooks and crannies of space that act as the connective tissue and the borders between settlement communities than their adult counterparts who primarily move through the space on their way from work to home. Indeed, as young people they have a different relationship to their spatial surrounds as their movements through space aren't as routinized as adults. This youthful propensity towards what Debord and his fellow situationists call the dérive, the unauthorized wanderings of urban space, serves to create a stage for sometimes dramatic engagements. The scope of these engagements, however, are determined at the intersection of age and gender. For instance, In the streets of Khirki young boys and girls under the age of 12 played in the *gallis* close to where they lived. Nepali, Northeastern, Afghani, Uttar Pradeshi, Nepali and Bihari youth were on the street regularly playing any number of games with each other -- a game of football, a kite flying session, a game of stick ball and so on.

The older youth, above the age of 12 and on the street, however, were mostly young men. In this age range, the African youth of the settlement appeared along with young men from various ethnic communities who lived in Khirki, all of whom would roam around Khirki in small groups. Some still wore school uniforms hours after school had been let out as they stood on the corners of alleys with their friends, found small areas away from prying eyes to smoke cigarettes or joints, or made their way to one of the many small billiard halls or gaming parlors tucked into the recesses of Khirki. Sudhir and his boys as well as Hanif and his crew would constantly roam (*gumthe*) in and around Khirki and further afield. Youth in their teenage years, as the Aap Ki Sadak staff understood quite well and deployed effectively, are prone to a deeper exploration of their built environment and are more prone to articulating particular constructions of place and space as they move through the authorized and unauthorized tangles of their settlement.

My movements with the youth in my study took me to abandoned buildings, the rickety domes of 500 year old masjid, the tunnels of the Satpula dam, several small parks, and, with the Somalian youth, dozens of African run speakeasies tucked into the lanes of Khirki. These explorations, of course, translated into certain knowledge of the settlement, a knowledge that was no doubt valuable to me as I sought to understand the context for self-fashioning processes, their participation in Delhi's rhizomic hip hop community, and their aesthetic productions of place, whether Khirki, or of Delhi more broadly, as they were captured and circulated. Aarthi and several others involved in the Aap Ki Sadak project had, similarly, engaged with the youth of Khirki over the years that they produced community art work with the many overlapping ethnic communities in the settlement. Aarthi, in particular, worked with many young people in Khirki, initiating several community art projects over the years. Migrant construction workers from Bihar whose children, left on the side of the road while their parents worked, created pottery and baked them in the temporary kiln Aarthi built in one of the small RWA (Resident Welfare Association) maintained village parks. Aarthi was also involved with a diverse group of youth in a local government school where she conducted theater workshops. This prolonged immersion in Khirki and amongst it's youth, for Aarthi and some of her colleagues and friends, created an image of Khirki for them that paints the settlement as

distinct, vibrant, and multicultural – a term Aarthi used to describe Khirki. These close interactions with the youth of the community coupled with their long engagements in the community also gave them a deep understanding to the kinds of social, economic and political struggles that the residents went through in their daily lives. Indeed, Aarthi and several other artist-activists who I met in my early days in Khirki provided an important narrative of change that allowed me to approach Khirki as a migrant colony, a working class colony, and a colony that posed a unique set of opportunities and challenges within the context of the changing metropolis of Delhi.

Aap ki Sadak, was in many ways, a means to engage the accumulated knowledge of Khirki's residents and the relationships that Aarthi and her collaborators developed with the youth of the community over several years towards a project that would produce a collective good for the settlement – walking paths, the reclamation of Satpula as a public park, and so on. This grassroots effort that linked expert knowledge – architects, planners, and artists – with the local knowledge of the settlement embodied in youthful bodies utilized, quite effectively, the alternative modernity that hip hop offered to, first and foremost, foster interest towards active change amongst the youth who made Khirki their home. On several walks I took with Sudhir and his crew during the months that Aap Ki Sadak were conducting their research and staging various public events, young people from the community approached them as local celebrities asking whether they were going to do any more performances in the near future.   For young people throughout the colony hip hop's incontrovertibly 'cool' aesthetic effectively linked with the Aap Ki Sadak's project to imagine Delhi, in Sudhir's appropriation of a political slogan that appeared at the turn of the millennium in Delhi, as "clean and green." These efforts were reinforced as several members of Sudhir's crew would go on to work closely with another NGO in Khirki that focused specifically on environmental issues, to teach other young people in Khirki, mostly tribals from Bihar and Jaharkhand, hip hop dance forms.

Aap Ki Sadak's overall efforts to utilize their understanding of the everyday urbanisms of Khirki to promote a new urbanism ideology of sustainability, however, were more complex.   The new urbanisms paradigm of walkability has been critiqued in the U.S. and Europe for its susceptibility to cooptation for projects of gentrification

within inner city contexts (Ruthheiser, 2008). In the context of Delhi, Aap Ki Sadak's efforts to promote sustainable development in the colony focused on the kinesthetic epistemology of walking. This, of course, in important ways mirrored the kinds of quick development that has occurred in urban villages like Haus Khas where walking has been championed in commercial terms. This mirroring potentially poses harmful outcomes for the current migrant residents of Khirki as it makes the settlement visible in way that might perhaps open its informal arrangements to new rental demands from those in the city who seek a neighborhood that poses an alternative to the gated colonies in which they live. Certainly, in the months I lingered around the arts organization's newly opened café in the heart of Khirki, I met several young middle class Delhites who had made Khirki home precisely because of the appeal of its cosmopolitanism. Said one new resident, a technology sector worker who moved to Delhi from Pune, "this place is great, I can see all kinds of people on my way to work. I can eat Nepali food or go to the mall across the street. It is like Paris." Moreover, the presence of the art organization in Khirki over the last 10 years had greatly impacted the community's residents, not just because it created a hub for a network of artists from across Delhi to congregate and, thus, put Khirki on the map but because some of the many who came to attend regular openings and events at the arts organization eventually moved into the neighborhood. I couldn't help but to think of my own experiences in New York and San Francisco and the role that artists, arts organizations and those associated with creative pursuits had in the gentrification of working class, Black and Latino communities.

The real estate agents I had made acquaintances with on my various jaunts through the community corroborated this trend I saw in my wanderings through Khirki and in my time inside the arts organization, as they spoke of young artists and professionals moving in, saying they were seeing more and more of this 'kind' of renter coming to their offices, along with the growing number of Africans coming to rent in Khirki, a point I will return to in just a moment. While Aap Ki Sadak certainly, on its own, wasn't going to be the catalyst that creates wholesale change in Khirki, a kind of turnover that would radically alter the demographics of the neighborhood, its visible

projects bring to light the complex processes shifting and changing Delhi's tucked away settlements.

Perhaps the more direct consequence of Aap Ki Sadak's project for the youth I worked with was its plan to revitalize the area around the ruins of the Satpula dam, a place now claimed by urban villagers who graze their livestock and horses, groups of young people who use the open space in front of the ruins of the dam to play cricket and football, and the young people in my study, who use the dam structure itself as a meeting place to practice MCing and to catch up with each other over a few cigarettes. In the closing show I attended that showcased Aap Ki Sadak's proposed changes for Khirki, Satpula had been remade in digital renderings from above which included a reclaimed lake area just in front of the dam, a walking bridge over the *nala* (canal) that ran on the borders of the to ease the movement of pedestrian traffic between Khirki and an adjacent community, and a landscaping plan that would reclaim the areas just on the banks of the nala. After spending considerable time at the Satpula site with many of the youth in the Somali crew and meeting crews of young tribal men from Chattisgarh who lived in the slum just behind Satpula, these plans at first seemed exciting. The youth, I imagined, would now, ostensibly, have a cleaner and safer place to spend time in. Of course, it dawned on me after a few moments that were these plans to go through, Satpula would be transformed into an authorized space, a space under surveillance that would be difficult to occupy by these youth who would find it difficult to enter or to do anything deemed 'illegal' in the space.

Weeks after the closing show for Aap Ki Sadak, I walked with Irfan, a member of the Somali crew of MCs from Khirki, who told me that Satpula would soon be off limits for them because there were plans to convert it to a heritage site with an entry fee similar to some of the many. Soon, he said as we climbed over the gate between the main road and the Satpula area, this place will not be a place we can hang out anymore. I asked him if he knew about the Aap Ki Sadak project and he looked puzzled. He had not been exposed to Sudhir's performances or to the project at all. I asked him where he had found out about these plans for Satpula. "The whole settlement is talking about it", he said. You watch, they will charge money to enter the site. And we won't be able to use it

anymore."   Irfan's knowledge of the potential changes to Satpula that travelled to him through his networks in Khirki, coupled with his lack of knowledge about Aap Ki Sadak's project, brings up two important issues and questions I will conclude this chapter with. First, how are African migrants, who are growing in number in Khirki and contribute to creating a particular political economy around private property in Khirki, positioned with regards to the discussion above regarding gentrification and the changing topos of Delhi? Second, closer to the ground of this study, how are the diverse youth who are engaged with the Delhi hip hop scene who live in Khirki reflecting through their artistic production the kinds of structural changes linked to capital that are ongoing in their spatial community?

Conclusion

As I noted at the start of this chapter, the possibility that the aesthetic projects of artists in collaboration with community members or Aap Ki Sadak's efforts, for that matter, could translate into a wholesale gentrification of the settlement seem unlikely precisely because of the political economy that the presence of African produces in the settlement. African nationals, refugees, and so on, because they pay considerably more rent for their flats, for the spaces where they have started African kitchens, or churches, have become the center of a rental economy in Khirki that has seen a marked increase in the presence of African nationals in the last five years. One older real estate agent in the area, over a cup of chai, told me that 6 years ago, just around the same time that the mall across the street was built, she started to get African nationals seeking flats in the neighborhood. Landlords, she said, were not willing to rent to them at first but warmed to the idea when the agent told them they could charge a bit more rent. Since 2007 the presence of Africans, along with the Afghans, has grown considerably in the spatial community. The UNHRC officials I spoke to who serve the refugee populations in Delhi have opened three offices in the area around Khirki to serve the growing numbers of African and Afghani nationals who have rightful claims to refugee status in the area. The influx of racial and ethnic others, not only creates an economic opportunity for landowners and property middle men, it creates a particular set of frictions, conflicts, and solidarities amongst internal and

international migrants and longer term residents. With regards to this chapter what becomes important is that the presence of the African community, in particular, limits the possibilities of the kind of wholesale shifts and changes that have occurred in urban villages with a similar walking sensibility and public art presence because of the unanticipated productive relationships between landlords, agents, the police, and prospective tenants.

It is curious that Aap Ki Sadak, in their vision for the spatial future for this community did not directly engage with this new migratory pattern as it is an almost overdetermining feature of Khirki's current spatial meanings. As the Aap Ki Sadak project began and ran its course there were several violent interactions between the state and Congolese and Nigerian residents, several rapes of Ugandan women that occurred in the evening hours, and several assaults of African men by groups of migrants from within India. These sorts of incidents produced a particular affect in the streets of Khirki, a feeling of fear amongst the Africans in the community, a feeling of impending violence for others. I delve further into the political economy of Khirki in relation to African migrants in my subsequent work on the growing presence of Africans in India's first tier cities. What is important in this case is the absence of Africans and the particular constructions of place that have occurred as a result of their presence in Khirki in the Aap ki Sadak narrative. This absence, I argue, is not because Aap Ki Sadak organizers are not cognizant of the kinds of economic and political shifts the presence of international migrants is producing in this microcosm of Delhi "below the thresholds at which visibility begins" (de Certeau, 1984: 158). Rather, the absence of any discussion regarding the cultural context and the political economy of Khirki in the Aap Ki Sadak project is reflective of the ways in which civil society efforts to engage in urban development often avoid directly addressing the seething political issues that lie just below the surface. Rather, civil society actors focus their efforts on the relationship between practical solutions and the production of a symbolic field that speaks to solidarity rather than tension to make their efforts realizable.

The eruption of hip hop imagery through the bodily performances and voicing of migrant youth, as I noted earlier in this chapter, creates an aesthetic field where an

alternate modernity is made visible in ways that work to coincide with Aap Ki Sadak's vision for Khirki. As Aap Ki Sadak has to appeal to the politicians of the city and its planners to implement its plan, they created a narrative of change within the settlement that is decidedly Indian. Thus, it is no surprise that the youth who become representatives of Aap Ki Sadak are migrants who can be included in the national imaginary. Biharis, Uttar Pradeshis, even Northeasterners and Nepalis, because they speak Hindi and, critically, look like they belong, become the proper representatives for this project, particularly the few that also engage with global hip hop as they represent an already existing global connection within Khirki that is decidedly Indian. As these youth represent the project to reshape the settlement a small sliver of their experience within Khirki makes itself visible. For instance, Sudhir's verse in the introduction, a verse he raps in public space, reveals something of his and his family's struggles in the city. He raps of the divide between the poor and the rich where the rich don't care and the poor 'hesitate,' highlighting the centrality of economic disparity that threads through discourses of urban change that limits the voices of those who occupy subaltern positions.

What is more telling, however, is the verse that he follows the initial verse with, one that he didn't rap in public but that he shared with me on Singh's terrace and that he ultimately recorded in the studio. This verse, a condensed auto-ethnography detailing his discovery of hip hop, dropping out of school, his brief stint in his early teens as a parking attendant in nearby Saket, and his subsequent return to school reveals the ways in which he is constrained by the labor market, and his hope that hip hop and standard education will allow him access to other possible futures. Sudhir explains, " My mom is paralyzed from the waist down. I have three sisters. My father is useless." I asked, "is he in Khirki?" "Yes, he is. He is a welder. I don't talk to him, though. I don't see him. When I was in 9th standard I got a job as a security guard in PVR, a shopping complex in Saket. It was the night shift. So everyday I would go to school. Practice my hip hop. Then, go to work. But, I would be so tired. I would start to fall asleep at work. My boss, once, found me asleep and beat me. Then, some BMWs in the parking lot had their tires punctured. Three men came and beat me saying it was my fault. They told me to never come back to PVR or they would kill me. So, now I work a part time job. I have

to work to help my mummy. My sisters." This story, what he called *mera khahani* in his verse, was reflected tersely in the 7 bars he wrote. But not quite so clearly as what he told me in between moments on the microphone as we stood on Singh's balcony and looked out at the Krishna temple that marked the entry into Khirki from Malviya Nagar.

Sudhir went on to tell me, in the months that we got to know each other that he imagined and hoped that hip hop would provide him a way out of the dilemma he faced, a way to improve his and his families situation. This sentiment was repeated in the film produced by Nikolaj Bendix and Skyum Larsen on hip hop aspirations in Khirki, where, in a poignant scene one of the younger brothers of a member in Sudhir's crew narrates how his brother and the Khirki crew of about 15 young men would go to the mall everyday to practice and perform their hip hop moves in the hopes that they would get discovered by someone who would provide an opportunity for them. In the next chapter I follow Sudhir's crew as they go to practice their B-boy moves and the MCing skills in the mall's outdoor courtyards to explore the ways in which hip hop allows these young men to become visible in the glittering public spaces of 21st century India.

Epilogue

It's evening in Khirki. I have just left an African run speakeasy with a few members of the Somali crew after discussing the remaining shots we need to capture for our film on race in Khirki. We walk through the streets, and, even after months roaming in Khirki, I am disoriented and don't know my way back to the main road. Hanif, my first contact in the crew and my main collaborator in the film project, laughs at my witlessness and he and a couple of others from the crew direct me through the now dark alleys and busy main arteries of the colony, thronged with pedestrians. We, however, quickly run into an impediment or series of impediments. Several streets are being paved in the settlement and, since heavy machinery cannot make it into the space, the paving process is being done manually. I stand and watch as Amin, an older member of the crew, explains to me that this initiative to pave the streets is the result of the Aam Admi (ordinary people) Party's victory in the Delhi elections. The bigger streets, now, he matter of factly reports, will be easier to navigate for motorcycles and cars. Also, they wont get muddy and

almost impossible to walk through during the monsoon season. It remains to be seen how this particular move to pave the streets in Khirki, or the visible efforts of the Aam Admi Party, a new political force that has arisen in Delhi that challenges the two party rule of the Congress and the BJP, will shape development to come as they on the role of governance, away from the Congress Party rule of many years and most recently under the stewardship of Sheila Dixshit.

A few days later I meet with Aarthi, the lead on the Aap Ki Sadak project. I had reached out to her as I was writing the chapter because even as I wrote my initial critiques of the project I became a bit hesitant to level them without giving Aarthi, an activist and artist who has been doing on the ground work for years in Khirki, the space to counter these critiques regarding the projects focus mainly on mobility and the integration of neighborhoods and not on the violence that surrounded the increasing African population in the settlement. When I ask her about the invisibility of Africans in the Aap Ki Sadak project proposal, prevaricating with my own projected reasons for why this exclusion might have been necessary, she countered, and here I paraphrase: the Aap Ki Sadak project started well before the issues surrounding the African community became so central. If we had made the project now I am not sure how we would have addressed it but certainly it would have been a central concern for us. I am currently working on advocating for the African community with the local police and I am getting the run around from officials in the central office and in the local police booth regarding the violence against Africans. This is an issue we are working on closely now. The good news is, however, that Aap Ki Sadak has been funded through the SDMC (South Delhi Municipal Corporation). That means that something of our initiatives will be implemented in the months to come.

"Multiple assemblages of disparate elements create novel political spaces in which questions of living are problematized and resolve today. In zones of hyper-capitalism, neoliberal values articulate ideals of belonging by making talents and self-enterprise ideals of citizenship" (Ong, 2008: 699)

"...research in the arts, humanities, and film media should not be separated from research on the economy, infrastructure and planning"(Appadurai, 2006: 174).

"...Malls are attractive places as they are destinations that replace the old civic meeting places of earlier times; they provide respite from the heat and cold; they provide possible spaces for the disaffected of the community" (Voyce, 2007: 2057).

Crossing the road to the Mall

In the late afternoon heat of summer I cross the busy road with a crew of 15 B-boyers from Khirki to access DLF construction groups glittering mega shopping center – three conjoined malls that occupy a 54-acre campus in the heart of South Delhi. These young men, ranging in age from 12-19, would scurry ahead of me, running in front of moving vehicles while I struggled to keep up, my DLSR video equipment on my back slowing my stride, my age making me cautious of the ambivalent drivers on the road. After we proceeded through the various security checkpoints to enter the mall we would head to one of the open courtyards where piped in pop music competed with the ambient din, the call to prayer from a nearby mosque, the megaphones on a passing car announcing a politicians aspirations, the sound of birds singing as they flew in the evening sky. There, in the courtyard, the boys would proceed to spend hours B-boyin' and rhyming/rapping in small ciphas.[12]   Members of this crew's parents, one of the three crews I developed relationships with in my time in Delhi migrated from Nepal, Bihar and the rural parts of Uttar Pradesh to Delhi in the late 1990s and early 2000s and currently make their home in Khirki.

These young men were not the only young immigrants that made it a regular practice to cross the busy road night after night from the settlement.   Indeed, many of the more recently immigrated young African (Congolese, Angolan, Nigerian, and Ivorian)

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[12] Cipha (cipher) is a term used in hip hop to describe the creative collective space in which dance moves and raps are shared and evaluated (See Spady et al., 2006 for a theorization of cipha not only as a situated space but as a concept that gets at the mass mediated collectivities that hip hop, as it travels globally, produces.

men and women I spent time with in the time I made Khirki who were not actively involved in the hip hop scene also claimed that the mall was a significant reason they chose to live in in the colony in the first place. These young African transnationals argued that mall provided a place where they could find food that they liked for a reasonable price, a place where they would be safe from the harassment they received on the streets of Khirki where passersby would comment disparagingly on their blackness[13]. However, for the young men I would spend evening after evening with as they breakdanced and rhymed, their reasons for going to the mall were constructed on different grounds. While, they like their African peers, also saw the mall as a space outside of the normalizing social contexts available to them, they, unlike the young African transnationals, refugees, and students from Khirki, had no intention of even feigning to consume what was on offer in the mall, or the resources to consume anything had they wanted to. They, instead, sought space where they could practice their moves. Articulate their poetry. Space that was free from the harassment they often received in the semi-public parks in the vicinity, where local men connected to the various resident welfare associations that maintained the parks would chase them out of the parks telling them they didn't belong there.

The mall, however, was by no means a public refuge for all who came to avail of its spatial features, its possibilities for consumption, or its particular and some would say disconnected and vacuous socialities (Augé, 1996). On my many trips to the mall I noticed the security guards paying particularly close attention to young people, particularly those who looked different than the mostly middle class 'Indian' patrons in the mall. Young men and women who were loitering in the courtyards were told to move along by security who walked inside the mall structures as well as in the outside courtyards, armed with long bamboo sticks (*lathis*). Some young people were not allowed entry into the mall at all. Indeed, in early spring of 2014 the mall had decided to enforce a policy that required all foreign nationals, targeting Africans, to present

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[2] I explore the racialization of African youth in Khirki and in Delhi more broadly in the final chapter. Here, I use the term Blackness as a literal translation of the Hindi word Kalli, black, which is one of the terms casually used by Hindi speakers to describe Africans in Delhi. The other common racialized epithet used in Delhi to refer to Africans is *habsi*, which translates as cannibal.

legitimate I.D.s or be denied entry. Once inside, in addition to the security officers on patrol in the mall the several dozen surveillance cameras installed throughout the complex would surveil those that made it inside, keeping an eye out for interlopers, troublemakers, and those that generally didn't belong. I, after a few days travelling with this crew to the mall to watch them practice wondered out loud, "why don't you guys ever get harassed by the security officers?" One of the young men told me that security had kicked them out on several occasions and that there were several altercations with security when they first started visiting the mall regularly to practice. But one day, he narrated, a curious thing happened. The head of security came down from his booth where he monitored several dozen close circuit TVs around the mall and said to the security personnel who were harassing the youth and said to his security staff, "Bandh karo. Mujhe aapne nutya ki pasand he. Dusrevaleko abhi pasand he." "Leave them alone. I like their dancing. Others like it too."   After that, they were not harassed again.

And who were these others that the head of security referred to? On every occasion I came to the mall with these youth and they proceeded to practice a small crowd of shoppers would gather to watch. Small families. Young couples. Grandparents with what seemed to be their grandchildren in tow. The youth's hip hop performances, in effect, became something to devour in the already crowded field of consumption that the mall offered. Interestingly, as the head of security suggests, it is this production of a *likable* spectacle for consumption that underwrote the possibility for these youth to stay in the mall, to return on a daily basis to practice. However, it was this very production of a spectacle that also made the security guards who patrolled the grounds nervous. Indeed, while the security guards, mostly migrants themselves, left the youth alone, they maintained a close eye on them, pacing a perimeter around the space that the young men claimed. It was not just the security guards that were gripped with the desire to do something in the face of the spectacle. The audience, myself included, also not content to occupy the role of passive spectator, quickly retrieved their cell phones and began documenting what they saw. I, too, set up my tripod and recorded the kids dancing, the audience watching, and those with small frame capabilities, cell phone video cameras and so on, recording the youth.

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I start with the ethnographic vignette above as an entry point to discuss the several instances over a span of a year and half where I, travelling through South Delhi with the young people in my study, observed them utilizing hip hop's forms to claim space in their city, or perhaps just as accurately, claim the city as their space. Claiming public space is a part of hip hop's historical legacy and central to the concept of aesthetic citizenship. In the early years of hip hop, as it made its way across east coast cities in the U.S. park jams, spontaneous street performances, graffiti, and so on, allowed young socio-economically marginalized youth to make themselves visible, in so doing, inextricably change the visible landscapes cities they lived in, echoing Harvey's (2008) argument that Lefevbre's (in Harvey, 2008) famous formulation of the right to the city is fundamentally "a right to change ourselves by changing the city"(3). While these young mens' efforts at claiming space occurred in several distinct public spaces, both terrestrial (parks, streets, the bazaar) and virtual (on Facebook, hip hop chat sites, twitter, in fifth estate news media sites), and utilized several distinct types of (implicit and explicit) performances related to hip hop; in this chapter I focus on their performances of hip hop's dance forms in the mall just across the street from their settlement community to engage with what I believe to be two intertwined theoretical arguments that intersect in my conceptualization of aesthetic citizenship, at once a claim and recognition of belonging through artistic production and circulation in the digital age. One the one hand the young men in my study utilized hip hop to claims to space that work to disrupt the normative visualities of Delhi's public urban spaces. Yet, because these claim are produced in the aesthetic, the affective, they are prone to digital capture, recirculation, and (re)narrativization. These processes, processes which link physical space to a larger public sphere work to tame these initially political tactics of recognition, and make them part of capital's performance.

In the first section of this chapter I explore how these youth's public performances are a means to think through Ranciere's (2010, 2009, 2007) provocative discussions of public art its possibilities for the political. Specifically, I engage with my observational accounts of these youth's performances to critically reflect on Ranciere's (2010) concept of dissensus. For Ranciere, dissensus is the rupture of visual norms and

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art, at is most fundamental level, functions as a political force precisely because it distends and disrupts the visible fields that produce knowable horizons of the possible. That the youths' performances occur in DLF's sprawling mall complex, a built environment that has radically impacted the lived realities and built environs of the surrounding communities becomes a significant featuring in assessing whether the spontaneous performances these youth engage in can rupture the social normativities that the mall reinscribes.

Indeed, migrant Nepalis, Biharis and other intranational rural migrants to the city are normatively inscribed into the space of this mall, and more broadly, into the social fabric of New Delhi, as service laborers. While little has been written on Nepali or Bihari migrants in the Indian urban context, particularly in Delhi, these groups are often relegated to specific labor roles. For instance, Nepali migrants are known in Delhi as security guards and night watch men (See Valentin, 2012 for a discussion on Nepali migrants aspirations in Delhi). Indeed, many of my youthful informants who are from Nepal have relatives, fathers, uncles or cousins, who are security personnel or chauffeurs. Critically, these youth, in taking up the artful practices of hip hop, challenge the visual norms proscribed by capital that casts them in particular social roles and produces new, at the very least, representational possibilities – putatively exemplifying Ranciere's (2010) notion of dissensus.

However, upon closer scrutiny the possibility for dissensus seems to twinkle in and out of existence. Indeed, the performative acts of the immigrant youth to shake themselves and their audience out of a collective social torpor determined by rigid class, caste, gender, and ethnic sensibilities that pervade Delhi seem, all to quickly, to be captured within the 'flows' of the mall. That is, the mall, as a node of global consumerism, traffics an overwhelming array of semiotic material and changes the very nature of the spectacle for both the audience and for the youthful performers as it quickly transforms these youth's acts into a commodity. I ask, if dissensus and its subsequent possibilities hinge on tearing bodies out of their social roles in particular spatial regimes, how then do we assess the potential politicality of these immigrant youth's performances if they are so quickly tamed by and within the very space in which they are instantiated?

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To contextualize this discussion of Ranciere's (2010) discussion of politics in the South Asian context, I will give a brief outline of how scholars of South Asia have theorized public space in urban India and how this story, located in a contemporary mall in India, reveals both a departure and a reification of particular social hierarchies within urban South Asia in our contemporary moment.

Second, I assess the role of small frame technology in the scene above. Chow describes the small frame as the exponential increase in visibility made possible through the advent of cheap readily available hand held recording devices. For Chow (2012) these devices problematize the very nature of visibility precisely because as they capture, abstract, and redistribute their subjects in ever expanding trajectories of circulation made possible through web 2.0. Chow (2012) argues the redistributive nature of image making technologies forces us to return to the chimerical statement posed by Foucault (1977): "visibility is a trap" (200). How can the empirical case I describe in broad brush strokes above allow us to critically assess Foucault's (1977) statement, particularly when read against Ranciere's (2010) suggestion that "politics consists in transforming this space of moving along, of circulation, into a space for the appearance of a subject (41)?" I suggest that small frame devices introduce the possibility that the perhaps politically valent performativities of socially invisible bodies, in this case the children of migrant labor, are not only tamed by the space in which they occur, but perhaps, in their circulation vis-à-vis small frame capture, are utilized in other peoples' projects of value[14] (Miller, 1997).

I conclude this section and my reading of Foucault (1977) and Ranciere (2010) by taking the first steps towards outlining what I theorize as small frame politics. I suggest that by looking how technology has reframed the possibilities of capture such that it is available to many, we might begin to break away from nascent and perhaps naïve arguments that this sort of readily available image making technology democratizes representation or, that it, like the technology that has come before it, poses an imminent threat to sovereignty. Rather, I suggest, that it is the through small frame, a view of the

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[14] Miller (1997) argues for an attention to how the narratives of the marginalized are taken up by others who seek to utilize these narratives to support their projects of value, their efforts to invest value in an emergent discursive formation.

world that is only inches wide, that allows us to see the tangled relationship between strategies for visibility at several temporal and spatial scales. Put simply, the strategies for visibility that my youthful informants utilize in their practice of a globally circulating popular cultural form whose roots are in North America occur simultaneously as Delhi seeks to remake itself a world city – capable of attracting capital in all its forms. It is this doubling of interests, I suggest, that both retrieve the possibility of the political in the performances of these young people even as they as they limit the political possibilities of these forms.

Urban Public Space

Like many cities in India, the development and expansion of Delhi has paralleled the influx of new residents, from within and without India. Delhi has, over the last decade, nearly doubled in population (censusIndia.gov, 2011). It has also, in the same span, increased its footprint as developers gobble rural farmland on its existing perimeters as they speculate further population and economic growth (Delhi Master Plan, 2021). These territorial expansions of the city, the development projects that follow, and the influx of labor that is required, first to build the edges of the new city, then to service those who will eventually populate it, create intense speculation regarding the future of the city (Nair, 2000; Searle, 2001). A new descriptive term, NCR (National Capital Region) has emerged to describe the frenetic development that has expanded the very borders of the city into the neighboring states of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Indeed, the stories of efforts to acquire land necessary for future construction in the farmland surrounding and within Delhi, the narratives of those who have been the beneficiaries and the exploited in these land grab cases throughout the metropolitan region, index the impact that economic liberalization has had on the city and its peri-urban surrounds since India opened its borders to foreign investment in 1991 (Hosagrahar, 2007). As a result of these development projects, both planned and unplanned, that pinned Delhi's future to a literal and metaphoric reworking of its image as a world city (rather than a problematic developing world megacity, See Roy, 2005 for a fascinating discussion on urban planning and informality), what could be considered public space has been reformulated

discursively and in its everyday use.   First let us look at how, historically, public space has been articulated in Indian cities.

While there has been an ongoing public discourse since at least the time of independence, a particularly strident middle class lament on the squalor, filth, danger, and so on, endemic to the bazaars, streets, small lanes, that stitch the city together as a recognizable whole; the mediatized 21st century iteration of this dispositif has shifted away from the literal subjects and objects of public spaces to focus on not the so easily locatable or localized risks. These invisible risks that are from time to time occasioned by horrific events cast as the by-products of urban expansion and development[15].   These risks, importantly, are also connected in the news media, sometimes blatantly, sometimes subtly, to the droves of recently arrived (whether through movement of their own or because the cities expanding borders captured them in its folds) now urban poor. Sundaram (2011) astutely observes the narratives that link risk to public space and public space to the cities newly arrived poor are broadcast and re-broadcast in the media, predisposing the so-called middle class of the city to imagine urban public space, now an abstract category that includes everything extending outward from the threshold of the portico of the house outwards, as imminently risk laden (Kaviraj, 1997).

Simultaneously, since economic liberalization in the 1990s the contemporary media and advertising worlds in Indian urban centers broadcast images and narratives that foster consumption (Mazzarella, 2003) as well as produce and circulate new ideal types of personhood laden with ideologies regarding beauty, success, and a sense of impending possibility. These messages appear on billboards strategically scattered around the city so that they are visible to drivers and riders of the metro. They are broadcast on TV, on the radio, they even appear as SMS messages on the phone announcing sumptuously detailed textual renderings of development properties available on the edges of the city for purchase. These advertisements, taken together, produce an aesthetic field that invites participation through consumption. As consumption begins to define participation an imaginary leveling of social difference through consumer

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[15] Sundaram (2011) points to traffic accidents as the catalysts for a redoubling of urban anxiety but most recently the several highly publicized rape cases have acted as a flashpoint to discuss risk.

participation becomes a seductive discourse for all the denizens of the city (Breckenridge and Appadurai, 1996; Ghertner, 2011;Lukose, 2009). Indeed, during my regular auto rides through the city I would interact with my drivers to practice my fledgling Hindi and in many of the conversations that ensued the billboards scattered along the thoroughfares connecting neighborhoods through intricate flyover systems would be the object of our exchange (although far too often the traffic was the main topic of discussion). One evening riding from my field site to my house through rush hour traffic my auto stopped in front of an advertisement for a new car. The advertisement's text was in English, clearly marking who the advertisers imagined the ad was meant for, an English speaking public that includes the middle class as well as those aspiring to middle class lifestyles. The auto driver, not being able to read the English script, asked me, pointing to the advertisement, "Ap angerzi pad saktha? Isse kya boltha?" Can you read the English script? What does it say? As I explained what the advertisement said, explaining how much the car cost in total and how much one could pay in monthly installments, the traffic once again began moving, vehicles blared their horns behind us, a car nearly hit a motorcycle ahead of us as my driver shook his head as he looked at the billboard and said, "bahut mahenga, so expensive." In this moment it dawned on me that these twin discourses portraying the city as imminently risk laden on the one hand, and brimming with the promise of social mobility through consumption or even the aspiration for consumption on the other, create a schizophrenic image of Delhi as simultaneously imminently hopeful and utterly pessimistic about its futures.

Sundaram argues that it is precisely this binaried discourse that produces the spatial realities of contemporary Delhi noting, "consumption, 'information' society and the new economy, spatialized imprints of the media industry like multiplexes/malls, and lifestyle and suburbia go hand in hand with the cries of urban decay and pollution" (Sundaram, 2004: 64). This parallax vision of Delhi's built urbanity that is at once burnished and tarnished depending on the subjective gaze, has developed as a defining spatial feature the wall and/or the gate (see Low, 1996 on divided cities). These walled or gated spaces ostensibly keep the separate the polished, glittering, gleaming Delhi apart from its festering, falling apart doppelganger.   The spaces the walls delineate as inside its

boundaries and apart from the deforming city that lies outside include shopping malls, suburban gated communities, and multiplex theaters. These spatial forms, when taken as visible symbols that are the physicalized representations of India's urban development strategy of the last decade, demonstrate that Delhi can compete with developed cities by creating seemingly safe spaces for those who have accumulated capital to enjoy their leisure time (Bhan, 2009; Roy, 2011). In other words, when seen at some level of abstraction, these spaces become symbolic of class separation, middle class oases that serve to keep at bay social types not associated with India's progress. However, this fiction only holds up if one approaches these lived spaces at the level of abstraction that keeps them symbolic –trapped within the discursive field which gives the symbol its meaning.

Let us take the case of gated communities in Delhi. Waldrop (2004) reveals how, historically, wealthier enclaves in Delhi came to put up gates around their communities to protect themselves from outside dangers, real and perceived. Ironically, she argues the gates are permeable to all of the service labor that these households require to function on a regular basis, bodies that social, economic, social, and political risk supposedly cling to. Her narrative on Delhi's residential enclaves suggests that the literal separation of people along class, caste, and ethnic lines is impossible. That is, the walled enclave, while visually symbolizing a class and caste hierarchy in Delhi, still creates the circumstances for interaction across class, caste and ethnic divides. To be sure these interactions are circumscribed by structurally and historically informed positions. The maids, gardeners, and other workers that come to serve the wealthy in their homes do not interact with the wealthy on their own terms by any stretch of the imagination. However, to hold this position in its most absolute form, to calcify ones view of social interactions within stratified social spaces such that there is no room for improvisation, no room for subversion, no room for dissensus; leaves the gated community or any other new spatial development in India's cities intact as a symbol of spatial apartheid that can only be used to reify the image of what Deleuze (1987) calls the arboreal or vertical social structures and institutions endemic to human sociality while making invisible the flights of possibility that emerge for a moment, perhaps longer. If we peer into daily life, however,

engagements across vertical historically produced hierarchies (class, caste, race, gender) reveal relationships and interactions that don't cohere to a strict reading of categorical difference and reveal frictions that show the self-making processes of all involved. For instance, Raka Ray and Saymeen Quyum (2009) in their work on domestic servitude in Kolkata make an incisive argument that it is precisely in the relationships between the domestic worker and his employer that one can simultaneously expose the self conscious self making processes of the Indian elite and their domestic help. In this chapter I suggest the mall space touches upon a dialectic akin to what Quyum and Ray (2009) describe. However, the intersubjective moment across difference I explore in this chapter occurs, rather than in the intimate domestic realm with its own historical dynamics of labor, caste, and ethnicity, within the public space of the mall.

The mall is yet another instantiation of a building phenomenon that, like the gated community, has captured the imagination of the media and of scholars and has become, in effect, a symbol of, so the popular narrative goes, a new phoenix like India that emerges out of the ashes of an older national identity. The older national identity, so the story goes, was the postcolonial legacy of the elite architects of an independent India and a species of a social welfare state that protected local businesses from international competition and provided certain state services to the citizens of India. The mediatized, mainstream narrative that has circulated in India since liberalization suggests that, in an effort to provide a safety system to its masses, to protect India's nascent industrial projects, the government held back the growth of its middle class till the fateful moment where the Indian government, the state, was forced to liberalize its economy by opening up its borders to foreign investment while simultaneously dismantling whatever social welfare systems existed in the country (See Chatterjee, 2010 for further discussion).

The Mall

In both the media and in scholarship the mall has symbolically come to stand for everything good and bad that happened since India liberalized its economy in 1991. On the one hand, the mall symbolically represents new possibilities for Indians to engage with the global marketplace. As a result, there has been a boom on mall construction and

development over the past 20 years that layers new malls onto the cities landscapes, in effect making older mall spaces obsolete. I suggest that the very reason why bigger and 'better' malls continue to get built in cities across India with the support of public monies (Nair, 2000; See Roy, 2012) are precisely because of their symbolic value. Let me share a personal anecdote regarding the symbolic value of the mall, which occurred when I recently hosted a birthday party at my house for my 3 year old son, inviting his entire preschool class to our house for a celebration. When the 12 mothers their children and the childrens' nannies arrived in tow, I wasn't quite sure where I fit in the gendered social space. Where were the fathers, I wondered? Milling about my apartment I tried to start conversation with one mother of my son's classmate about the changes that have occurred in Delhi since I last lived in Delhi back 2001, hoping to have some sort of dialogue around the social change that has rewrought the city in which she lives from her particular class and caste perspective. When I asked her what she thought of the changes that have happened in Delhi over the last ten years one of the mothers sitting close by, overhearing our conversation, immediately interjected, "oh, lots has changed. We now have really great shopping and shopping malls," suggesting, of course, that the most important development in Delhi of the last decade has been the arrival of 'good shopping' options, and, for me as relatively new denizen of the city, potentially reifying the stereotypical idea that malls symbolically represent *and* are populated by the middle class of India.

On the other hand, academics and left leaning activists, artists, and concerned 'citizens' have all decried the shopping mall boom. For instance, Naryanan (forthcoming) examines the financial viability of malls and shows how as new shopping malls come up that one up older malls in terms of offerings, design, and comfort, the older malls fall out of use. She argues against this sort of unsupportable infrastructural waste eventually suggesting that malls are "middle class vacuums". Several of the activists in Delhi I spoke to echoed this sentiment, decrying middle class waste and consumerism, the advent of the mall, and the social and environmental chaos that emerges as a result of these sorts of infrastructural projects that valorize global consumerism over all else. In all of my conversations with activists and artists working in the settlement community as well as in

other parts of Delhi they unanimously agreed that the mall was a symbol of the new middle class and a lived space for the middle class. However, I suggest, economic and environmental arguments against wasteful infrastructural projects notwithstanding, the symbolic resonance of the mall cannot solely be attached to the middle class. In fact, the mall continues to capture the imagination is precisely because it exceeds its presumably 'stated' audience. Thus, if we examine the mall more closely, we can see that the conflation of the mall as a space that symbolizes the ascendance of the middle class in India and the mall as a lived reality of the middle class does not quite mesh.

The shopping mall, a urban construction phenomena that took off in the early 1990s, just after economic liberalization, has purportedly become the refuge of the middle class as they seek public spaces in the city that are seemingly free of risk (although recent bomb threats in malls have somewhat threatened this idea). The mall space, secured by multiple layers of security, could be called, drawing from Augé (1996), a veritable non-place where the deluge of images, signs, symbols dis-identify subjectivities and displace history (Favero, 2003). Here, away from the bustle of the traditional bazaar, itself a powerful signifier of insider/outsider positions in the South Asian context, and in climate controlled comfort shoppers can feel a part of the globalizing trends in India and, according to some scholars, can rest assured they are safely tucked away from the so-called subaltern. However, unlike the sister development of the mall, the multiplex cinema, the masses are not so easily kept out. While the multiplex charges phenomenally high prices for ticket admissions compared to the talkies of old, a phenomena that Ganti (2012) argues dovetails with the changes in taste that have swept through Bollywood as it has sought to remake itself respectable and thereby appeal to a middle class audience, the mall does not have an admission cost. Its entertainment is free. Open to the public.

Indeed, the lack of public space in the city coupled with an equally strong desire by youth from other class, caste, and immigrant positions, to partake of the cities changing built environs, make the mall a desirable destination for more than just the middle class. Thus, the mall could easily be imagined as a contact zone (Pratt, 1991), as it provides a public space where contact and the reevaluation of social meaning become

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possible. However, the possibility for contact is unevenly produced, mediated through surveillance both in the literal and figurative sense. That is the symbolic power of the mall as a middle class space, the sign that evinces the very discourse that produced the mall in the first place, disciplines those that enter into its spatial field. The literal surveillance and disciplining, of course, is evidenced by the dozens of security guards and hundreds of cameras in the mall complex. In the figurative sense, drawing from Bentham and Foucault, the surveillance is self-generated. Indeed, White Tiger, a recent novel by Aravind Adiga (2008), shows something of the social changes being wrought in India's cities through the intensely personal first person narrative of a farmer from a rural village who has recently migrated to Delhi. In Delhi he lands a job as a chauffeur with a noveau-rich family. This chauffeur, as he takes his employers to the mall regularly, struggles to convince himself that he is worthy of entry into its climate controlled spaces and over several chapters finally comes to the conclusion that if he just wears certain attire no one will notice him at the security checkpoint as different, an outsider.

Next morning, as I drove Pinky Madam to the mall I felt a small
parcel of cotton pressing against my shoe clad feet. She left,
slamming the door; I waited for ten minutes. And then inside the
car I changed. I went to the gateway of the mall in my new
white T-shirt. But there, the moment I saw the guard, I turned
around – went back to the Honda City (151).

Adiga reveals, through his character, a self generated surveillance involved in the maintenance of class, caste, and ethnic boundaries in contemporary India. The driver could only approach the gate before he forced himself back to the car to reassess the situation. The story, then, could follow along these lines, both for Adiga's protagonist, and for the youth in my study. By realizing that surveillance is self-generated one can break free of social constraints and claim public space freely. The strategy that would emerge with this realization that it is only self-held beliefs which limits ones possibilities would be to engage in tactics that rearticulate the externally visible, to reconfigure the

aesthetic, to validate entry. And so it is the case with the chauffeur in Adiga's novel, who finally dons a shirt with a brand name emblazoned on its front, and walks through the security check point to gain entry to the mall, a space he has coveted for several chapters in the book. One could say the same of the youth from Khirki, who engage in a series of corporal performances to legitimate their presence within the mall except for one important caveat. Their position, and as it turns out, the chauffeur's as well, is always precarious precisely because of the markers of difference inscribed on their bodies, those that cannot simply be concealed or transformed through mimetic gesture, artistic flourish or the donning of particular styles. Their position, the fictional drivers and my informants, are also precarious precisely because the spatial reconstruction that has remade Indian cities over the last decade has co-produced both the spaces they live in and projects like the mall, as both function as projections, the literal protuberances of capital and its relationship to labor, land, and transnational aspirations. Their co-production seems to imply that each spatio-social domain needs one and other to exist. What, then, can a moment of dissensus created by the children of migrants turned B-boys and MCs, a moment of disruption of the norms that link the mall to Khirki largely through the laboring bodies that built and now maintain its edifices, make possible?

The spatial thresholds of Dissensus

Let us return to the mise-en-scène of the mall. I, if you recall, have set up my tripod to film the youth as they take turns in the center of the circle demonstrating their dance moves. The other denizens of the mall, as they watch these youth performing, surround them. Some pull out cameras to record the event. And the security guards uncomfortably pace in the background. These security guards have been told to leave the youth alone yet it is clear that they do not, for one minute, believe these youth are meant to occupy the space. The only thing that stays their hand in ejecting these youth is the authority of their boss, which, he suggests in his reported words, is undergirded by the desire of the spectators on hand to watch and record these youth and their performances. Here, then lies an interesting intertwining of interests and interpretations that reveals the possibilities and limits of critical art to create dissensus, which, for Ranciere (2010), is the possibility

for creative acts to rip bodies from their assigned social roles, even if only for a moment. In any public generating display of art, there will be a heterogeneous group that will come into contact with the visual, aural display. This heterogeneity will, necessarily, spawn several reactions to artistic performance. That is to say, it is not just the performance that dictates the reassignment of social roles. Any assessment of public artistic performances ability to create a ripple in an aesthetic-political regime must also include its audience. Ranciere (2010), in his discussions of the political possibilities of artistic practice, is not unaware of this. He, in a particularly rich passage suggests, drawing from Lyotard, that art's resistance, its ability to upturn representational norms, "consists in providing a two-fold testimony: A testimony of the impassible alienation of the human and of one of the catastrophe that arises from misrecognizing that alienation" (182). What, precisely, does he mean by this dramatic pronouncement?

Ranciere (2010), to clarify the possibilities of art as political practice, contrasts Lyotard's assessment that art is always limited in its possibility for transformation by those who apprehend its forms with Deleuze's (1987) claim that art produces a monument, a fixed sign shall we say, that is resistant to cooptation. Ranciere (2010), almost reluctantly, supports what he calls the more melancholic fate of art. Following Lyotard's (1997) argument, he concurs that it is artistic products, because of their aesthetic, sensory appeal, that are destined to be confused with "another, prose, or the clichés of the world" (179). Here it is important to make a distinction between Ranciere (2010) and Lyotard (1997) regarding what each of them consider a work of art or whom they consider an artist. While Lyotard is theorizing from a framework that separates the artist's everyday life from that of the everyman, Ranciere (2010) wholeheartedly claims artistic practice as possibility for anyone to creatively shake social norms. In other words, for Ranciere (2010) the artist is the everyman who utilizes practices that call into question aesthetic regimes. The artist and her works are not, as Lyotard (1997) suggests, superordinate to the everyday worlds they inhabit. Ranciere's (2010) democratic assertion regarding art suggests two avenues for exploration. First, what forms are available for the everyman to utilize as a mechanism for cultural production, a means to disrupt, distend, and create dissensus? Second, how are spatial regimes where 'art' is

found or made central to understanding of its uptake, whether it is a particular historical formation of art as its own distinct category of production, consumption, and taste making, or of popular, functional, or everyday artistic forms?

Here a few words must be said about hip hop, quite possibly repeating some of what I have already stated in the introductory chapter, that locates its practices as a popular artistic form that has gone global. Hip hop's aesthetics now can be found in the streets of Berlin, Germany, in the rural farmlands of the American Midwest, and in the shantytowns of Mogadishu, Somalia, and Sao Paolo, Brazil. That is, in all of these places, hip hop's music and its visual styles have ensconced themselves as part of a youthful visual and aural landscape. However, Hip hop's practices have also, along with its already produced forms, made the journey to places far and wide. Youth across the world not content with simply consuming its products have picked up hip hop's dance forms and musical forms to create cultural products of their own, products they claim have held onto the original values of hip hop which stressed reportage of 'the real', a do it yourself attitude akin to the British punk scene which emerged at roughly the same time and both, importantly, popular cultural forms that connected claims to urban public space with a break from aesthetic norms.

Some have argued that the products that contemporary hip hop practitioners create across the globe, rather than representing a process of transculturation, a movement of American cultural significations to the rest of the world inclusive of the so called developing world, is a representation of locality as it struggles to make itself known in the face of a process of globalization (Pennycook, 2007a, 2007b). This specifics of this strategy of argumentation which, in trying rightly to make an anthropologically sound case for local improvisation of globally available forms and discourses, inadvertently suggests globally circulating cultural forms are able to shed their ontological origins. In fact, I posit that it is precisely the economic, political, and social conditions that spawned hip hop within African American and Latino communities, specifically the racial regimes of power in the U.S., that make its forms of putative resistance so appealing to youth across the world (See Hall, 1990; Partridge, 2013 for a discussion of Black diasporic aesthetics, its circulation, and subsequent

creation of unanticipated audiences). However, there are the limits to how these historical remainders found within hip hop's aesthetics can act as political possibilities where they are picked up and reinvigorated through practice, whether of hip hop's explicit musical, dance, or visual forms, or of its styles, in a new place and time. Indeed, the intention of this chapter is, in part, to explore how hip hop as a political discourse tied to marginalized bodies is delimited as it enters social milieus ensconced within geographically specified socio-historical contexts.

The young Nepali, Bihari, Assamese, Sikkimese, Nigerians, Somalis, and Punjabis, who have all taken on hip hop who I met in Delhi's hip hop scene don't just consume new products through their engagement with hip hop but to articulate their individual and collective struggles through hip hop's forms as they make their lives in Delhi. That is to say these youth actively engage with hip hop's forms – B-boying, MCing, DJing. However, because the aesthetic undergirding of the form itself has such global appeal, because as it has travelled across borders it has built for itself a reputation as a quintessentially urban aesthetic, others recognize its value as well. Let me emphasis this point within the context of this chapter. It is precisely hip hop's urban aesthetic, its visually captivating forms that enable these youth the possibility for participation in the mall space. As Partridge (2013) argues in his work on Blackness in Germany and the ways in which Africans and Turks take on American Blackness vis-à-vis hip hop to perform modernity in Germany's cities, "hip hop is the springboard for racial incorporation…", suggesting that hip hop's aesthetics allows for new possibilities of participation in a society that, perhaps, mitigates the symbolic valence of hip hop as an aesthetic of resistance.

And so, it follows, that as the immigrant youth I spent time with in Delhi perform these globally available forms, perhaps inadvertently connecting their struggles as invisible migrants in Delhi to the struggles of Black Americans in urban contexts in the U.S., the aesthetics of resistance supposedly internal to hip hop is only part, if at all, of what is apprehended by its audiences. What is a more critical factor that mediates the uptake of these spontaneous performances is the space in which they are performed.   I suggest that what draws these onlookers in to a spectacle performed by immigrant youth,

what allows them to relax their internalized social reservations towards ethnic others that, in other settings, would limit their engagement, is that the space of the mall tames these performances, remakes them another commodity on offer in a space of offerings. The appropriation of these young peoples expressive talents to, if we take the argument to its limit, sell the mall as an experience, speaks to the power of how space create the conditions of possibility for 'audience' uptake.

Just as Ranciere argues the creation of the gallery and the museum in a European historical context creates the conditions for art to become Art, the mall plays an equally powerful part regarding what is seen, what *can* be seen, within its enveloping features. Indeed Ranciere (2008) argues precisely this as he states, "a medium cannot be reduced to a specific materiality and a specific apparatus. A medium also means a milieu or sensorium, a configuration of space and time, of sensory forms and modes of perception"(185). When I spoke to onlookers in the crowd watching these kids and asked them to describe to me what they saw a few remarked at their athleticism, one questioned whether they were paying enough attention to their schooling if they were spending all their time dancing, but the overwhelming majority of the people I spoke with said, "it is wonderful the mall sponsors performances like this."

Castells (2002, 2000, 1989) ideas of how networked technology has changed the very nature of space and time in urban locales around the world may be helpful to situate the discussion. He elaborates on his theories of place and space by drawing a distinction between a space of flows and a space of places. Briefly, a space of flows is the recognition that communicative exchange no longer requires that everyone be physically located in a place. In other words, technology creates the possibility for social interaction that is not limited to geographic habitation. Castells (1989) argues that this space of flows is a highly restricted sphere of interaction that inheres to the geographies of the urban. This highly restricted sphere of interaction creates global informational flows, interaction, and exchange, that articulates a space of places – the metropolitan geographies of the urban – producing urban change particular to the historical backdrop of the city space it flows through (Abu Lughod, 1999). The example, I believe, that most clearly evidences Castells argument of these two typologies of space dialectically shaping one and other is

the global financial market, which produces a highly restricted information flow between urban centers around the world, in turn changing those city centers into hubs of global capital, thereby effectively remaking these cities at the infrastructural and discursive level (See Sassen, 2006). Indeed, Delhi is swept up in precisely these sorts of changes as it seeks to attract further capital investment.

As a synecdoche for the urban the mall could be considered an example par excellence of the ways in which communication technology links, even laminates, a space of flows, a convergence of connectivity vis-à-vis the semiotic assemblage present in the mall's cyber technological imagery, soundscape, etc., with a space of places, that is the specific metropolitan geographies and collective histories of the urban. The mall, as it brings a torrent of semiotic material together in one place, i.e., the signboards displaying images of racially ambiguous women and men, the products that these aesthetic images are connected to, also brings the residents of the nearby migrant settlement community into contact with residents of the middle and upper middle class enclaves of Saket, Malviya Nagar as well as those who drive from other parts of the city to visit the mall. This doubling, where informational flow collides with a mixing of 'other' bodies, is quite a remarkable phenomenon for two reasons. First, it contradicts the simple binaried logic of class (tied to other forms of social stratification) I briefly touched upon above regarding public space in India. That is, my observations suggest that the mall uneasily brings together people from across class, ethnic, and caste lines directly contradicts those who would assert that the mall is simply a middle class phenomena in Delhi. Rather, the mall operates on two planes -- one that symbolically functions as an indexical to particular class positions while simultaneously functioning as a lived space where individuals from diverse social positions mingle, even if restricted in their possibilities for exchange.

Second, the B-boyers in the mall force us to assess Castells (2000) assertion that technology produces limited spheres of interaction, or, put another way, that a space of flows is a necessarily class marked space in relation to a space of places, which Castells implicitly suggests carries all other signs of difference that are not necessarily class centered, i.e., ethnicity, race, gender, caste and so on. Let us take the first supposition in

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his thesis, that the space of flows carries information that has been denuded of its historical past save for, in Castell's (2000) rendering, its obvious relationship to class. This notion of a place of flows assumes that postcolonial information flows in our digital age are not saturated with the colonial histories that precede it. I argue that if we recognize that the ethnic body, the historical, material past, is part of what the space of flows traffics, then we cannot help but recognize that the space of flows is deeply inhered in not only a space of places but several spaces and times simultaneously (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000). This last comment bears a need for a bit of elaboration. Several scholars have argued that capitalism's latest adventures have harnessed difference, heritage, history, and a post-racial aesthetic as a means to sell lifestyles. The Comaroffs, for example, point to the growing demand for ethnic products by several diasporic groups who long for a historical home and seek to reconstruct their ties to their respective points of imaginary or real origination, through consumption. The Comaroff's also argue for an attention to hip hop's global appeal as an engine of cross border nation building, and, thinking with diasporic and mediatized popular cultural movements like hip hop, have made a case for rethinking capitalism as an engine of desire no longer fixed to Marx's notion of capitalism that hinges on labor as the central feature of capitals workings (See also Ong, 1999). That is, that with the advent of mass mediation vis-à-vis the internet and the ubiquity of travel class positions are not so easily recognizable, labor not so easily categorized, and work not so easily pinned down to industrial production. Rather, Marx's ideas regarding value (use value, exchange value, and surplus value) rather than labor come to the forefront in any sort of assessment of late capital's unfolding project.

Thus, given a continuous circulation of ideas, images, material affects tied to a plethora of space/times it might be more accurate to say that a space of flows carries the echo several time/spaces within it and that these constellations of space/time work to create new systems of value. However, and this is critical, the historically laden significations of a particular place and time found in the flow is irrelevant with regards to its historicity if the audience who receives the flow has no knowledge of the referents to a particular past or a particular place where that past occurred. In other words, as I suggested earlier, if the spontaneous audience assembled to watch the B-boyers has no

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knowledge of, say, New York hip hop circa 1979, then the significance of the act of migrants performing hip hop's forms will be lost on them with one important exception – that the youth, in the act of B-boying, in wearing backward facing caps and baggy jeans, make them an exotic product for consumption. What becomes interesting and a bit curious is how the political and social roles proscribed to the migrant youth in my study are inconsequential precisely at the moment where they produce themselves as an ethnic/exotic product for consumption. Just at the moment, in fact, when they put their bodies molded by hip hop on display is the moment where they become socially viable, albeit as commodities. I will explore this disquieting visibility predicated on consumption, particularly in the face of the immediate possibilities for the circulation of the image of these young men's now commoditized and perhaps fetishized bodies, in the next section. However, before I conclude this section with some final thoughts about performance and misrecognition, I wish to ask the simple question: Are these youth engaging in hip hop forms to overtly make political statements? Does, at least for most of these boys, their lack of explicit interest in politics suggest that their actions do not fall into the realm of the political? Ranciere (2010), speaking to this very issue, argues that for art to be political, it does not necessarily require its producers to establish predetermined effects. Ranciere's argument, if I can be forgiven for stating it ever so simplistically, is that anything can be called art if it calls into question naturalized visual realms. The youth in my study, in making their way to the mall to perform their practices, did not necessarily go to change peoples' beliefs about them, their spatial located community that lies just across the street from the mall, nor to challenge ethnic stereotypes. Rather, these youth take the practice of their globally travelling styles across the street to the mall precisely because they want to be seen. Heard. Represented. And not only do they want to be seen, heard, and represented, but they wish to be seen heard and represented within the social milieu of the mall where, as one B-boyer suggested, "everyone comes to look and be seen." In a Deleuzian (1987) framework these performances, because they juxtapose an almost surreal multi-sensory experience onto a normative space of inhabitation, would be fixed signs – irrevocably challenging the aesthetic and thus the social hierarchies at play in contemporary Delhi. And to some

degree, no doubt, these spontaneous performances did and continue to, in their viral circulations as well as in their live reenactments at the mall, challenge an established sensory realm where migrant bodies are no longer docile labor but aggressive, athletic, and dare I say, subversive in their performative acts. However, as I have shown, an attention to audience reception always reveals the uncertainty of how meanings are constructed within a given social milieu and, moreover, the space in which reception occurs shapes the direction of the audiences uncertain uptake. Moreover, the youths' lack of political intent, their undisguised desire to, first and foremost want recognition, makes the representations that they generate more vulnerable to cooptation.

If we end our analysis of the scene here we are left with the construction of a spontaneous performance where there exists actors, an audience, and a backdrop for the performance, a stage of sorts. The mall as the stage, I have argued, over-determines how these youthful acts get interpreted. Or, another way of describing it is that these performances are everyday productions where the social fabric of the world outside of the mall is called into question inside the mall by the performances of the young people and the political valence of these performances are delimited by the very space in which this theater of everyday life is taking place, restricted to an ontological possibility of what Debord (1967) pessimistically calls the spectacle. Yet, there is another curious feature of this tale that must be taken into account; the capacity for audience members, myself included, to capture and re-broadcast the performances that were consumed in a specific time and place. The possibility for capture/re-broadcast brings up several new considerations. If we surmise, from the discussion above, that the political valence of these youth's performances are rendered, at the very least, opaque because of the location in which they are staged, what happens when they are rebroadcast to a wider audience?

On capture and visibility

It is perhaps fitting to begin with the interrelated concepts of capture and visibility as they become central to the next section where I assess the role of small, readily available camera phones in the production of political subjects. Capture is a muscular term that opens the door to many instinctive interpretations, most of them, at first blush,

unpleasant. Capture could be read as the anti-thesis of freedom, a term that connotes the impossibility of unfettered action, that conjures the tense dialectic of the hunter and the hunted and the tools of entrapment necessary for capture, confinement (Chow, 2012). However, capture could also be read as an affective entrapment, a means to engage desire; a way in which friends and lovers are made. How, in our 21st century moment does capture function, what are its mechanisms, and what is its relation to visibility?

In his ruminations on historical change and the emergence of so called modernity in the European context, Foucault (1977, 1990) suggests, using the prison and the clinic as his metaphors and empirical touchstones, that rather than consigning those that are marginal in society to the shadows, the modern state casts light on these so called individuals, makes them visible. He argues that this subject making project, one that simultaneously enumerates and articulates subjectivities, lies at the heart of modern governance. In some sense, then, the systems of modern governance are productive, insofar as they operate to bring into the fold those previously left behind, to become autonomous subjects in their own right by becoming visible. But Foucault (1990, 1977) unequivocally argues otherwise, stating that visibility is a trap. Visibility, according to Foucault (1977), creates the possibility for greater control over subjects precisely because, as subjects come into being, as they are described and counted, that which was irreducible, human life, now becomes knowable. And to be known is to be captured. Moreover, for Foucault, the desire to become visible creates new technologies of self-making that operate on a grid that inextricably links ones own processes of becoming with the apparatus that influences that shape the conditions of possibility for self-making.

Here Foucault's (1977) notion of the visible seemingly contradicts Ranciere's notion of visibility. Recall that Ranciere argues (also see Mirzoeff, 2011 on the counter-visual and Puar, 2007 on affective assemblages), that it is precisely at this junction where the collective and individual body can disrupt and change the matrix that conditions the possibilities for life in the first place. Some have read Foucault to argue quite the opposite, that all possible disruptions to the matrix of governance, which in updated formulations includes state apparati, corporations, international human rights organizations and NGOs (see, for instance, Moten and Harney, 2012), are transmuted to

effect greater control.   However, I suggest this seeming absolute incommensurability, this either or proposition regarding visibility as a trap or visibility as a potential for social change, is rendered mute when we consider the relationship between what Chow (2012), ruminating on Foucault (1977) and Deleuze (1988) in her efforts to get at the heart of postcolonial visibility, calls the seeable and the sayable. What does these to terms mean in relation to each other? For Chow (2012), reading Deleuze's (1988) reevalution of Foucault's thoughts on visibility, the seeable is what we directly come into contact with, collide with such that our senses are engaged fully, our historically affective bodies are made, at least for a moment, permeable to what we apprehend. The sayable, in contrast, is the rendering, the narrativization and reduction if you will, of what is directly apprehended. The sayable suggests that language is culpable for a sort of taming that normalizes or makes invisible the subject, and indeed much of what Foucault was concerned with in his several treatises on modernity was how the written word creates a historicity that can only be seen from the vantage point of the present such that any rupture or deviance to the narrative could only have one of two fates, to either be explained in the normalizing terms of the discourse or to fall out of the discourse completely. If we take the sayable to include all the processes of taming, making knowable, etc. then, surely film and photography would fall into its matrix as examples part excellence of the kind of capture technologies that have developed in the last 100 years that flay open the possibility of knowing and being known.

I assert that, rather than putting the seeable and the sayable in opposition to one and other, it is the distance between the two that we must assess when we consider how political subjects are made and unmade in our current moment where the hyper-circulation of text, images, and moving images are the norm. I began this section discussing the concepts of capture and visibility precisely because I suggest that it is the moment where the seeable is captured that allows us to make any speculations on what might be sayable. Put another way, by being present to and even capturing images as they are being made available in the in the mall, I will be able to say something about their trajectories, how they might circulate and coagulate into discernable a discourse about, in no particular order, migrants, hip hop, the mall, and Delhi. I will be able to

suggest what may or may not fall out of the story line as these images are harnessed into a story or stories. But before I postulate what stories small frame technology make possible for broader circulation let us return to the performative event to assess precisely what is being captured, what 'tools' for capture, aside from the camera as an obvious instrument of confinement, become visible in their own right.

Laying Traps

Several cameras point towards the kids, who are seemingly oblivious to their presence. They dance in the flickering lights of the fluorescent bulbs that light the outdoor courtyard in the mall. Young, middle aged, and old men and women behind these cameras smile as they take pictures and short videos of these kids doing B-boy power moves. One young man with a camera gets closer so he can shoot the arms of one B-boyer, which is covered in several self-made tattoos, as he holds himself poised, inverted, in a handstand. In the last section, I argued that the mall, as a milieu that is oversaturated with the flow of global capital's visual and material detritus, tames the performances of these youth for their immediate audiences, such that their political valence is muted for most, silenced for some, and made very apparent for others. In the last category, I would count the security guards in the mall and myself, as we all noted the significance of these transgressions in a way that was not readily available to the other spectators. However, there is no doubt that these other denizens of the mall, the shoppers with their families, the college students in large groups, were pulled in, captured if you will, by these performances. First, what are the factors that lead to their capture? We can suppose they were attracted to the sensoria that these kids put on offer precisely because of its spectacular or exotic character on three counts. They for the most part, had never seen B-boyers before. Never encountered hip hop's styles or forms except, perhaps, for in the syncretic Bollywood dance numbers were hip hop dance and music have been incorporated in the last decade. Also, it would seem likely that these spectators never come into contact with young migrants in any capacity other than in a service exchange. And in this instance, this moment of performance, they are confronted by migrant youth who confidently, athletically, gracefully make themselves visible, produces a new value

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sign attached to their body. Finally, the mall, as a context for the two conditions of visibility above, allow them a safe place by which to interact with the content above from a position of relative safety. Why? Because capitalism in its current incarnation renders social difference as a unit of consumption, harnesses difference as a means to inculcate desire. Put simply, the mall allows shoppers to interact with difference as it presents itself in spectacle such any discomfort that would occur in what could be considered a political confrontation is rendered null and void. The question arises, then, as to who or what is actually being captured in this moment? Is it the boys who are on display, the audience who are attracted to the initial performance, the mall itself as a media for the possibility of capture, or is it the ever-expanding public that comes into contact with the images that are generated by the audience as they travel out of the mall? Or all three? And what are the consequences of these moments of capture? To clarify who is being captured and what becomes visible lets us turn to Rey Chow's (2012) rumination on the trap.

Rey Chow (2012) asserts that the trap "is an index to a type of social interaction in which one party takes advantage of the other by being temporally preemptive, by catching the other at unawares"(45). Certainly, these youth, in deploying aesthetically robust performances in the quasi-public space of the mall intelligently lay a trap that succeeds in attracting an audience, capturing them if you will. Yet, performance as a trap, which I have argued cannot simply be seen as the performance devoid of its spatial context, must include the milieu of the mall. This begets yet another rendering of the trap. Here the mall comes into visibility and becomes a second order trap, reassigning meaning to the performances and rendering them visible as a commodity spectacle to be consumed. The appearance of small frame cameras, however, complicates this even further. As the cameras are pulled out and trained on the object of interest they capture the performance and the context. Even I am captured in the gaze of the audience myriad cell phone cameras, the anthropologist, lurking in the shadows of a palm tree in the middle of the cement and steel courtyard, with my own camera in front of me. Thus, a third order trap is introduced that once again reassigns meaning. As the images of the performance of other bodies are captured within the context of the mall, they are

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eventually circulated. I argue that it is precisely at this moment, where migrant youth are once again decontextualized and travelling, that there exists the potentiality for new political subjects to emerge. In my most cynical estimation these political subjects are aesthetically fetishized in ways that that reify the economic and social narratives that valorize the remaking of Delhi as a world-class city (Roy, 2011).

The notion of de-contextualization with regards to the travels these images will make deserves further scrutiny and a bit of explanation. I have argued that the mall, as a lamination of a space of flows and space of places creates a milieu by which the youth's enactments are read. If the very nature of the mall is to function as a space of flows, a place where historical contingency falls by the wayside, what could possibly be a de-contextualization of performance in this already supposedly decontextualized milieu? Here, recall that I argue earlier that a space of flows in Castells terms cannot exist as a dehistoricized place. Rather, a space of flows carries embedded in its flows a set of histories, times, events, places, that are only readily evident to those who already know how to contextualize the semiotic referents that circulate within the flow. In this case where hip hop is being performed in the all, if the audience doesn't know anything of the context of the music, dance, or visual forms associated with it, then it can only be read within the context in which it is presented. The socio-spatial container of the mall, where products are sold and bought, allow hip hop to be read in the way that it can only be read in the mall –as a benign aesthetic form to be consumed.   However, when the sound/images travel outward the mall again fades away as only a singular referent in a host of signs and signifiers.

Here, I offer two possible routes of travel these images could take that (re) animate context as the space where meaning emerges. If we imagine the camera as a vector for the spread of images that upends a visual regime that currently cloaks the migrant, keeps them, their narratives, and their engagement with the city invisible, then their re-contextualized bodies, regardless of where they travel would emerge saturated with a historicity that cannot help but evoke the colonial period, capitals prior adventures in the subcontinent, and the position of migrant labor in Delhi. These images would disrupt an emerging narrative of Delhi as a world class city that scholars argue is being

constructed by and for certain denizens of the city, read the middle class, by placing a new imaginary at the forefront. Here, Ranciere's (2010) hopeful possibilities for visibility once again return to the forefront. The camera breaks the hold of the spatial features of the mall and once again gives the actors, the youthful dancers in the courtyards of the mall, the agency to disrupt hierarchical regimes.

However, putting aside this utopic scenario for a moment, we could also imagine the camera as a mechanism that, contrastingly, creates a visibility for the youth that does not offer any new political valence for its subject, but in fact harnesses their images into the making of narratives of a future oriented Delhi that seeks a growing presence on the world stage. These images of these young men B-boying, hats backwards, wearing imported sneakers, importantly posit an inclusive Delhi. A diverse Delhi. A Delhi that compares to the postcolonial cities of the west insofar as it too has youth who partake in subcultural worlds, consume the hippest styles, youth who spend time together and simultaneously represent several different backgrounds based on visually apparent differences. Youth who represent a developing world picture of a post- racial, post ethnic, post difference society.

Indeed, these images, as they produce publics, could just as well reaffirm that Delhi's world class project is underway and, moreover, is an inclusive project. One that sweeps the margins and allows for participation in previously unimagined ways. Indeed, when people I have met in Delhi who are not connected to my research ask me what I do and I tell them my research focuses on working class migrant youth in a settlement colony who engage with hip hop their first response is to say, wow, I didn't know there was anyone doing hip hop in Delhi rather than focusing on the migrant component of the narrative. When I show them my images of young migrant youth performing hip hop's forms, wearing hip hop styles, the first remark of some is that these kids look remarkably like kids one would see in any western country. And indeed, it is precisely this image that becomes a powerful means to create a narrative of Delhi as a city that has come of age precisely because it now has urban youth from various class, caste, and ethnic positions who participate, like their western counterparts, in projects that underscore the emergence of western liberal notions of individuality and self-expression. Moreover,

these images of inter-ethnic and inter-racial friendship, images that counter the continued discourse of India as a nation where religious, caste, and ethnic difference continues to fracture a politics of possibility, acts as a powerful means to attract (and produce) capital.

I argue that once the event that has been captured through small cameras and starts to travel, once the performances of these youth in the mall are mobile, the images that connect Delhi to hip hop become a new trap, one that coheres with the projects of value of those who utilize images to, as William Mazzarella (2006) eloquently states, shovel smoke. But who, precisely, are the entities that traffic in these images? Is it the denizens of the mall, who email, text, or upload these images onto their Facebook account to share with those within their networks? To be sure, these onlookers with their small cameras do not necessarily participate in creating a new image of Delhi that can be explicitly marketed to a global audience. However, their interest in the spectacle, their trafficking of these images in public domains, such as the internet, brings the attention of others to what the marketing and branding experts call content, a sumptuous and thick capture of sensoria. This content, I argue, is capable of providing marketers a futuristic rendering of Delhi, of India; a way in which to sell lifestyles to youth in the subcontinent while simultaneously signaling that India represents a new modernity that has yet to be fully realized.

However, branding agents and marketers are not the only interested parties who are engaging with, taking up, and rebroadcasting the images of the emerging youth subcultural scenes in India. Indeed, my interest as someone who grew up with and engage with hip hop's forms as well as others (other academics whom I have met in my time in the field who are interested in the hip hop phenomena as well as transnationals' in the global hip hop community who spend time in Delhi's emergent subcultural scene) imagine this content, images of young migrant kids engaging in hip hop's forms, as hopeful evidence of a growing counter-cultural movement capable of giving voice to the marginalized, the urban subaltern. And, evidently, both the corporate interest in these images to sell a place, to sell lifestyles within that place, and the interest of those who see hip hop as a political vehicle, a means to distend older images of the needy poor, the migrant worker and so on, with a brash vital and energized youth who have taken on

western forms – both gravitate on and are seduced by the images and sounds caught in a moment of small frame capture. This intertwining of interests to create a tangled, contradictory discourse that reduces the visible, the immediate devolving image that rips asunder social norms, into a narrative that, while in places contradictory, polarizing, still agree on the emplotment of the images to do a particular kind of placemaking work. Thus the small frame, with its unlimited image making and image re-broadcasting capability (See Helen Grace's 2007 discussion of how Youtube not only allows user made uploads but rebroadcasts of fragments of "previously sourced material"), creates a politics that cannot help but inhere to an already established discourse on Delhi – one that reveals the largest trap of all, the discourse of modernity itself.

Small Frame Politics

I will briefly summarize what I have argued thus far in this chapter and conclude with some speculative ideas regarding a concept of capture I provisionally term small frame politics to introduce the next chapter, which focuses on how the pleasure and politics of hip hop's practice, in our contemporary moment where labor is seen as immaterial (Hardt, 1998; Hardt & Negri, 2000), creates employment opportunities for the young men in my study and opens the youth culture industry in Delhi and in India more broadly. First, recall that the youth who populate this chapter year live in Khirki. Parts of this community has been a migrant enclave since the early 70s, when local zamindars would hire seasonal labor from Bihar to till the fields directly across from community and then rent these laborers and their family's flats. In the early 2000s the farmland was acquired by DLF construction in partnership with the DMC and DDA, for a one hundred year lease agreement. The mall was constructed on this land and the seasonal Biharis who previously provided agricultural seasonal labor on this land were hired on to provide the labor for the construction of the mall.   Other migrant groups, as the mall and its several complexes were being built, arrived to work in the large number of jobs this infrastructural project created. This influx, of course, spawned the construction of more 'illegal' or informal housing within Khirki. After the mall was completed in 2007 it acted as a beacon for newer migrant groups to establish themselves in Khirki as it

provided a respite from the chaos of the city as well as it offered cheap rents, swelling and diversifying the population. In the last few years, the community has witnessed yet another influx of new residents; young technology and IT workers from all over India, expatriates from several western nations, Afghani refugees fleeing the instability of their home country, and African nationals from several countries who come to Delhi as students, refugees, and entrepreneurs. The youth of this community, a superdiverse group, have grown up interacting with ethnic and religious difference. They have also grown up in a post-liberalization India where the influx of popular cultural forms from all over the world, mingling with popular cultural forms from India, has shaped their lived experiences in ways which was impossible even a decade ago. These youth, seeking spaces where they can socialize, and in the case of the youth I focus on in this chapter, where they can practice hip hop's forms, travel to the mall regularly.

For the youth in my study the spectacle they produce when practicing hip hop's forms underwrites their possibility to use the mall space, despite the ambivalence of the guards on watch. This spectacle of performance, however, while putatively producing what Ranciere (2010) calls dissensus and what Mirzoeff (2012) terms a countervisuality, a break from the visual hegemony that places these migrant bodies in particular social positions, also folds these youth into the purposes of the mall. That is, the mall as part and parcel of the media by which the performances are delivered remakes the performances as a spectacle to be consumed, not unlike all the other offerings in the mall. However, there is a wrinkle here, and as I have argued, one cannot simply stop at this lived and momentary production of audience and spectator. I observed these spontaneous performances on several evenings being captured by many in their small cameras and therefore, we can assume, the images of this captured travels far and wide in and through virtual networks. I, above, suggest that this circulation of the image once again decontextualizes the very event it captures – no longer is the mall the overdetermining force for interpretive possibilities. Nor does the migrant body stand out; become the subject of the new narratives that arise from these circulations. Rather, what emerges in these images as their stand out feature, as the feature which drives further interpretation and interpellation is hip hop, as a set of forms that signify an urban alter- modernity, and

its emergence in Delhi. I argue it is here that the value of these images, and therefore of the youthful migrant bodies that populate these images, to promote Delhi as a global city that actually becomes central to their political possibilities.

Ong's (2007) suggestion, when discussing the emergence of Asian cities dubbed megacities, is that the mega in megacity refers less to the sheer enormity of the city than to the ambitions of its elite as they seek to attract creative know how and 'foreign talent.' Ong's (2007) play on the term megacity is an interesting and important rejoinder to this conversation on small frame capture as it opens up an avenue to think through the import of small frame politics as the ways in which the behemoth, unruly urbanity that emerges in the developing world is articulated and made available and intelligible within and outside its borders. While Ong's (2007) essay focuses more on the advent mobile transnational labor as a symbol and mechanism for Asian megacities global ascendance, her allusion to creativity and foreign talent suggests that critical to the production of the Asian megacity as a world city is the production of its image as a creative hub. The arts, then, become central to producing the cities of the east as global cities in their own right and, certainly, the high art scenes in Delhi, Mumbai, and other emerging cities (Bangalore, Hyderabad and so on) have flourished in part because of this recognition for the necessity of local creative capital to attract mobile labor capital.[16] However, it is not just the high art scenes that are gaining recognition in these cities but also the popular subcultural worlds that are attracting interest and recognition. The capture and dissemination of images of Indian youth engaging in cultural practices that are familiarly western, even if they are, in their aesthetic constructions, oppositional, only serves to create an image of the eastern city as ascendant. However, importantly, it is not the formal media estate that is capturing these happenings. Indeed, while there have been several articles in boutique magazines and weeklies about the hip hop scene in Delhi, the primary vehicle that this scene is becoming visible is through small frame capture and the subsequent virtual dissemination of these images as they are embedded into short

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[16] They have also thrived because of the surplus capital that has emerged as a result of the economic boom in India. As newly rich Indian investors, bankers, and so on seek new avenues for investment, the arts emerge as a site for economic speculation as well as an engine for the creation of new forms of social and cultural capital.

narratives that circulate on web 2.0. Several blogs and websites dedicated to broadcasting the up and coming urban subcultures of Delhi and Mumbai have sprung up, some dedicated specifically to the hip hop scene, that publish images taken by 'locals.' Equally important that the young men from the crews I got to know from Khirki or Humayunpur and the middle class youth in the scene, use the small frame to produce and disseminate narratives of their own on Facebook or on YouTube. This intentional broadcasting of images create a circulation of organic content that is ripe for more mainstream promotion – of a city that has indeed become world class because of its youth cultural life and the burgeoning youth cultural industry that it promises to create. In the next chapter I focus on the kinds of immaterial laboring opportunities that are emerging for the youth in my study as they sign themselves into visibility and, as result, open up new possibilities for participation in the collapsing economic and social spaces that the digital produces as its links pleasure and labor, citizenship and the aesthetic.

"…The entertainment industry and the various culture industries are likewise focused on the creation and manipulation of affects…This labor is immaterial even if its corporal and affective, in the sense that its products are intangible; a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, passion – even a sense of connectedness or community" (Hardt, 1999:95-96).

"The flavour of India today is young. Every brand and business in the country is asking itself a question – are we profiled right for the young India? Those who realize they aren't are quickly signing up for brand makeovers" (Sinha, 2008:2).

"A commodity appears, at first sight, a very trivial thing, and easily understood. Its analysis shows that it is, in reality, a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties" (Marx, 1999:6).

Traffic was bad and I ended up arriving a half an hour later than I expected to in front of the main gate that led to Humayunpur. Sunil and Guru, two young men I got to know well as a result of the studio sessions in Singh's place, met me at the entrance to the colony. On this day, instead of heading inside and through the windy *gallis* that, much like Khirki, were beautified by several large intricate graffiti pieces and murals, we proceeded to make our way across the busy road and away from Humayunpur into Green Park, an expansive leafy green outdoor space at the foot of their colony that these young men used to practice B-boying, to pass time with each other, and, sometimes, Sunil told me, to just be alone and away from everyone. The park's grounds were one of two places I met with these two young men and their extended crew regularly. The other was in Surabh's small apartment. Surabh was another member of their crew who earned enough money as a club promoter to rent a small *barsati* (rooftop room with terrace) in the settlement. I spent many late afternoons in the early fall of 2013 on this rooftop, alternately watching the young men practice their moves and chatting with the young men and women, friends, girlfriends, and fellow bboyers, who were the casual audience of their spontaneous performances. In moments where the action or conversation halted, I would peer over the rooftop edge to ponder the changing landscape of their urban village where historic ruins periodically made their appearance nestled amongst the drab contemporary buildings and the newer upscale development projects on the perimeter of the settlement that seemed, in the evening light, to ominously edge closer. On this

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particular afternoon, Niraj another of the Nepali youth from the crew, came along with Sunil and Guru to meet me. I hadn't seen Niraj since I went with the crew to a late night weekly party in South Delhi where they danced regularly on stage although he and I regularly chatted on Facebook (see chapter 2 where Niraj makes an appearance on Facebook to request a like for a photo of himself that he had just uploaded). As we sat on the bench Niraj and I began to discuss the last time I saw him in front of the club venue. He and I had spent considerable time outside of the main velvet roped entrance with the promoters and organizers of this particular party, The Hip Hop Project.   These promoters were all loosely affiliated with their crew, and all young men between the ages of 18-22 from the Northeast (Mizoram, Sikkim, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh). Niraj, while Guru and Sunil played an unrecognizable hip hop track on Sunil's phone in the background and practiced rhyming and beatboxing, began to share with me what he believed to be the economic value of hip hop in Delhi, the lifestyle that went along with it, and the kinds of opportunities that came up for him and members of his crew as they tried to make their livelihoods in the city through their practice of hip hop forms. "There are two ways we can make money as B-boyers", he said in Hindi. "B-boying, where we get paid to dance at events and shows around the city or we go and compete at the B-boy battles where there are sponsors who offer prize money, or we work for the clubs as promoters. As party promoters we get paid for each night we promote. It works out to about 10,000 -12,000 rupees a month to be a promoter if you promote 3-4 parties a week. It's not enough money for the long term but it's good for now. I am going to stop doing the promotion though because it means that every night you are out late and sleep all day. Also, the bouncers treat us with disrespect sometimes. You saw how they acted with us that night[17].   Mainly, there is no time for practicing B-boying. It's difficult."

Niraj, like many of the practicing B-boys, MCs, DJs and graffiti artists whom I met in Humayunpur and Khirki, two working class migrant colonies in South Delhi, saw

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[17] Niraj, in referring to the friction between the Gujjar security guards and the primarily Northeastern and Nepali B-boys and promoters highlights ongoing everyday ethnic friction between those that occupy the same class positions in Delhi but historically have very different social positions based on based on kin networks and notions of ethnic difference.

hip hop as a means to participate not only to forge friendships in Delhi, to develop translocal connections, or even to claim the city as their own, but a means to make a living in the burgeoning youth lifestyle industry that is emerging in the city and across the country as international branding agencies, as proxies for global multinationals, as well as local entrepreneurs seek to find new ways to engage the over 600,000 million youth in India who are 25 and under (Mustafi, 2012 August 27). Indeed, as demographic data reveals, India is the most youthful country in the world, approximately 65% of the total population are under the age of 35 (Census of India, 2011). For these young undereducated and unemployed men living in a fast expanding and youthful Delhi, new opportunities that are emerging as a result of an intensification of interest in developing the Indian youth market segment have meant that their hip hop skills have become sought after by various interests.

As these young men engaged in Delhi's entertainment and marketing industries as club promoters or as professional bboyers in the various events put on by corporate cultural industry executives, they reveal the ways in which their ground-up youth cultural production is becoming increasingly important to the growth of the burgeoning youth lifestyle market in Indian cities. This growing industry, I argue, requires a homegrown set of images of young people engaging with and hybridizing globally available youth subcultures, their requisite styles and, critically, their representations of sociality, to engender demand, desire, and consumption. This realization was reinforced after I met two branding executives, each of whom worked for larger multinational marketing and branding agencies who represented a portfolio of multi-national corporations. In my conversations with these branding agents about the events that they had produced in several cities across India and the marketing philosophy they adhered to that was shaped in large part by their own personal relationships to youth subcultural worlds[18] and the industry discourse since the late nineties which has focused on marketing lifestyles, ways of being in the world rather than specific products (Breckenridge and Appadurai, 1996;

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[18] The brand managers that I met were both young and called themselves practicing artists. One was from Delhi, and had grown up in South Delhi. The other was from New York. They, I argue, are exemplars of the kinds of creative workers that are being brought in to manage the production of an Indian urban subcultural scene.

Mazzarella, 2003); the branding executives suggested that there is a strong interest amongst global brands to produce a sustainable youth market in the region and that the development of the youth market requires novel interventions that hinge on locating and cultivating localized youth cultural production.

In the first section of this chapter I explore what global branding and advertising experts refer to as 'content,' the images and narratives they capture when they sponsor youth subcultural events, or even more interestingly, the material that is produced when branding firms take an active part in developing a youth 'scene' from the ground up. I argue throughout this chapter that as young migrant working class men and women along with their middle class peers participated in Delhi's several and connected youth subcultures – B-boying, MCing, graffiti writing, skateboarding, and BMX biking – they are effectively harnessed to produce an image of Indian youthful cool that is being promoted by global branding agencies who work with corporate interests in India not simply to market particular brands but to develop a sustainable youth lifestyle industry in the subcontinent that has the capacity to grow market demand by fostering new imaginaries that link participation to consumption.

These branding agencies, in producing subcultural events, work to promote two overlapping interests. By partnering with local NGOs, key cultural producers, or by directly hailing the youth through events that they produce, branding agents utilize the budgets that they receive from their high profile clients to foster the growth and development of a place specific and highly inclusive youth subcultural scene. This, of course, benefits the young people in the city who seriously engage with the practice of subcultural forms as it offers them venues to practice and gain exposure without having to fight for a claim for space to practice, be seen, and so on (see chapter 3 on the politics of the small frame that arise when practice is relegated to the medial public space of the mall). However, these events, while providing space, a stage, and even recompense for the competitors who win the sponsored competitions, also act as image incubators where aesthetically tantalizing scenes of youthful Indian urban cosmopolitanism arise for capture. This quickly becomes obvious when one mills around these events and runs into at least two or three photographers and videographers moving through and

documenting the unfolding event. Indeed, branding agents who sponsor these events hire professional photographers and videographers to capture this material for future use, to promote the brands that they represent by establishing lasting indexicals, relationships between the image of young people in urban India who are consummate in their youthful crafts and the product(s) that they wish to sell (Bloomaert and Varis, 2013). This, of course, is done on a much smaller scale in the clubs, bars and even retail establishments around Delhi that are emerging in key geographic areas for burgeoning youthful lifestyles whose owners engage in similar strategies – hosting events that are vibrant, 'cool,' and inclusive and hiring the youth at the center of the scene to act as promoters to attract crowds and to forge lasting connections for all who are present at the event and for those who come across the event through the image circulation that occurs thereafter, that their establishment, and more broadly the locale or neighborhood of their establishment, is at the center of the new youth culture in the city.

The use of the images and so on that they capture in these events effectively fashion the visual products of young men and women's labor in the hip hop scene as *affective commodities,* commodities in the sense that the images have exchange value, affective in that their value is derived from the images capture of "excitement, passion, even a sense of community" (Hardt, 1999)[19]. The labor that produces these images, thus can be called, following Hardt (1999) and Hardt and Negri (2000), immaterial labor, a concept I will return to in detail in the next section but, briefly, one that evokes the changing relationship between production and demand in our contemporary information age. For the young working class migrants as well as for some of the more economically well off youth I got to know during my time in Delhi the opportunity to produce affective commodities that have recognizable exchange value became an important impetus to further develop their skills, expand their networks, and learn how to self-promote through images, text, and sound. This, of course, created a situation where hip hop emissaries,

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[19] For an elaboration on the idea of affective commodities as visual images see William Mazzarella's (2003) conception of the commodity image, a concept which originally was developed by Wolfgang Haug to point to the ways in which aesthetics mediates the conversion of use value to exchange value. I will engage with this concept in the next section as I delve deeper into a discussion regarding immaterial labor, image production, and the India's burgeoning youth culture industry.

like myself, and the internet, i.e, Youtube and so on, not only became social conduits but ways in which the young people in the scene could acquire or further perfect marketable skills that hinged on their ability to perform globality.

In Delhi, the development of a youth subcultural world underwritten by this sort of market intervention complicates the concept of consumer citizenship developed by anthropologists who have rightly pointed to a mutating sphere of participation through the marketplace made possible by neoliberal reform that has allowed global brands into countries like India, which prior to 1991 held firm to a protectionist policy that promoted domestic production rather than global consumption (Lukose, 2009; Appadurai & Breckendridge, 1995). As Lukose (2009) argues, participation in the public sphere engendered through new regimes of value ushered in since economic liberalization offers Indian youth across class, caste, gender and region a new sense of global connection vis-à-vis their consumption practices. Lukose (2009) suggests that these ideas of global connection allow youth to reimagine their context specific worlds, and negotiate their gendered, classed, and caste subjectivities in ways previously unavailable to them but in ways which profoundly enmesh them in the workings of global capital. In Lukose's (2009) account of changing youth subjectivities in a globalizing India, while youth are by no means passive receivers to the discourse of consumption as Marcuse (1964, 1991) forebodingly predicted in the post world war II moment as inevitable fate in the coming world system, they are certainly not active producers of the images that engender their localized consumption practices. The production of the images that inculcate desire, in Lukose's (2009) ethnographic account of youth in Kerala, are importantly located in the regional and national popular cultural industries, most notably in the Indian film industry, far away from the lives of the youth. In other words, desire is produced far away from where consumption takes place.

However, in this case, where Delhi's youth who actively participate in the city's subcultural worlds and events produced and promoted by corporate interests, production and consumption become intimately intertwined in ways which cast the young men and women as immaterial or affective labor who critically fashion images that link several commodity chains together (the entertainment industry, the apparel industry etc.) and blur

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the distinction between consumption and production. These blurred lines point to the ways in which consumption and production are collapsed that echo Marx's argument that production and consumption are equivalent and exchangeable from the point of view of capital (Marx, 2009). It also begs the question of what new laboring practices tied to the production of particular aesthetic forms are emerging in 21st century urban India as capital intensifies its push to engender mass consumption to markets that fall beyond the putative middle class through mechanisms that Mazzarella (2003) describes creates "the conditions for the appropriation of local cultural difference as content" (4).

In the next section of this chapter I explore the marketing concept of content in relation to Hardt (1999) and Hardt and Negri's conception of immaterial labor, the labor that I argue drives the production of the aesthetic content necessary for global capitalism's continued expansion (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2009). I argue that the need for particular content, which in this case for the branding executives or even for the club owners meant the images, stories, and captured experiences of young people who participate in youth subcultural worlds, creates a new laboring possibility for youth in urban India, one that doesn't cleave to existent hierarchies of the labor market but rather levels the playing field by offering young people from working class communities, many of whom are ethnic others and lower caste migrants, the opportunity participate in the fashioning of the image of a quintessentially Indian urban youth subculture world. This work, I argue, is essentially affective and immaterial in the sense that the images, narratives, the 'content' that the branding executives wish to capture are valuable precisely because of the kind of unique knowledge it represents and particular feelings it evokes of a youthful, cosmopolitan India, one that is on the rise and different than the previous generation's national imaginary.

Here, I return to the concept of aesthetic citizenship as a way to recognize the ways in which marginalized youth, as they produce aesthetic renderings of the world and *their* world, as they connect Delhi with a set of affective content linked to their bodies, their communities, their 'hoods, and, critically, to a globally diffuse youth culture; become valuable to marketing and branding executives precisely because of their ability to buttress the ongoing discourse of Delhi as a world class city that is capable of

producing globally recognizable and authentic youth subcultures. Authenticity, in this case, is, in part, derived from images of productive poverty (Roy, 2012), where hip hop, particularly when it is performed by youthful bodies that are working class and who are caste, ethnic, or racial 'others,' serve to demonstrate that the workings of global capital have stretched beyond the elite and that in its extension, has successfully included those deemed underdeveloped in its self-valorizations. The subaltern youths' participation as producers of the very images, the content that undergirds future consumption in the subcontinent and (re)casts the Indian urban milieu as inclusive begs two intertwined questions – first, can the youth in Delhi's hip hop scene who come from historically marginalized communities, who represent the children of Delhi's migrant working class, maintain the promise and possibility of a critique of the prevailing economic and social system that their subcultural practice is historically grounded in, when global capital has, apparently, contaminated their pursuits of pleasure, harnessed it as labor? Second, and deeply related to the first question, how does the recognition of the value of their immaterial labor shape how the young men who I got to know in the months I spent time in the spatial communities they lived and at the events they attended, work to fashion their gendered subjectivities?

I conclude by engaging with a corporate sponsored hip hop event to focus on these two intertwined questions to discuss the ways in which hip hop's network of possibility fashions a new method of governance through the marketplace even as it offers room for subversion, critique, and self-fashioning that exceeds capital's needs. By engaging with the tension that Niraj marks when he intimates he may have to choose between practicing B-boying or going to the clubs and promoting parties to discuss the ways in which the young men in my study had an acute awareness of the stakes of the political economy of the culture industry in which they were engaging, stakes that hinged on their affective relationship to hip hop and to the friendships that their participation in the subcultural world of hip hop ensconced. I suggest that if we take a close look at the corporate sponsored events as not only sites of affective, aesthetic, and immaterial labor but as sites of potential protest, as instantiations of dissenting citizenship (Marr Maira, 2009), we begin to see how the youthful actors in Delhi's hip hop scene are positioned

and position themselves as gendered laboring bodies that create multiple readings of the aesthetics they perform for potential capture. However, this possibility for reading the images these young people produce under the auspices of the corporate against the grain of the corporate event requires emergent narratives that disrupt the easy linkages between image and the product narrative that are being fashioned by corporate sponsors -- a narrative of tame aggressiveness that utilizes the crackle and edge of hip hop and other youthful forms of self-production to govern through desire. What is required and what Tricia Rose (2012) has argued continues to be the political possibility of hip hop in the contemporary moment is its ability to offer those who have been rendered invisible, visible not just in marketable performance but in the narratives that they tell.

Immaterial Labor and Citizenship

Labor has dramatically shifted since the dawn of the information age (Berardi, 2009; Castells, 2000. 2002; Hardt, 1999; Hardt & Negri, 2000; Negri, 1999). In an epochal change, just as the industrial age signaled for Marx the age of the proletariat the information age has signaled the demand for a different kind of labor, one that works in the realm of immateriality. This labor, while it clearly does not supplant previous forms of, say, manufacturing labor (just as manufacturing labor in the age of industrialization didn't supplant agricultural labor), changes the conditions in which older forms of labor are perceived and structured, and, as Hardt (1999) notes, reshuffles the hierarchy of laboring practice which, in turn, reshapes the lived geographies and temporalities across the networked globe (see also Jameson, 1991 on postmodernity as a laboring category and Castells, 2004 on network society and the creation of the information economy and its impact of identity formation). As new laboring demands arise in the global marketplace, trends in migration, of course, shift dramatically and create new aspirations and opportunities for movement for some while simultaneously limiting or impeding movement for others. In this new hierarchy Hardt and Negri (2000) argue that immaterial labor and the creative class that particular modes of immaterial labor engenders, become ascendant in the global economy (See also Ong, 2007). In other words, for Hardt (1999) immaterial labor can be seen as the glue that holds together

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global capitalism, becomes the driver that derives its immanence from its power to inculcate, articulate and disseminate emergent desires and solve intractable problems through its tentacled networks.

Just what constitutes the practice of immaterial labor, what can be contained within its theoretical category? Hardt (1999) describes immaterial labor as work that falls into three basic sub-categories in the post-industrial age. First, there is manufacturing labor that, as a result of informational inputs, has radically been altered. A broad example of this would be the movement from Fordist assembly line production techniques, a top down system, to Toyota's revolutionary networked LEAN system which has infused traditional manufacturing process with information garnered at the end of the production cycle as well as iterative informational infusion from workers throughout the processes of assembly. Second, is the immaterial labor that focuses on the manipulation of symbols and on analytical tasks, which can further be broken down into two subcategories, complex analytics and simple routine analytics. We can see examples of this in outsourcing technical support of various kinds, from the more complicated tasks such as software design, to the more routinized analytic tasks – customer support, basic accounting service, now even basic legal counseling – that have become the bread and butter for call centers across the developing world who provide cheap well educated workers to the global marketplace (Dasgupta, 2014; Gupta, forthcoming; Nadeem, 2011). Indeed, in Indian cities the rise of the call center, the epitome of the kind of analytical immaterial labor that Hardt and Negri (2000) highlight to indicate changing labor practice, is synonymous with the economic growth, infrastructural development, and cultural changes that have ensued since Manmohan Singh's and ruling Congress Party's decision to open India's economy to global trade. Akil Gupta's (forthcoming) latest work traces the impact of what he calls virtual migration for the predominately youthful workers, who spend hours a day assuaging the concerns of their invisible clients half a world and several time zones away. Nadeem's (2011) ethnography of a Delhi's call center reveals how the young people who work there, in an effort to act as "dead ringers" for their American counterparts, take on a cultural mimicry that extends far beyond the workplace and into the daily lives of the young people who work long hours in the call

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centers and often live far away from their familial homes. This mimicry, Nadeem (2011) suggests, recalibrates not only the cultural context of work but recalibrates the affective relationship between the young men and women who work in the call centers, with India at large.

Finally, there is the immaterial labor that directly concerns itself "with the production and manipulation of affect" (Hardt, 1999: 293). This labor, describes Hardt (1999), creates traces, that leave, as it productive ends, a feeling, a sense of "well being, excitement, passion." Whether the labor that is attended is actually in-person or is virtual, the grist of the work is located in the interaction of particular bodies and its products are, of course, the effects these interactions produce. One can locate the work of the so called creative class in this laboring category, the experts of taste that have purportedly become the subject of development and infrastructural change not only in the developing world cities but in the first world command center cities (Ong, 2007). However, one can also locate this kind affective labor that is otherwise invisible in contemporary renderings of capitalism or even, for that matter in a classical Marxist rendering of labor as a male centered activity that takes place on the shop floor, in other contexts. As Hardt (1999) notes, if we widen the notion of labor to include affect, we begin to see several modes of work, which include work inside the private domains of the home or service in several capacities, as laboring practice. We also begin to see how what has been designated as leisure or as creative hobby can now function, in our contemporary moment, as affective or immaterial labor.   It is this particular aspect of immaterial or affective labor that Hardt (1999) and Hardt and Negri (2000) delineate that I wish to pursue as I discuss the branding agents conception of content in relation to the sought after laboring practices of the young people in my study.

However, it would do well, before I jump into the conversation that primarily utilizes Hardt and Negri's (2000) conception of an affective immaterial labor and it role in the production of culture industries, to review the key critiques put forth by anthropologists concerning Hardt and Negri's (2000) path breaking work on the relationships between governance, subjectivity, and labor, as these critiques highlight the importance of extending their insights by engaging with the everyday realities of work,

play, desire and belonging. It becomes clear, that for the most part the unrequited hopefulness and their commitments to a close study of power, align Hardt and Negri's project with the contemporary concerns in the discipline of anthropology. However, with that said, several anthropologists have expressed a great deal of skepticism regarding some aspects of their theoretical work precisely because it steps out of the everyday and into the ethereal realm of universals. Indeed, while Wilson (2012) argues that much of Hardt and Negri's philosophical commitment to politics within existent realms of power rather to some notion of a universal outside of social relationships are shared by anthropologists, anthropologists have argued that, ultimately, Hardt and Negri's attempt to recover a universal globality overdetermines their work. This idea of universal globality is evidenced in their concept of the multitude.

Conceptually, the multitude suggests that the emergence of an ever more networked capitalism, one which links heterogeneous people across time and space, actually holds the key to capital's demise or the very least, disruption. Several scholars, however, have argued that the notion of the multitude is an all too facile and naive attempt to recover a revolutionary proletariat out of heterogeneous and historically situated global precariat (Kelly, 2012; Ong, 2012; Tsing, 2012; Wilson, 2012; Yanagisako, 2012).   A large part of the problem, their critics have suggested, is that Hardt and Negri's (2000, 2004, 2009) theorizations still hold Europe and the U.S. as the key sites for political and economic change and as the historical ground from whence theoretical models proceed (Ong, 2012), which diminishes their ability to invoke the global multitude in the first place. Ong (2012) raises an important concern that as a result of this geographical conceit, the corollary argument that global demand for new forms of labor practice and new consumer markets has resulted in the weakening of state forms of power across the world, is factually untrue if we consider the case of China, where the authoritarian state has actually been bolstered as a result of the changing global economy. Finally, Hardt and Negri's (2000) notion of immaterial labor, quite related to the idea of the multitude if we agree that certain forms of affective laboring practice and heterogeneous instantiations of political connection across borders often doubles as one and other, have been critiqued for placing too clear a division between the material and

immaterial – a binary that doesn't recognize the relationship between the significance of everyday communicative practice or that the forms that communicative practice take up is directly linked to material conditions where they arise (Ong, 2012; Wilson, 2012).

By taking up Hardt and Negri's (2000) theorizations of how technology and neoliberal state policies have globally altered laboring practice, theorizations which are embedded within their larger arguments that reformulate Foucault's (2010) notion of biopower such that immaterial labor can be seen not only as circuitry for a greater and more total governance but as a disruptive anti-capitalist practice; I explore these two primary critiques – critiques that, at their core, argue for a more situated and contingent reading of how global capitalism is changing the way life is imagined across the world and participation and belonging is being (re)configured, that don't succumb to a simple universalist notion of immanence that several anthropologists suggest is implicit in Hardt and Negri's work. Here, a look at India's emergent culture industries as they arise in the lives of the young migrants in the hip hop scene in Delhi, becomes particularly important, as their emergence suggests the further intensification of a globally circuited cultural production that diversifies India's offerings of (popular) cultural products beyond, say, the Bollywood juggernaut and opens new links between youth in disparate locations with youth in India and connects youth in India more profoundly across spatial, ethnic, caste, and gender difference.

This relatively new development is perhaps best exemplified by engaging with Mazarella's (2003) earlier work on the Indian advertising industry and its production of what he calls, borrowing from Haug (1986), commodity images (see also Rajagopal, 1999). The commodity image, conceptually, points to the importance of the "aesthetic in the conversion of use value to exchange value" (Rajagopal, 2009). Rajagopal (2009), here, stresses that the image cannot be seen outside of the commodity itself, "the commodity cannot remain merely economic, and the image only aesthetic" (1). Rather the commodity and the image are co-constitutive, material and immaterial, inseparable, echoing the notion of indexicality that Blommaert and Varis (2013) suggest is inherent in contemporary marketing practices where subjectivity, materiality and politics collide in the aesthetic.

For Mazarella (2003), in his close study of the Mumbai based advertising industry, this has meant that the advertising in India has had to bend their practices to produce commodity images that suture what he refers to as the global and the local, aesthetic renderings that translate globally circulating commodities into viable and marketable products for the local Indian market. The result, he argues, is a quixotic combination of nationalistic and global messaging that is embedded in advertising campaigns designed by the emerging Indian creative class for the Indian middle class. Leaving aside his problematic evocation of the local and global binary in the context of India where the local seems to all to easily becomes a stand for the (Hindu) nation state, what I would like to consider for this chapter is who is at the center of the laboring process to forge what I call affective commodities, which, perhaps unlike the concept of the image commodity, are not focused on the image forms of commodity objects per se but, rather, and this is critical, focus on branding youthful bodies as they perform the future (See Nakassis, 2012 for a linguistic approach to branding that articulates the semiotic procedures that link the brand to particular visual complexes).   While Mazzarella (2003) recognizes the appropriation of 'local' images are central to the process of branding for a particular cultural milieu; his ethnographic work focuses on how the expert creative class manufactures value through its circulation of the commodity image, making invisible the immaterial labor that undergirds the images production. Arvidsson (2007), in his work on global branding argues that rather than seeing the creative class as the architects of taste, we must rather see them as administrators, as bureaucrats, as the "real productive force becomes not so much the creative class of art directors and advertising executives but the mostly unemployed mass intellectuality (Virno, 2004) of the urban arts, music, design and fashion scenes" (9). This assertion, of course, places the immaterial labor of young people at the forefront of capital's expansion, particularly in a country like India where the population is overwhelmingly youthful. Moreover, as I suggested in my introduction, this 'opportunity' for participation as immaterial labor becomes particularly important for the ethnic and low caste migrants as well as for international migrants who live in cities like Delhi, as their production of authentic urban cosmopolitan imagery becomes increasingly desirable

for those who are charged with the management, and extrapolation of mass intellectualities laboring forms – as they effectively produce images of India's cities as world class in their representations of emergent cosmopolitanisms, and, we might add, do so for very little economic renumeration.

If we pay attention to these empirical instances of immaterial labor produced by the largely unemployed and marginalized youth in Delhi's burgeoning culture industries, we can see that rather than the concept of immaterial labor irreconcilably diminishing the salience of everyday communicative practices, as several anthropologists have suggested, the concept of immaterial labor suggests (Ong, 2012; Wilson, 2012), what it does is enshrine these practices as valuable performance. Here content becomes something more than the images of a B-boy breakin', or an MC rappin', and rests, rather, on the phenomenological content of the produced hip hop event, the signs of value that the particular bodies of the young people who participate and populate the space where the event takes place make, even in repose. This means, of course, that it is not simply the obvious performance, say the B-boys who are dancing on the stage, that acts as content but rather it is all of the images and narratives that are gathered within a particular time/spsace that becomes 'content.'

The effect, on the young men and women in the scene, is twofold. First, these corporate events, often in collusion with civil society actors, i.e. a cultural organization or a youth centered NGO, create the context for these young people to feel themselves a part of a local, national, and global phenomena. Second, the always mediatized experience of the corporate events create, for the young people I got to know in the scene, a sense not only of global belonging but a sense that their participation placed them at the center of an emergent Delhi, an emergent India in ways which would benefit them economically. Put more emphatically, for the young people in the scene who participated and were made central in these events, the attention the camera and the recording crews gave them reinforced their belief that they were already famous – that whatever kept them in the margins of Delhi's social worlds, because of their exceptionality, had been overcome. Here one can begin to see Marx's classic conception of the commodity as fetish reemerge inside the workings of immaterial labor when products of these youths' labor, their

affective commodity emerges as an image divorced from the ontology of the body that creates it and the lifeworld that gives it context (Haug, 1986). Here it follows, if we evoke Marx in this context, that young people, as they learn the exchange value of particular performances that create desired affective commodities, work to perfect these performances until all other performances are purged from their repertoires, such that the market value of hip hop allows them to forget, to distance themselves from the political, and the historical in the public social worlds (See McRobbie, 2002 on the depoliticization of the popular in the era of neoliberalization).

Yet, to leave it here would be all too simple, as what I have suggested above would lead us to conclude that by global hip hop's appearance amongst non-elite youth in Delhi and the ways in which it disciplines them into new forms of laboring practice linked to processes of subject formation creates homogenous conditions of unfreedom – that to study Delhi is no different, than say, studying Berlin insofar as capital is structuring the same degrees of possibility and impossibilities in both contexts. Of course, the simple reaction to this would be to champion the putative agency that hip hop creates as it creates new opportunities for social, political, and economic engagement but, I think, the more subtle task at hand is to show how global forms, as they travel, reveal a far more complex context for everyday life that is specific to time and place and that evokes particular historical struggles that are intertwined with the story of capital as it continues its adventures in new forms and reformulates old forms. Here I think, Ong's (2011) recent argument that a study of globalization that either focuses on impositional global capitalist formations or on the resistant (and politicized) subaltern both miss important facets of how globally circulating discourses are producing distinct and historically situated notions of personhood, urbanity, and nation, becomes an important space to situate this concerns of this chapter, and indeed, the concerns of this book.

While the images and the youthful performances that produce them in the Delhi scene, certainly, in their travels through particular circuits work to inculcate desires that are valuable to the market, the performances and their captured images, as I have argued in several chapters also work in several other capacities – to engender localized political movements, explore gendered, racial, ethnic, and travelling subjectivities, or to enact

particular politics within the discourse of hip hop. This, of course, suggests that the processes of subject formation embedded in the image making projects of young people always exceed the market's demand for a particular kind of immaterial laboring practice and the subjectivities that undergird it. Indeed, if we take a closer look at the events sponsored by branding agencies, we begin to see how the youthful producers of these images, these affective commodities, disrupt the simple narrative of capital's triumphalism by creating performances that exceeds capital's needs, performances that are located in the unfolding of historical time in Delhi that reveal the particular gendered, classed and ethnic positionalities of the youth that perform them. Sometimes these disruptions occur in what could be considered political acts within the folds of the event, more often they are embedded more subtly in the very images they produce. These instances of disruption, I argue, reinvests the aesthetic citizenship made possible through the engagement of hip hop forms with political force as it offers the collectivity that hip hop engenders in Delhi and beyond to, following hip hop's career as counter hegemonic force, create instances of politicality through a disruption of peace. In this case peace refers to the regular workings of the market typified in the events that are put on by what Arvidsson (2007) rightly suggests are, rather than the creative class, the branding bureaucrats who leverage the immaterial labor of the youth. In the next section I describe/analyze and event that reveal how hip hop actors in the scene, even as they struggle to figure out how to make hip hop part of their economic futures, actively disrupt hip hop as labor. I follow this by discussing how the youth in the scene, in producing a series of practice spaces outside the industry sponsored events, and by producing images, videos, and narratives for circulation through Youtube – even while there is a hopefulness that all of these activities will enable economic stability – also practice their crafts as forms of expression, as ways to link their experience to a larger globality, as a means to approach the multitude.

Corporate hip hop and the Disruption of the Commodity Image
I arrived to the South Delhi college campus where a globally known sporting goods brand was sponsoring a B-boying, graffiti and skateboarding event. There were crowds of

young men and women, many of them students who attended the college, milling around the several booths set up by the sporting goods brand that displayed their latest footwear and clothing offerings. At the small stage in the center of the courtyard stood a few B-boyers – many of whom I knew from Khirki, Humayunpur, and others that I had briefly met when I attended B-boying events, corporate sponsored, or not, that goes on across the city. Some of these young men, as they waited to compete in the tournament, were practicing their moves, most were leaning against the wall and looking outward, posing in their baggy jeans, graphic print T-shirts, and their backwards snapback hats, as they waited for the event to begin. Over in another corner a small quarter pipe had been set up and a European skater, tattooed with board in hand, was quietly talking to a few young Indian men, presumably college attendees, who had encircled and were raptly listening to him. Behind the products booths there stood a 'graffiti wall' made out of cloth stretched over steel poles where a few graffiti artists were quietly spraying large pieces side by side, ventilator masks strapped on, several paints of paint neatly stacked in plastic bins, by their side. In the back of the main event there was a stage set up, where there would be, prior to the B-boy competitions and the skating demonstration, a talent show showcasing performers who attended the college.

Throughout my initial walk through the event space I ran into young men and women who I knew, B-boys and Bgirls, graffiti artists, a DJ and some youth who simply just passed time with their friends in the scene, and exchanged awkward hip hop styled greetings with them -- a hand shake followed by a hug, neither of which were as firm or emphatic as what I grew up with in New York or the greetings I would receive when I went to Khirki to meet the East and West African students, shop owners, and refugees that I knew – none of whom made it to these sorts of events. These awkward hugs with the young men and women were, no doubt, filmed by the official content collectors[20] throughout the crowd, who were busily milled around taking photos and talking with a few of the participants on the side. Before long the B-boy battle started. Several crews who I knew from Khirki and from Humayunpur competed against crews I had never seen

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[20] As opposed to the unofficial content collectors in the mall in chapter 4.

before. Some of the crews came in T-shirt uniforms that announced their crew affiliation, however most didn't and sufficed to mark affiliation to their crews by simply wearing similar colors. The event was judged by three older B-boys from the Delhi scene who would rate the quality of the contestants and promote the winner to the next round of the competition. The judges, in contrast to the contestants who would compete for prize money, were paid for their roles as arbiters of quality, another work opportunity that many young B-boys aspired to as they gained fame and notoriety as dancers. The winners on that day were a crew from East Delhi and before the open mic commenced and rappers and poets in the scene were invited to the stage the MC of the event, an MC that most of the youth in the scene knew, gave a short lecture on what hip hop was to the crowd made up largely of college student attendees, to educate them about what hip hop is and why it is important.

To begin his public pedagogy, he picked a young girl in the crowd and asks her name. She responds, "Deepti."   "Alright, Deepti, do you know what is real hip hop culture?" She answers, hesitantly, "I don't know, must be dance derived from some country." "Okay," he repeats, "dance form from some country, do you think its right?", addressing the crowd. "Okay let me tell you what is hip hop culture, it's a five elemental thing. It's a creative five elemental thing…." Here, the recapitulation of the universal tenets of hip hop, a formulation that I heard repeated in almost every hip hop gathering in Delhi, corporate sponsored or not, set these events apart from the kinds of guerilla performances I described in my chapter on illicit B-boying in the shopping mall across the street from Khirki. Although there were also opportunities for the production and subsequent capture of affective commodities in the mall l, as I argued when I discussed what I describe as the politics of the small frame, here, because there was room for a narrative explication, the images were given some context. Often however, hip hop, in these retellings of the five element discourse in corporate sponsored events as well as in the more grassroots events reflected, rather than the historico-political origins of hip hop, a kind of universalist notion of hip hop (recall chapter 4 for a full discussion). This universalist approach that stressed practice and discipline was in keeping with the

corporate context in which it was delivered, certainly, as its rehearsal in other self-organized event spaces was in keeping with the discourses of global capitalism.

When the leader of the crew that won the competition, Dhruv, a young Dalit man in his 20s who was originally from a small village on the Uttar Pradesh and Bihar border, finally got the mic he decided to rap in English. However, prior to sharing his poetry he began with his own statement about hip hop, one that steered away from the abstract and apolitical five element discourse on hip hop offered by the MC of the event. "Yesterday I asked someone what is hip hop. He answered, a guy, a black guy who is rapping is called hip hop. Yoo, Hip hop is not that. Hip hop is worldwide. It's in him (pointing to the MC) it's in that DJ, it's in me, it's all in you (pointing to the crowd). The difference is that we are, were just attracted to the commercial stuff …but we don't understand what is hip hop. Alright, I don't want any music (pointing to the DJ)." Here Dhruv points out that real hip hop, while it is universal, "it is in him, it's in that DJ, it's in me, it's all in you…" cannot be found in commercial "stuff," suggesting that the image of the Black guy rapping is already always a commodified form. Then he begins his rhyme, "I am just going to say the truth and the fact. It's a rhyme. First of all, who all know 16th of December, 2012? Raise up your hand if you know this date. If you know this date FUCKING (loud voice) raise your hands up." The crowd starts to shuffle. From my vantage point, I had climbed up a small wall to get a better view of the scene, I could see the police start to walk over to the crowd slowly. The organizer of the event who was in the merchandise booth emerges from the booth. Dhruv continues, "anybody in the store knows? What is 16th of December 2012. Nobody knows that. Right. Because we are all commercial fucking people. Because we listen to Honey Singh and after that we forget what is happening. You know, we are posting our pics on Facebook, yo how I'm looking? Nah. Well let me say something."

16th of December 2012, a Sunday became doomsday for a young pretty woman. All went good until 9:30pm when she took a bus for her residence. No paranoid mind along with her man. It was the wrong bus and the wrong prayer. Suddenly things changed and she was attacked. Her man was hit by the rod. Damn. She

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moved to save her man till then she was grabbed. By six faithless wimps…..when the incident hit the new channels, India was left numb. After the brutal gang rape the girl was coma…. When people, when people, when people when people will come now out now to protest for your fun. Now you're behind the bars, let India decide what about your son? But wait, there is one more bar about the Indian government scars. 22nd December India Gate, when people turned out to protest for her scars. Thousands of people gathered grieving for the incident, thousands of police across the park. India was quiet and calm, piece in the arms. Youth was divine, no sentiments of crime. All for the justice to change the system, to change the dime. When the police got the order for another crime. Lathi charge and gas proved the goonda raj. Sending a message to the government through my art. She could be my sister. She could be my new. She could be my one. I'll burn you. She wasn't for fun. Snatch your soul for all that you've done. I want to kill you. But that won't change the destiny of that girl. I want to kill you. But that won't bring her stars and pearls… I cannot believe no Ana, no Sonia they were on the streets. They were not on the streets, but that is fucking politics. You guys agree? You guys agree!(louder). You guys agree? You guys agree? You didn't listen, right. It doesn't matter to me because we are like this.

In his forceful voice that evokes and (re)narrates the highly publicized and politicized rape case of a young women in South Delhi and the events that followed that punctuated the end of 2012, Dhruv immediately changes the tone of the corporate sponsored event by telling a political story *as* hip hop. What, prior to his ascension on stage, was a tame affair where hip hop's forms were performed alongside a skating demonstration and a talent show, and where hip hop was explained, abstractly, as knowledge, suddenly, through Dhruv's intervention, became a political space. Capitalism, evoked in his condemning introduction of himself and the crowd to whom he speaks as "commercial fucking people," and its violent effects are brought together in his poetry. Dhruv's voice, his tone, while in English and pitched to a youthful, decidedly middle class college going audience, quickly alerted the police who were otherwise an innocuous presence in the

event. They pushed towards the stage. Where their *lathis* (police batons) were previously at their sides, they were now in their hands. The crowd, right from the moment he began his introduction to the end of his first verse, nervously shuffled their feet. Some dispersed, moving away from the main stage and back towards the area where the talent show had taken place. The branding agent in charge with organizing the event nervously paced in front of the merchandise tent. Dhruv, in his personal, poetic and passionate narrativization the story of the rape, a story that had, many months after the incident had taken place and had fallen out of circulation, out of visibility in the media, by condemning the young men who were responsible for the attack and the politicians who weren't "on the streets" in the same breath, single handedly brought politics back into a corporate sponsored hip hop event that seemingly had no room for politics. Moreover, in his public grappling with the Delhi rape case through the lens of hip hop, he reveals an acute awareness of his gendered position, an awareness that many of the young men in my study articulated in the months that followed the deep rupture that this event produced as it stirred, through the mediatized sensationalism that had followed, the collective anxieties of the city. Importantly, these mediatized accounts of the rape case had singled out young men like Dhruv as a threat. While I will not fully go into a discussion regarding class, gender, and violence in Delhi in this monograph, it is important to recognize Dhruv's articulation of the rape case in this context was his way of not only engaging with the current political issues of his time that focused on violence against women, but of recognizing his own position as a young Dalit male in the face of the backlash that followed.

While this example alone reveals the ways in which the production of the affective commodity can be disrupted in situ, Dhruv's poetry that follows, perhaps more powerfully punctuates the economic and social conditions of (im)possiblity that young men and women like Dhruv, the caste and ethnic others who are children of migrants, struggle with as they seek to straddle the economic, political and social possibilities of hip hop in the city of Delhi.

De-commercial is not my aim

Underground fame is what my game

What you looking up is brown kids name

Working in call centers is not my shift

Created my words, life is a dick

I am not the one your gonna to look up at

in Dance India, dance shit.

Underground battles I rocked my (inaudible)

Worked in McDonalds

Cleaned the dish

Served french burgers, teas and drinks

My reality is beyond what I spit

Im a B-boy with a beautiful hist..

What I think is what I hit I'm an artist

You might think that you've struggled a lot

But you don't need the work because its still slot

Dhruv, in this next verse tersely discusses the realities of work in relation to his passionate engagement with hip hop. Evoking call centers and shifts in McDonalds, Dhruv calls attention to the kinds of working opportunities that are available to him and the other young men and women in similar economic and social positions who share his stage while also revealing the tensions between the fame and economic reward that are made possible in his practice of hip hop. By suggesting that underground fame is his aim and that decommercial(izing) hip hop is not, Dhruv straddles the tense middle that emerges when there is a recognition that his engagements with hip hop produce laboring opportunities but that this is, perhaps, not what he is after. What becomes critical here, and what I would like us to keep in mind into the next and final chapter as I explore the ways in which hip hop and its aesthetics undergirded the filmic narrative that I and my Somali collaborators produced about race and place, is the ways in which hip hop or, for that matter, any artistic practice has the power to imbricate personal experience with

political critique, and, thus, create aesthetic products that are not free floating and easily taken up in the projects of others but are, rather, firmly embedded in the narratives of those that produce them. Once Dhruv surrenders the mic, the mood slowly reverts back to the tame event it was prior to his ascension on the stage. The MC asks that everyone gathers around the quarter pipe for a skating demonstration in a half an hour while many of the B-boys who competed in the event continue dancing on stage. Some call me over to take pictures of them. I pass the next half an hour taking photos of members of the crews from Khirki and Humanyunpur before I jump into an auto and make my way through the thickening afternoon traffic.

Months later I run into Dhruv in front of a grassroots B-boy and poppin' and lockin'jam run by a young man in the scene for dancers. This jam, unlike the corporate event or the mall, is not open to the public and there is a small entrance for to enter. None of the young men from the Khirki or the Humanyun crews come, and I suspect it is because of a combination of the entrance fee, the lack of prize money, and the absence of camera that they don't make it. Dhruv and I, as we wait for the organizer to set up his sound system and his accounting system, a beaten up laptop where he recorded the emails of the entrants, the fees collected and so on, talked about B-boying, life, and the future. Dhruv begins to tell me, as we dodged the motorcycles that constantly whizzed by us in the alley in front of the basement space where we would eventually make our way, that he was getting nervous that he would not be able to compete for much longer for prize money in the competitions because his body was getting older (See Fogarty, 2009, on aging hip hoppers and imagined futures). He, clenching his jaw as he spoke a mixture of Hindi and English, began to talk about ways he could make his living in the future doing the thing he loved most, engaging with hip hop, and asked me for advice on how he should pursue this without losing his first love, B-boying. But he was unsure that day. Not the figure he cut on the stage months prior, when he brought the force of his personal experiences and his political art to bear on Delhi's hip hop scene. We discussed potential futures and work opportunities that would allow him to continue doing what he loved to do. I suggested, perhaps, that he should go into video or music production as these industries would continue to grow in the city and in the country. Or, perhaps, he should

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teach dance, I limpidly offered, knowing that everything I suggested in the way of career pursuits required capital investment in the form of training, equipment, space and so on. I told him about my work with a few B-boys and MCs in the city with video, how I have been working with them to make their own music videos, and, how, as a result of our initial digital collaborations, we are now working on making narrative films. Perhaps, I said, not quite sure if I had the time, we could do something together in the future. Maybe I could work with you around video. Throughout my, in retrospect, rather insipid talk, he clench his jaw and listened. Months later I saw on his Facebook page, underneath a post of a photo of several B-boyers from the Delhi scene, young men and women from several different ethnic communities, caste and class positions, the following pithy line written by him, "I am happy with my life, haven't choose any career, I dance, I breath, flowing with the life's groove."

"Only in the visual and narrative form, can the body language, the colloquial street lingo, and the moral complexities and dangers of the city emerge. The central figures in many of these films are people who somehow navigate and manage the city through networks and ways of knowing that are unavailable to the elite and to the official gaze. They represent an otherwise disavowed perspective on the city, the 'real' of the urban, a perspective that only with the greatest difficulty can emerge in a sociological register…"(Hansen and Verkaaik, 2010:12).

"…Knowledge only begins to become interesting when we take it out of the hands of the experts"(Lal, 2002: 149).

"The concept of dialogic art practice is derived from Mikhail Bakhtin, who argued that the work of art can be viewed as a kind of conversation – a locus of differing meanings, interpretations, and points of view"(Kester, 2001: 10).

We sat on the warm stones of Satpula, a dam built during the reign of Sultan Mohammed Shah Tughlaq in the 14th century. The dam, several hundred meters down the main road from Khirki, is a decaying, poorly maintained monument testament to Delhi's former glory as the center of a regional empire. Importantly, Satpula stands barely a kilometer from a potent symbol of a newly rising global city of Delhi, the DLF Groups 54 acre campus consisting of three adjoining shopping malls, several office buildings, food courts, and movie theaters.[21] Here, in a small tunnel that could only be accessed by a narrow, dark and claustrophobic staircase that leads down from the main parapet of the stone wall that now overlooks a small overgrown field where buffalo graze and residents of the small squatter camp, tribal families originally from the forested areas of Chattisgarh state, go to perform their morning ablutions; one of the three 'crews' of young men who I spent a year with during my time in Delhi would gather in the late afternoons to smoke cigarettes and marijuana away from the prying eyes and harsh words of those on the street. Here, in this cave, hidden from their parents and elders in their community who told them, exaggeratedly, that they would kill them if they ever found them smoking, they told stories, laughed, and engaged in hip hop's poetics.

As a gentle breeze blew through the cave like tunnel, Hanif, a 17 year old Somali whom, along with his mostly Somali crew, lives in a predominantly Muslim basti

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[21] Recall that this is the mall that featured in chapter four's discussion of public space in Delhi.

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(neighborhood) located within the larger contiguous spatial geography that makes up Khirki, begins to rhyme a freestyle verse.   He is self-conscious of the camera I train on him and even more self-conscious that he is being recorded in front his friends and, more importantly, in front of an older MC in Delhi's hip hop scene whom he is hanging out with for the first time but whose music, through Youtube videos, Facebook, and the music site ReverbNation, he knows intimately. He begins briskly, his first acapella stanza a rehearsal of commercial hip hop bravado marked by an easy, effortless use of nigga to punctuate his staccato lines:

What I'm saying is
Sitting in Delhi
Trying to get a PhD
Still smoking all the greatest
I'm fuckin' the baddest
I will never take you to the top
Focus on the hocus
you niggas are jokers
Sipping that mojo
Bitch know me what I do
here with my nigga Z. sitting here
we smoking weed
with my nigga H. here we about to do the shit
All we do is smoke weed and go home

Then, perhaps because he doesn't get any feedback from his listeners, perhaps because the mainstream misogynistic 'American' hip hop bravado from his initial verse doesn't quite fit the self-image he wants to produce, his cadence slows.   He begins to struggle to tell a story in verse, to share something more personal of his life in Delhi:

Because we live in the blazing Delhi

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It's a place to live

I've been grown up here

I've been living here 9 years

I've been seeing shit

I'm with my family

pause

My father lives in Somalia

Works so hard to pay us for our bills

Audience: uhhuh, yeah.

I don't give a shit

But still I am doing good

They think I am black

Audience: yeah.

But my teeth are so white

But my smile is so bright

It's a rap thing that's all I can do

In this concluding chapter I discuss how my relationship with this predominantly Somali crew, whom I met in the circumstances described above, developed into a collaboration that yielded a feature length ethnographic film on Khirki that explored the racialized experiences of its diverse array of African residents in a moment when African transnationals and refugees in the city were under increasing scrutiny and subject to violence and everyday discrimination. In doing so I focus on two overlapping concerns. First, the ways in which global hip hop, as it arrives in Delhi, emerges as a "critical site for the negotiation of race, for the marking of racialized borders, and for their subsequent displacement and rearrangement"(Dolby, 2001:9). As Hanif subtly points to in his closing stanza and as I intimately observed in my time in Delhi, emergent racial logics brought about by recent immigration patterns are interpenetrating extant notions of difference in the city.   These newly formulating demarcations of difference most explicitly impacted the African youth in my study -- those from Somalia, Nigeria, and the

Congo -- who all thematized racial friction and exclusion as the most significant feature in their everyday lives. Importantly, the young Africans whom I met with the notable exception of the Somali crew, did not directly engage with Delhi's hip hop scene but rather populated its edges as they frequented the regular hip hop parties in nightclubs across Delhi. For these young men and women, their engagement with global hip hop, particularly their consumption of its music and its poetics, produced not only in North America but in West Africa and in Europe by Africans, was a way of engaging with a world outside of India while confined by its borders. Their experimentations with hip hop cultural production, always musical and lyrical, were narrative in scope and emerged within an experiential field that revealed their sense of displacement in India and their imaginings of their lives elsewhere. For the young Somalis in my study, a group of nine young men who all lived in Khirki for several years and had lived for extended periods in other cities across India, hip hop's poetics became a means to negotiate and articulate the kinds of challenges they faced as racial others growing up in Delhi and in India more broadly, *as well as* a means to participate in Delhi's emerging hip hop scene.

The distinctive position that the Somalis held as a result of their prolonged stay in India as refugees, the cultural knowledge, language proficiency and relationships that resulted, coupled with their visible difference that linked them to the other Africans living in Khirki, forged a unique positionality for these young men as they were able to move through several layers of sociality in their city and in Khirki. In the first section of this chapter I discuss how the Somali crew members ability to cross cultural and racial borders and, in so doing, rearrange and displace them, emerged in their multi-lingual experiments with hip hop's poetics as well as in the evident lyricism of their corporal wanderings across through the settlement and the city. I suggest this ability to cross borders and articulate these transgressions through hip hop eventually cast these Somali youth as central figures in what would become a shared anthropological engagement or what could be considered, in the blurred lines of 21st century anthropological practice, a community arts project that sought to understand how perceived racial difference imbricated daily life in Khirki. I argue that these young Somali men emerge in our experimentations with the filmic medium as the personification of what Hansen and

Verkaaik (2010) conceptualize as urban charisma, the (male) body who is intimate with the networks and ways of knowing that are distinctly urban. Rather than the 'local' tapori (vagabond/hustler) or the middle man of Indian cinematic fame that Hansen and Verkaaik (2010) draw on to thematize urban charisma, the hybrid cultural experience of the youthful male Somali migrant became central to understand Khirki and Delhi as places shaped by global processes as they inject new notions of the urban onto preexisting social worlds.

In the second section of this chapter I focus on the issues and opportunities that arose in my engagement with the Somali crew when making what I call *critical hip hop cinema* – collaborative 'ethnographic' filmmaking that relies on the idea of the cipha, the collaborative and creative space of iterative production in hip hop, to create narrative films that explores, or in a word, researches, issues of social salience. The film, set to a musical soundtrack that arose through cross cultural connection made possible through hip hop, documents not only the crises of difference around perceived racial difference that erupted in Khirki in the year and a half I lived in Delhi but the ways in which the desire to experiment with hip hop forms and digitality, even if short lived, makes visible new social arrangements. Indeed, when I met these young Somali men, as was the case with all of the young men and the few young women who people this narrative; hip hop music, style, and practice played a crucial part in allowing us to develop a meaningful dialogue across generational, national, ethnic, and class based difference. My initial engagements with the Somali crew, which early on were set in the atmospheric backdrop of Satpula dam, ratified the possibility for envisioning a collaborative process for shared learning that hinged on the transformative promise of dialogue and exchange that, eventually, led to the production and post production of a feature length ethnographic film – Cry Out Loud. The film, along with a second film I worked on with the mostly Northeastern crew from Humayunpur and the music videos I co-produced with several youth in the Delhi scene, are exemplars of the ways in which youth interest and engagement with subcultural or youth cultural forms can be harnessed towards fruitful teaching and learning opportunities that arise during ethnographic fieldwork – teaching and learning opportunities that are constructed within and through dialogic practice.

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As Ken Hirschkop (1999) argues in his recovery of Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic imaginary as an ethic for democratic practice, the dialogic, when framed as intimate, powerful, and full of possibility, release participants in an interactional framework from a communicative ethos steeped in conventional aesthetics. This reframing of dialogue as unconventional, which in my engagement with young people in Delhi was constructed through hip hop's spatial and temporal technology of creative exchange, the cipha (Spady el al., 2001), and ratified in the non-institutional and unauthorized spaces where they occurred – Satpula dam, for instance -- fashioned opportunities for us to engage with pressing issues in their lives in ways which were not stultified by linguistic or other semiotic pre-conditions.

In our early sessions, the construction of a hip hop cipha coupled with the presence of the camera in the surreal settings that these young men found to pass time, prompted powerful exchanges that painted a vivid picture of Delhi, Khirki, Somalia, and the transnational networks to which they belonged. When the camera was off, however, the conversations didn't stop but shifted direction. All of the young men whom I got to know, whether in this crew or in one of the two other crews whom I passed time with, were interested in learning the technical aspects of the media capture and editing technology I could offer to extend and deepen their already prolific media production practices with low-fi equipment. Many of my early off-camera exchanges with members of all three crews of young men, when we were not talking about hip hop, Delhi, or the world, often following up on threads that they brought up in their lyrics or in their performative talk or other hip hop informed semiotic communicative practice when the camera was turned on, focused on the pragmatics of shooting as well as on the finer aspects of scene and shot selection and so on. As our relationships deepened, our off camera talks, when we were not talking about the relational, the historical, or the experiential, centered on more abstract concepts that arose during the processes of shooting and post production. For the two 'crews' I worked on longer narrative films with, discussions regarding narrative, style, and theories of composition quickly ensued. These more abstract dialogues coupled with a hands engagement with the tools necessary

for production, I argue, worked to further develop the media literacies these youth recognized were central to ratifying their claims to aesthetic citizenship.

As importantly, the film project the Somali youth and I undertook extended and deepened conversations regarding representation that initially began with several different youth participants around the production of music videos. A shared ethnographic filmmaking added the additional practical, theoretical and ethical concerns that came with extending their interest in visual representation to the practice of research. It is this process of extending the aesthetic, the experiential, the affective, and the narrative play found in hip hop, into the realm of a process based and dialogically situated production of knowledge that I call critical hip hop cinema. I suggest that hip hop and its history of politically motivated aesthetic production provides the possibility for imagining a collaborative research from below that echoes Appadurai's (2006) sentiments in his discussion of PUKAR, a research collaborative in Mumbai that engages youth who are not from putatively privileged backgrounds in socially engaged research activities. Appadurai (2006) argues that research, or questioning one's ontological experience in the world and the context one finds oneself in, is a right. The articulation of this 'right' to research in my fieldwork took the form of a dialogic and creative engagement vis-à-vis the filmic.

In particular, the filmic experiments I took on with the Somali crew, as it relied on their deep experiential knowledge to develop a narrative that elucidates the complexity of race and racialized difference in their settlement, pushes back on the implicitly deficit oriented notion of collaborative filmmaking with youth in the literature, and particularly with youth in the margins. For instance, Alicia Blum-Ross (2013), in her work documenting media education projects for young people living in a working and underclass council estates in East London, argues that expert led educational filmmaking projects that are designed to engage youth in collaborative production enhances the participant's phenomenological understanding of their urban lived environs and, thereby, engages an enhances their sense of urban citizenship. On the contrary, I argue that marginalized youth the world over already have a visceral understanding of the spaces they traverse, the places they are excluded from, and the places where they feel a sense of

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connection. Rather, the filmic medium, utilized in anthropological research since the turn of the 20th century and increasingly coming into vogue as method in the 21st century, often as a means to enact a shared anthropology in our contemporary 'digital' moment (Pink, 2006, Russell, 2001) that offer a powerful medium to make visible their ontological and embodied experience of difference through narrativization and critique.

The necessarily intersubjective process of filmmaking, particularly when approached with the improvisational aesthetics of hip hop and the cipha, fostered a desire for the young men to tell ethnographic stories. I contend that for those taking up collaborative digital projects with young people who live in urban spaces of marginalization across the globe, one should approach youth as embodiments of urban charisma, as knowledgeable guides into the politics of place often only tackled in the fictional worlds of the cinema (Hansen and Verkaaik, 2010). Of course, with joint exploration comes the challenge of navigating power differentials. In this case the power differentials between myself and the Somali youth were experienced in our generational difference, my 'expert' status, and their deep contextual and linguistic knowledge. The other axis of power that we had to navigate, of course, was our relationship with the larger spatially 'situated 'community of Khirki. Our project brought the challenge of translation within several nested interactional frameworks that emerged throughout the dialogic process of production. I discuss some of the challenges that arose in the process of making films with youth and the ways in which we worked through them even as I describe the challenges in collaboration.

Delhi's emerging racial logics made visible

"How can they call us cannibals?" "Say that that we eat people?" "I mean, maybe they found an organ somewhere in some Nigerian's fridge who is doing organ trading but how then do they assume we are cannibals? That we eat people? They are racist." Salim, a 22 year old Somali and the elder in the crew, discusses the urban myth circulating through Khirki that Africans eat people. He is visibly upset. "This is what we have to deal with everyday as Africans in Khirki, in Delhi, and even we are not all the same." Salim's story, told soon after Hanif rhymed the verse in the vignette I began this chapter

with, touches upon the kinds of symbolic violence that occurs daily in Khirki against African nationals. These sorts of racialized, ethnicized, and gendered stories of difference, where contact with the "other" is expressed in terms of inhumanity, are set in the working class context of Khirki. In Khirki contact with India, for most Africans, is defined by their relationships with landlords, real agents, shopkeepers, and their neighbors. Importantly, for the majority of the Indians who live in the colony, this is there first contact with *baharlog* (outside people). However, it is important to note that the circulation of stories that position Africans as the inconceivable other -- the drug dealer, the prostitute, the cannibal, the organ trader -- are finding their way across India as Africans become more visible in the country as students and entrepreneurs from Africa arrive to make their lives in Indian urban contexts and as the Indian news media picks up stories of Africans in these contexts and circulates them nationally and, in some cases, internationally.   It is also worth noting that places like Khirki serve to not only create first time cross cultural contact between culturally diverse Indian working class migrants, lower middle class merchants, and those from abroad, but also serve as the space for first time contact amongst Africans from several different national, tribal, and religious backgrounds.

By evoking racism in relation to the circulating story of cannibalism, Salim indexes the kinds of discourses of difference that have been circulating since the colonial period that utilize pseudo-scientific rationale to legitimate European dominance through bureaucratic procedure by casting the colonized of the global south inferior, producing what Trouillot (1991) famously calls the savage slot – that categorical black hole where those without civilization are relegated. As a discipline, anthropology played a large role in the 19th century and early 20th century in propagating race as central concept to understand human difference. Even in the disciplines later attempts to critique race as a concept, the discipline served to keep it alive through concepts that mutated its biological specificity to realign it with notions of distinct temporally and spatially bounded cultural practice (Fabian, 2002). Indeed, while the culture concept was developed and made central by anthropologist Frantz Boas and his followers in the U.S. to critique notions of human hierarchy based on biology and stress a relativist approach rather a hierarchical

approach to studying human difference, several scholars have argued the cultural concept, in recent times, has actually served to reify notions of hierarchical difference that qualify racial superiority (Stoller, 2000; Visweswaran, 2010). The production and circulation of a story of Africans and cannibalism in contemporary Delhi is an eruption of the kinds of global discourses that entangle culture and biological difference to produce new hierarchies as new economic, social, and political arrangements create new persistent linkages between several African nations and India. As importantly, this story highlights how the Other, apprehended through visible difference and normalized through linguistic convention, is made aesthetically 'known' in ways that reinforce difference. Here it is important to, albeit briefly, elaborate on two points.

First, that a full discussion regarding how racial discourses that are tied to the emergent south to south connection between India and Africa is beyond the scope of this monograph and is a topic I will tackle in detail in my next work on what I provisionally call south to south entanglements, which studies in detail the web of relationships between African nations and India through the eyes of African students, small scale entrepreneurs, large scale business magnates and refugees from several countries living in Delhi, many of whom I got to know through my time wandering through the streets of Khirki. What I would like to do in this closing chapter is foreground my engagement on the relationship between India and Africa in the 21st century by thinking through how, by following Hanif, Salim, and their Somali friends, all long time refugees in India, we can get a glancing perspective how new race logics that are tied to migrating bodies and changing economic structures overlap with hip hop's discourses regarding race and exclusion. Specifically, I will discuss how the young Somali men, amidst the pan African diversity of Khirki, emerge as, in Hanif's words, *desi niggas* (see chapter 1 for an initial discussion on desi niggas).

By utilizing Desi – a now globally circulating term that indexes a connection to Indianness that doesn't require national identification -- with Nigga, what Marc Anthony Neale (2013) argues has become a globally circulating term that indexes "concepts of Blackness that are mobile, fluid, adaptable, postmodern, and urban and embodying various forms of social and rhetorical flow most evident in hip hop," Hanif and his crew

mark the ways that they are enabled and constrained as they make their lives in Delhi because of their in-between status (557). The term at once suggests the recognition of their position as social and cultural hybrids, "mobile and fluid" agents in their lifeworlds. Yet, it also points to a deep recognition of their perceived otherness, a recognition that Salim's telling of the story about Africans and cannibalism highlights, precisely because Salim, Hanif, and the rest of the crew, all understand the various Hindi derived argots of the settlement and hear that story applied to them by people who imagine that they couldn't possibly understand what is being said.

Second, and equally important when discussing race in India, is that logics of difference that justify social and economic inequality are not new to the subcontinent. Caste, of course, has been long the domain of those who have studied systematic constructions of hierarchical difference in the subcontinent and debates among academics continue as to what the impact of the colonial regime had on pre-colonial constructions of caste (cf. Dirks, 2002) and how caste continues to play out in the current neoliberal moment (Kapur, forthcoming). Ethnicity has also emerged in the scholarship on South Asia (cf. McDuie-Ra, 2012) along with the politics of language (cf. Mitchell, 2009), the construction of religious identity (cf. Blom Hansen, 2000; Rajagopal, 2001) as scholars have all deliberated how 'the other' is constructed and stabilized in the public imaginary. Perceived racialized, ethnicized, caste based, and linguistic difference were, no doubt, also salient feature in the lives of the recently arrived Northeastern, Nepali, Afghani youth whom I met, as well as by the Uttar Pradeshi and Bihari youth who identified as members of scheduled backward castes[22] (SBC) or Dalit communities. For these youth, life in the capitalist megacities exacerbate the pernicious effects of these differences and laminated them onto new regimes of inequality based on class, as I touched upon in Dhruv's narrative in chapter 5 or in Sudhir's narrative in chapter 3. However, migration and engagement with the potential cosmopolitan playgrounds of the city also mitigated the effects of difference, particularly for young people, who could begin to explore new ways of self-fashioning that allowed them to participate in previously unavailable worlds.

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[22] The term Scheduled Backward Caste (SBC) is just one of many categories of difference that are still utilized today by the Indian government to describe and govern caste and tribal communities that are systematically discriminated against in India (Visweswaran, 2010).

Indeed, throughout this monograph I have argued that hip hop's aesthetics of alterity and resistance was a key reason why young subalterns from several different historical backgrounds gravitated to its forms in Delhi, as it offered them a means to visibly participate in the production of an alternate urban modernity in ways they could not access through the other cultural forms, whether popular or otherwise, of the subcontinent. Moreover, hip hop offered the young men whom I got to know an opportunity to build a practice community that stretched across difference in the city and beyond the borders of India. For some, as I have discussed in the previous chapters, hip hop also offered a means to more fully participate in Delhi's changing urbanity, through engagements with activists, entrepreneurs, and artists. Yet, in distinction to the African youth who engage with hip hop in Delhi, while their position as social others formed the context with hip hop, racial, ethnic, or caste based difference was not immediately evident in their multimodal productions as an explicit theme.[23]

In part, their lack of thematization regarding social difference had to do with the context in which I met most of the youth I got to know, within Delhi's hip hop scene. For those who are active participants in the scene, ideas of difference were put to the side as hip hop created a field for participation that, for the time they engaged closely with their practice community, limited the impact of their outsider status. As I was a putative outsider, a New Yorker arriving to engage with hip hop in their city, the default position amongst the youth I met was to perform for me a unified hip hop scene in Delhi that kept the powerful divisive forces outside the scene at bay and that positively represented the city and India as unified under the allegory of *the street* – which could, in the context of this conversation, be read as a signifier of class solidarity (see chapter 2 for an extended discussion of hip hop ideologies and their circulations in the Delhi scene). Second, as the Delhi scene primarily focused on hip hop's visual and corporal practices and only recently had rappers and MCs coming to the fore more publicly, much of the reflexive capacity of hip hop's poetics had not been fully realized. Of course, the glimmers of

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[23] The Facebook pages of the Northeastern and Nepali B-boys I spent time with revealed, as I discussed in chapter one, an aesthetic alignment with Korea and Japan's hip hop scenes – a subtle linking of race, hip hop, and an opening into how being visibly different in Delhi shaped their self-fashioning processes and the kinds of networks they were able to produce through their engagements with hip hop forms.

reflective critical engagement we can apprehend in Dhruv's and Sunil's verses in previous chapters that focus on class, consumption, and the politics of space in Delhi point to a potentially rich political engagement through hip hop's narrative forms amongst youth in the Delhi scene. Yet, these examples still are only glimmers and did not fully engage with the emergent politics of difference that saturates the city.

Finally, for the ethnic, caste, and racial others in Delhi's hip hop scene who were not African, putative national and even regional belonging coupled with language proficiency served to obscure the issues that visible and/or categorical difference created for them as they made their lives in Delhi. As I mentioned in earlier chapters, the Nepali, Northeastern, and Bihari youth I got to know seldom spoke up about how difference worked to shape their experiences. Poignantly, in the initial months I got to know these young men, they avoided my pointed questions regarding their historical background, simply claiming Delhi as their home and hip hop as their life. However, during my time in Delhi, there were ruptures in this seeming normalcy, ruptures that created the conditions for many of the young people I worked with who were initially reticent to begin to articulate how difference impacted their everyday lives in the city. For instance, the violence against an Arunachali student and his subsequent death in early 2014 forced the issue of racial discrimination against Northeasterners in Delhi into the public eye and incited the Nepali and Northeastern youth in my study to more openly discuss the day-to-day issues they face as outsiders in the city in our conversations. This incident against the Arunachali student subsequently sparked protests amongst Northeastern communities living in Delhi who argued the attack was an example of the kind of racialized discrimination they faced regularly as recent migrants to the city. The incident, followed by the protests, spurred the chief minister of Delhi of the newly elected Aam Admi Party, Arvind Kejriwal, to announce, "There is no place for elements trying to spread hatred against people belonging to any particular part of the country"(Hindustan Times, February 1, 2014).

The timing of this statement by Kejriwal that supports the legitimacy of Northeasterners living in the city *as* Indians, came in the wake of a recent vigilante attack led by the administrations law minister on Africans in Khirki under the pretense of illegal

activity. The juxtaposition of these two events and the public statements by politicians they precipitated serve as an important context for the ways in which Africans, mostly students, refugees, and transnational entrepreneurs, are positioned in the city as people who are incontrovertibly different – in the words of the law minister, Somnath Barthi, "yeh hum aur aap jaise nahin hain" (They are not like you or me) (Srivastava, 2014). While I will not go into the specifics of this state sponsored attack on Africans living in Khirki or the attack on the Northeastern student in this monograph as they both lead down the rabbit hole of contemporary politics of difference in Delhi and the ways in which this politics of difference plays out in the formal political sphere, I bring it up to highlight the differentiated public discourse that these violent ruptures make visible and the way that the diverse youth in Delhi's hip hop scene are positioned in this discourse. With this in mind, let us now return to the ways in which the young Somalis utilized hip hop as a means to mark and renegotiate racial as well as religious, gendered, and class based borders.

Initially, through their raps and rhymes, as Hanif's last verse in the vignette above begins to reveal, I got to know their stories of transnational longing, of families split across several national contexts, and of the kinds of racialized violence, both symbolic as Salim's story above reveals, as well as literal, that they faced as young men in their everyday lives in Khirki and in Delhi. The poetry these young men produced, rather than creating new ways for them to participate in Delhi's changing social, economic, and political worlds as I discussed in previous chapters hip hop did for those who could be included, even if uneasily, in India and Delhi's narrative, revealed their fraught positionality as part and yet apart of the Indian context. For these young men in particular, hip hop's poetics created the possibility for a self-reflective process of self-fashioning in a way that hip hop's other practices do not. We, perhaps, can surmise that the possibility for reflective storytelling that creative language practice facilitates emerges as the primary reason that hip hop has so easily become associated with its lyrical and musical forms rather than its corporal and visual forms. The focus on the linguistic flows of hip hop, I suggest, is mirrored both in the marketplace as well as in the scholarly literature, where very little is written about the other practices that constitute

hip hop's five elements when discussing hip hop's pedagogical possibility or social relevance (For exceptions see Fogarty, 2010; Weiss, 2002). Perhaps this is because, as I have suggested throughout the book, hip hop's dance forms and its visual arts practices are prone to being rendered part of someone else's narrative while hip hop's poetry, even if commercialized, cannot be divorced so easily from it's speaker.

For Hanif and his crew, their interest in hip hop's poetics, rather than its other forms in a city where hip hop lives more in its corporal and visual repertoires than its musical or lyrical, reveals, first, that their gravitation to hip hop's poetics is borne out of a necessity to articulate their position in the city which they live. While certainly the other youth in my study also feel the effects of living on the margins of the cities changing social, political, and economic terrain, I have argued and described throughout this book the ways that that their engagement with hip hop's forms to produce aesthetic products created a space for them to participate within the city as members of a larger Indian and Delhi hip hop scene. Even as some of the Nepali, Northeastern, and Bihari B-boyers and graffiti artists whom I got to know began to write rhymes that told their stories, these stories, because these young men were already a part of the Delhi scene, became part of the narrative of Indian and Delhi hip hop in ways that reified a particular sense of belonging that hinged on the national as a larger container for engagement. For instance, as I described in chapter 5, while Dhruv's poetry shook the commercial context in which it was delivered, his political hip hop performance still had a place as part of an emergent Indian and Delhi hip hop scene.

The Somali crew, however, rarely engaged in hip hop events, whether produced by branding agents and other commercial interests or by practitioners in the scene who put together more grassroots gatherings. While Hanif made it a point to connect with several MCs who were producing music in Delhi through Facebook to arrange for production dates and playfully freestyled with his Nepali, Northeastern, and Bihari friends, his storytelling, which mainly spoke of issues of race in Delhi or the struggles of Somalis across the world, were pitched beyond his current lifeworld in Delhi or in India.

What becomes critical to understanding how our transition from the lyrical play, which marked the beginning of my relationship with the Somali crew, to the filmic

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project we eventually undertook is that these young Somali men, because of their fluency in Hindi, their close understanding of the cultural context of their erstwhile home, and their practice of Islam, allowed them to straddle multiple worlds in the city. From the West African speakeasy bars of their settlement community, to the local mosque for prayers, to UNHRC (United Nations Human Rights Commission) functions, to passing time with their working class Nepali, Bihari, Afghani, and South Indian school friends in Satpula, visiting the middle class homes of some of their school mates, or interacting with the wealthier refugees from Somalia who lived across town, these young men had a profound sense of the complex layers of the city and the community they resided in and the ways in which this knowledge linked to a broader understanding of the world. Their deep interest in American mainstream hip hop music, which more often than not was the sound track for our time together, created the conditions for them to simultaneously express their connections to their 'hood, to the city, to India, to Africa, to Somalia. Moreover, their experimentations as MCs allowed them to explore their disconnections from the West Africans, Indians, and others they met and developed relationships with. Importantly, their experimentations with hip hop's musical and lyrical forms also created a network that, eventually, connected us in the tunnels of Satpula.

Critical hip hop Cinema – Creating a Collaborative Ethnography
Hanif: And if it happens we will do the little documentary you told me about. It will be great doing something with you

Me: Yes. Lets do it. Lets start planning it together. I shared some ideas. I want to hear yours too.

Hanif: Alright we will sit and share ideas
(Facebook chat July 2013).

The connection that I made with the Somali crew through hip hop and our subsequent development of a film on the racial terrain of their settlement can, on one hand, be

likened to the almost mythological quest of the anthropologist who searches for a key informant or informants who will open the door to unknown worlds that the anthropologists seeks as they wish to extrapolate on a particular subject of study. Here, in this narrative imaginary, the Somali youth appear, unexpectedly and quite spectacularly, as key informants, as embodiments of urban charisma as we meet in the atmospheric ruins of Satpula to engage in a hip hop freestyle cipha. Together, over the course of several months, we undertook the work to excavate the multiple threads that connect landlords, the police, real estate agents, political party leaders, and mullahs to discuss, through the filmic medium, the complicated ways in which Africans become part of a complex political economy that is deeply connected to private property, vote banks, and urban development in the fast mutating urban context of Delhi.

In this case we could presuppose that the subject I entered seeking to understand in Delhi was race in light of the changing demographics of the city. Yet, our meeting under the auspices of hip hop, a point that the Somali youth constantly remind me of -- "we met because of hip hop" -- suggests something quite different. If my original subject or object of study was hip hop in Delhi, how did I, end up making a collaborative film on race in Khirki? How does this close look at how Africans are placed within the political economy of Khirki possibly fit in with my, till now, rumination on aesthetic citizenship and the capacity for the production of popular images, texts, and so on, to enable participation? The answer, I believe, lies in the nature of networks and the ways in which, by following its flows, and eddies, we arrive engaging with otherwise unforeseen objects. Throughout this book I have followed hip hop into the places where youth live, work, play, and otherwise derive pleasure from or have obligations to. Rather than focusing on hip hop as a static object of study, I have traced the ways in which young peoples' experiments with digital hip hop creates opportunities for them to engage, for instance, in issues of local development in Khirki, or participate, perhaps more obviously, in the youth life style industry. To, in a word, extend their networks not just within a globally situated hip hop nation, but into unexpected social worlds. Georg Marcus (1995), in his methodological essay detailing the notion of multi-sited ethnography in a world system, argues for a notion of multi-sitedness that, in essence, cleaves to the

notion of the network. Marcus (1995), by calling for an ethnographic project that follows moving objects of interest into new terrain, suggests that constructing a multi-sited ethnography doesn't necessarily mean placing oneself in multiple geographic terrains to grasp a fleeting glimpse of the world system circuitry, but requires one to follow the people, follow the metaphor, or follow the conflict into previously unforeseen places and spaces. Marcus's (1995) call to follow, of course, echoes, Riles's (2000) argument that to create something interesting ethnographically, one must turn the network inside out.

With Hanif's crew, I found myself, through an engagement with their digital experiments in hip hop, following the ways in which emergent race logics in their spatial community and in India more broadly were reflected in their multimodal productions as well as in our talk about their lives in Delhi, talk that emerged when we engaged in the production of hip hop texts. Our discussion regarding race logics in Delhi coupled with their interest in digital production eventually led us into the streets of Khirki, the speakeasies of African transnationals, and into their homes, to document the ways in which difference was being produced within their spatial colony. Yet, this shared dialogic project that extended and unearthed their already existing processes of documenting race in Khirki did not immediately materialize when I met Hanif and his crew but rather required a lengthy period of connection, conversation, and shared play within the practice based strictures of hip hop. Moreover, it required that the camera become an integral part of the kinds of explorations I would undertake with the youth in my study.

The camera, indeed, worked as an entry point into all three crews lives I spent time with in my year and half in Delhi, as I elaborated on in my opening chapter. All the while, as I got to know the youth in my study, as I shot videos, photos and so on, at the request of crew members from each of the three crews, I also shot interactions that we had in the various public and private places we met without a clear plan for this footage. This casual and consistent shooting made my DSLR, initially an intimidating piece of equipment, an integral part of our shared interactions. As a result, the camera, an always present technological device, a metonym for the digital/physical terrain that we interacted on, was often passed around and playfully utilized as a means to record and play back casual conversations, encounters and laughingly discuss them.

I decided, after about eight months in Delhi working closely with the crews in my study while taking in the larger context of the city through interactions made possible by my partners job which placed us in Delhi's high society, to head back to the U.S. for a short visit. When I let the youth in my study know I was going, Hanif and Sunil, a member of the crew from Humayunpur who makes an appearance in an earlier chapter, immediately asked for cameras. Their request for cameras was part of a larger request from all the young men in each of the three crews I interacted with for snapback baseball caps and graphic t –shirts from the U.S. (both of which are available in India). Sunil also asked me if I could purchase tattoo equipment for him expressly telling me he would pay me back whatever it cost. Another MC in the scene, when he found out I was visiting the U.S., requested studio equipment, emailing me the exact specifications and also promising me reimbursement when I returned. The request for western material goods, both technological and fashion items, reminded me of my childhood when my family and I would come back to India from the U.S. bearing the latest gadgetry and a bundle of denim jeans for relatives who had written letters with their particular 'needs.' The continuity of this type of 'exchange' from my childhood during the pre-liberalization days in India to the current moment and the ways in which the current exchange indexed kin relations speaks to the ways in which India, while it continues to change dramatically in many ways, still remains, in some ways, fixed to a relationship to the past where material items from the west are desirable and, in some cases, unattainable in India.

When Sunil and Hanif asked me for the cameras, intimating that they would utilize the cameras for music video production, I asked them if they and anyone else in their crews were interested in utilizing the cameras to make films and, if so, what stories were they interested in exploring and telling through film? These initial conversations before I left Delhi with crew members from Hanif's crew and Sunil's crew inspired me to purchase a reasonably high quality camera and sound equipment for the two crews to share and, ultimately led to the shared conceptualization and subsequent production of two film projects. The first, which I discuss in a more detailed manner in this chapter, was a film on race and place that I produced with Hanif and his crew and the second was a film on the business of hip hop in Delhi, that I collaboratively worked on with Sunil and

his crew[24]. Here it is imperative to stress, again, that the possibility for producing these films stemmed from our shared engagement with hip hop and hip hop production over the course of many months. Without this grounding and shared interest, even passion for hip hop, these projects could not have been developed. Hip hop, in a sense, created a working definition of collaboration, of dialogic exchange, through the discursively available concept of the cipha. The cipha, in hip hop, is understood to be the physical and, now, digital space where ideas can be circulated, critiqued, and reformulated in friendly competition (Spady, 2001). The cipha, as a concept, worked to shape a notion of collaboration in our filmic work together not dissimilar from Eric Lassiter's (2005) for a project based coming together between ethnographers and those that they wish to know where an artifact, in my case a film, is produced and works to represent the dialogic process of teaching and learning that takes place in the proverbial field.

For the remainder of this section, I will briefly discuss how I reformulated Jean Rouch's[25] idea of playback/feedback through the decolonial hip hop ideal of the cipha to develop the initial contours of both video projects. Then, I will discuss how we managed the challenges of editing followed by some comments on the necessity for sharing this sort of shared knowledge production within the communities that it documents – or extending the cipha to include a greater constituency. I will conclude this section by discussing the ways in which an ethnography that embraces the digital may offer a means to bridge 'basic' research with a collaborative and even what might be considered an applied research in ways which, as Peggy Sanday (1998) has argued, is required to change the paradigm of anthropology to include teaching, research, action, and practice.

Jean Rouch's notion of playback/feedback is pretty straight forward. After a day of shooting, Rouch would invite his 'collaborators' to sit with him and watch the rushes of the footage (Henley, 2009). He invited critique and more importantly, he invited those involved in his project to suggest new avenues for exploration. In this formulation Rouch controlled the camera but invited his interlocutors to enter a space of dialogue that was

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[24] The film is still a work in progress.

[25] Jean Rouch was a noted visual anthropologist and filmmaker who in the 50s and 60s pioneered what he called a shared anthropology through the camera by inviting his subjects to become participants in the process of filmmaking. I make previous mention of Jean Rouch in chapter one as I discuss the concept of memesis.

tethered to what was captured in his filmic incursions. In my work in Delhi what I experimented with was an inversion of this relationship, where I gave the camera to the crew and we watched and discussed the footage they shot at the end of a week of shooting together. Their shoots, however, were not without any direction. Initially, I asked them to develop a conceptual area for further inquiry – the African experience in Khirki, for Hanif's crew, business and hip hop, for Sunil's crew. I also reviewed with them the basic workings of the camera and, very briefly described key rules for shooting – keeping the camera still, selecting subjects and foregrounding the cut in the editing room by shooting long shots, medium shots, and close ups and so on. This process, of course, was made easier because of the organic scaffolding that had already occurred as they 'played' with the equipment I had brought along in my initial months in the field. It was also made easier because of their longer engagement with digital video and photo on their cell phone cameras, which had attuned them to thinking visually about production. Then, after our discussions on camera and filming basics, they went out, sometimes together, sometimes individually, and continued their play with the camera.

The turn taking when they shot created a healthy competition and play amongst the group, as they playfully argued, during play back, what looked and sounded better between their rushes. After a week or two of shooting, watching, and discussing, the idea of B-roll and A-roll emerged. B-roll being the images we would use to visually tell a story, fill in the cracks, create a mood. A-roll being the interview and interactional footage that they captured. This delineation of A-roll and B-roll opened up the space for me to discuss interviewing – what it entails, what its challenges are. This discussion prompted participants to try and develop interview protocols – questions that they felt they needed to ask in order to get a story. Here, some interesting developments occurred. First, some of their early interviews were reflective of the mass media versions of interviewing that they consumed. Some of crew members had taken on an almost MTV like approach to conversation with their subjects –an approach which produced them as super ordinate to the situation they were trying to understand. This led to some good discussions with the young men around reflexivity, although I certainly didn't name it as

such, discussions filled with laughter, as I pointed out occasions when their subjectivities were completely left out in the questions they asked.

After 3-4 months of shooting, watching, discussing, and shooting some more – I said to the crew, with a bit of regret as the process of collection was incredibly stimulating for all involved, that it was time to stop collection and to begin editing. The move to the editing stage, where we would begin to sift through the footage they shot and in some cases the footage I had shot earlier in the year or the footage we collaboratively produced, changed the way in which we worked together and opened up several conversations that challenged the lighthearted and easy exchanges we had during our 'collection' phase. As we began to sift through and watch the footage, conflicting interpretations of difference emerged in our dialogues about the footage in ways that made it challenging to move forward with co-constituting a narrative. Hanif and his crew were unsure of whether to be sympathetic to the many putatively Indian voices that we had captured who, in interviews with the Somali youth, cast blame on the Nigerians of the community as the main culprits in creating a bad situation. They, as they had close dealings with both the Indian migrants and the West Africans in Khirki, all of whom were assumed to be Nigerian by the local Indian community, were prone to agreeing with the Indians that the Nigerians, specifically, were to blame for the kinds of harassment the rest of the Africans in the community received. In part, this agreement stemmed from some of the experiences they had with Nigerians who saw the Somalis as 'strange' Africans, as outsiders in the larger African diaspora in Khirki (which was also fractured around linguistic and cultural lines). For the Somali youth, these experiences with Nigerians created a bias that came up several times in our editing sessions as we sought to suture together a narrative about the lives of Africans in Delhi and in Khirki specifically. The bias revealed itself most often in joking exchanges that the crew had with each other and that they eventually included me in, where they mimicked the speech patterns of Nigerians as they spoke English, playing with key Nigerian patois expressions and morphologies as a form of critique.

The conversations that we had around the relationship West Africans more generally and Nigerians, specifically, while productive insofar as I got to understand the

politics of difference within the African transnational community in Khirki, didn't quickly translate into how to make collective choices regarding the narrative flow of the film. In part, this challenge was diffused through my suggestion of the inclusion of a Nigerian main character in the film. I had begun shooting short interviews with this character, a young man in his late 20s, early in my stay in Khirki. When I met the Somali crew, it seemed obvious that we would continue to film him together. By making the decision to film him together, Hanif and his crew got to know his story very well and appreciate his particular situation in the context of the larger story we were trying to tell. During editing, we decided to use his character to gel the narrative by having him appear periodically throughout the film to punctuate the humanness of the story we were trying to tell about diasporic departures and the challenges of a becoming part of a new place, a story that no doubt resonates beyond the specific context of Khirki, Delhi.

Eventually, the open ended cipha and creative play of filming and watching, as it transitioned into the more technically laborious process of editing resulted in an almost natural drop off in involvement. For instance, of Hanif's 9 person crew, only Hanif and 2 other crew members faithfully showed up to the donated studio space I had established to cut the final film. While this drop off in involvement created a more manageable space for dialogue around the issues we were trying to thematize and narrativize in the film, it also made readily apparent the power differential between myself, an elder in the hip hop community and their mentor in filmmaking, and them, a small group of young men learning the complex processes of narrative storytelling in digital forms by engaging with their personal and sometimes difficult to engage with stories of social difference. Silence often punctuated moments where it was challenging to move forward with choosing a sequence or shot or where our conversations had gone down paths that were almost too self-revealing. As a long time educator, managing silence in dialogic exchange was something I had a bit of experience with. Instead of pushing my ideas into the empty space where silence emerged, I would let us sit in silence for a period of time until the young men were ready to work on the next segment or to continue a conversation on the segment we were working on.

Here, rather than working with the rational and argumentative possibilities of dialogue associated with Jürgen Habermas's (1987) notion of communicative exchange, the idea was to take up the notion that silence is work, that a suspension of linguistic exchange actually allows other more affective processes of acceptance or dissent to register, to arise, to be made known. However, lest we get carried away imagining the instrumentality of silence, our moments of collective pause did not always result in a continuation of dialogue that resulted in consensus. In several instances, after picking up, stopping, and reengaging with dialogue, there were times where I felt a decision had to be made and went forward with take on the matter as well as there were times where I took their decision to include or subtract a part of the film, even though I wasn't entirely sure if it was the best idea.

In some sense, the space that I had created in the donated editing studio was not so different than the classroom space of the university, or, for that matter, the informal education spaces where I plied the craft of teaching prior to graduate school. The one difference, of course, was that it was smaller and more intimate and relied on non-institutionally sanctioned relationship building to arrive at its goals. Yet, in important ways, it was very different insofar as my position of 'authority' was not delineated through an institution. Rather my position of authority emerged through our shared interest in hip hop and within dialogic interaction. These framings made apparent the need for me to challenge my own so-called expert status and defer to my interlocutors knowledge of the spaces they traversed, the intimate ways they knew the circuits of power in Khirki and in Delhi. Yet, because I brought particular knowledge frameworks with me as a teacher, a scholar, and a filmmaker, the young men I engaged with also recognized my particular role in the dialogue.   This mutual recognition allowed for productive exchange. As Herbert Kölger (1999) argues in his work on the dialogic encounter, the possibility for the theorist/intellectual to break from their superordinate position when engaging with social through a recognition of the larger power structures that govern their position, can only occur in the inter-subjective moments of exchange. In the best of circumstances, Kölger (1999) argues that a 'dialogic cross-reconstruction' of context that utilizes the knowledge frameworks of the interlocutor and the theorist or

researcher in ways which elucidate rather than conceal or suggest a hierarchy of knowing, can create new understandings for all involved.

Yet, the ethos of dialogic exchange, while it created a powerful opportunity for teaching and learning in the process of creating the film, didn't diminish the necessity for me to take on certain responsibilities when it came time to produce the final filmic artifact. Importantly, throughout the process of editing the film, rather than push the idea that they needed to be responsible for the final cut, I made it clear that I would take the lead around discussions regarding the narrative composition for the piece – how would we assemble all of our audio-visual data to tell a story – what was the story we wished to tell – and so on. By scaffolding the process and keeping it open to dialogue, I hoped that this experience in hip hop inspired ethnographic filmmaking would open important, even critical dialogues, regarding their experiences in the spatial settlement in Khirki and this possibility that emerged, in our work together, to represent these experiences. I also hoped that this process would spur these young men to take on future projects that utilized digital technology to tell important stories.

It seemed clear that these two films that I worked on with the two crews, for them to continue the dialogue we began in our ciphas around issues of social import in their lives – needed to be screened once they were completed works. This is particularly true for the film concerning issues around race in Khirki. The film, as it documents the lives of several West and East Africans living in Khirki over the 6 months preceding and just after the highly publicized attacks on Africans in Khirki in early 2014, creates a social text that potentially provokes a more nuanced dialogue around perceived difference in Khirki, and a chance for the young Somali men who I collaborated with to make the film to take the lead in conversations around the pressing social issues that their spatial community currently faces. To this end I developed relationships with a local arts organization, the local UNHRC office and a couple of universities in Delhi for the crew and me, and eventually for the crew alone, to screen the film and do talkbacks afterwards.

These filmic screenings and talkbacks, of course, created yet another site for participation, dialogue and exchange, and for the possibility for the youth involved in these processes to extend their networks in ways which allowed them to further deepen

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their hip hop situated processes of inquiry. Indeed, the very idea of utilizing their already existent interest in digital media production through hip hop, it became clear to me as I began to shoot the films with them, ultimately served to reinforce the possibility of an aesthetic citizenship, participation and belonging made possible through the rendering of their aesthetic experiences through digital technology. By extending the already collaborative and communal space of digital hip hop into the processes of filmmaking, we created a new site for struggle, a space to reflect upon, through thoughtful inquiry, the larger conditions and contexts that situate the lives of its makers and to share that space with a broader audience. This inquiry process within our small group culminated in the preparation for the talk back sessions post screening, where I pushed them to articulate what their intentions, feelings, and hopes were during our process to create the film, as well as what sorts of things they learned in the process and so on. In other words, I moved fully into the pedagogical space of the mentor or the teacher once it was time to publicly present the films. Once talk backs for the film took place, the Somali youth were able to, even if somewhat nervously, engage their urban charisma coupled with the kind of experiential knowledge gleaned through the film making process to engage with diverse audiences -- as filmmakers and as experts in their own right. The social context of the screening and talkback -- particularly at the arts organization in Khirki, which brought an audience of people that the young men had previously had no experience with, artists and art mavens from all over Delhi-- and the subsequent press coverage of the film -- of course, has its own ethnographic context, and one that I won't explicate in this monograph. What is important to leave this discussion with, however, is that the screenings and talkbacks were a vital part of the process of making public the work that we had done in ways that allowed the youth involved to see the impact of the narrative that they had developed and the ways in which the collaborative process we engaged in, while legible within the context of hip hop and its ciphas, was novel to many, particularly in the art world, who had not engaged with dialogic artistic production. Moreover, the talkbacks created the space for audience members to see these young men and interact with them as experts of spaces that are, for all practical purposes, invisible to them as outsiders. Yet, the talkbacks and the interactions they produced signaled the end of our

collaborative journey, and posed for me the intractable question regarding ethical responsibility of the researcher when the time for exchange is over and it is time for us to leave the field we have constructed and inhabited.

Conclusion: An engaging and engaged anthropology

I conclude this monograph by offering some final thoughts on how the aesthetic practices of the young men and women I was privileged to spend time with in Delhi connect to a larger discussion of how the digitally circulating popular offers a fertile ground by which to explore the gap "between the globalization of knowledge and the knowledge of globalization (Appadurai, 2006: 175). Here I very briefly touch upon my discussions in the previous chapters concerning how the youth in my study utilized hip hop and its practices to experiment with their gendered, classed, and racialized subjectivities to create enduring connection across difference in the Delhi hip hop scene, to participate in the spatial politics of development in their settlement community, to claim space in the bright new public spaced of the mall, to engage with the globally circulating political discourses attached to hip hop, and, finally, to engage in the laboring possibilities in India's emerging youth market through the skills that digital hip hop provided. In each of these chapters I have ruminated on how what has been called globalization simultaneously creates a dual optic by which to observe how changes are being wrought in particular urban places. One the one hand, changes brought about by neoliberal reforms that allow for an increasingly free flow of capital increasingly marginalize already vulnerable populations (categorized as the migrant, the urban poor, and so on), creating what political scientist Patrick Heller (2014), in his work on Delhi, calls new regimes of exclusion. On the other hand these global processes brought about by capitals' excesses and flows also open up, for youth in particularly, new unexpected avenues for participation (Best & Kellner, 2003).

   Through youth cultural worlds, such as hip hop, coupled with the amplification that the world wide web brings in its capacity to network people across the globe who share in particular interests new opportunities for participation through aesthetic production, youth are able to produce and disseminate their processes of self-fashioning that is inextricably linked to the changing terrains of the urban spaces they inhabit. As Hull et al. (2009) notes, "processes of globalization, it is often observed, are uneven and unpredictable, and for youth at risk there is evidence of the creation, albeit often

serendipitously, of previously unavailable potential for mobility" (123).   It is this process of creative engagement, the passionate play that the young men in my study engage with in their everyday lives in Delhi and circulate to an unknown global audience through the digital circuitry of Web 2.0, that I argue is the site for future struggle – a space where academics, educators, and activists in the truest sense of the term can enact solidarity by engaging with the issues that impact and effect the daily lives of urban youth in the teeming megacities of the world.

As digital technology becomes central in young people's lives, as it offers youth a potential for production, it seems obvious that it is in this aesthetic sphere there is a need for research that gleans what is being produced and reproduced by youth within particular historical contexts to better understand how youth are shaping and are shaped in the contemporary moment. Indeed, my work over the course of 18 months in Delhi, India was to engage in a close reading of the ways in which young people are producing themselves through a digitally enabled hip hop to create new social, economic, and political possibilities. In each chapter I have attempted to show the ways in which the young men in my study mobilized their multimodal performances in ways which not only reinforced their relationship with a global hip hop community but which extended their possibilities for participation in ongoing projects to reimagine Delhi's and India's changing urbanities.

I began with a discussion regarding the kinds of utopias or alternate modernities that youth were constructing through the image making possibilities of hip hop coupled with digital technology and argue for an attention to how self-produced and circulated images show not only the kinds of self-making processes young people are involved with but the ways in which these self-making possibilities reveal their changing city. Aiwa Ong (2011), in a recent discussion regarding the urban, argues that these sorts of relationships between subject formation and urban formation, what she calls worlding practices, offer a window into the complex ways in which people are resisting, adapting, and embracing changes that have been brought about by globalizing trends, to produce new urban imaginaries. Her call for a turn to worlding practices in social science research to gather more granular accounts regarding urban processes of change, I believe,

is quite similar to Riles's (2000) call to turn networks inside out and is certainly related to my development of the concept of aesthetic citizenship insofar as making emergent social worlds visible is the central thematic I develop throughout this monograph. No doubt, throughout my time in Delhi young people from different historical backgrounds utilized hip hop as a practice to create new social worlds to extend their already existing networks into new unchartered spaces, as I described in my introductory chapter. However, as I have shown throughout this monograph, when one traces the moments where these extensions take place through cultural production, what is revealed are not only the ways in which networks circulate content but the ways in which networks, as they circulate multimodal forms, overlap with larger publics through that work to produce both city and subject.

In the second chapter I explore the ways in which a Delhi's hip hop scene, as it represents a more diverse class, ethnic, and racial diversity in India, attracts hip hop practitioners from abroad, all of whom have a stake in how the aesthetic of hip hop and its political and social import is constructed in the Indian context. Here I engage with global hip hop's travelling ideologies and the ways in which these ideologies render different subjects and urban spaces legitimate or illegitimate citizens and territories. By taking up a discussion of digitally enabled ideological circulation I deepen the analysis of existing global hip hop studies that have thus far focused on the relationship with the global and the local to include a discussion on the interpenetration of the local and global, or the ways in which it is impossible, in our age of the image, to separate the two from one another.

In the third chapter, I reflect on how activists in Khirki, as they include hip hop involved youth in their project to reimagine Khirki and, indeed Delhi's urban spaces, harness the image making practices of hip hop involved youth. In so doing, I suggest that they open up processes of gentrification as the aesthetics of hip hop create conditions where the image products of the hip hop youth attract attention that works to potentially remake the communities in which they live. In the fourth chapter I explore how youth hip hop practitioners from Khirki utilize their image making practice to claim the physical public spaces of the mall and, in so doing, open up several questions regarding

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the political possibilities of hip hop in the age of digital flows. In my fifth chapter I focus on how digital hip hop practice, for the young men in my study, creates new laboring opportunities for them and reflect on how these laboring opportunities are embedded in the changes currently underway in Indian urban contexts.

Yet, it becomes clear that the digital proclivities of the young men in my study not only offered insights into the changing social worlds of Delhi but created sites for me -- as an anthropologist, educator, and media maker -- to intervene and engage with youth cultural production in ways which push them to think about the what they are producing and why they are producing it. My leap towards what I call critical hip hop cinema, which I have touched upon in this concluding chapter, covered a very short distance precisely because the youth in my study were already, through hip hop, challenging the normative and the taken for granted ideas of the social in Delhi. Indeed, hip hop's history of criticality allowed me to create seamless transition from studying multimodal products of hip hop involved young youth in Delhi to making audio-visual texts with them that could deeply and carefully develop themes that they had already explored in ways that would 'reach' a wider audience.

Here, in this context, my utilization of ethnography as a method couldn't help but foster dialogic teaching and learning relationships in the proverbial field and forge opportunities to make the transition between studying the kinds of self-fashioning projects that youth undertook in the digital realm and extending this study *of* youth cultural production into a collaborative and dialogic process of exchange. The move into a collaborative engagement within the context of digital hip hop created opportunities for pedagogical innovation as well as new possibilities for representation. Indeed, what I realized in the process of making these films with these two crews, even beyond the possibility for shared knowledge production and dissemination, was that developing these projects quite literally on the street allowed for pedagogical experimentation that I had not experienced as an educator in informal and alternative education settings in the U.S. Much of my arts education work that drew greatly from hip hop in my decade as a practitioner, was often constrained by the institutional charge to produce 'positive' final renderings.

As Murray Forman (2013) recently argues in an article on what he calls 'hood work, the use of hip hop as an education tool by educators both in formal and informal settings in the U.S., this mandate towards positivity stifles what could be a productive engagement in creative critical inquiry. Our, for all practical purposes, street based inquiry projects, allowed for a different kind of representational opportunity, one that relied on non-expert knowledge to delve into the heart of social processes in ways which, as Vinay Lal (2002) argues, produced far more interesting, complex, and critical renderings of cross-cultural exchange.

I argue the process of shared critical inquiry that I, in part strategized by bringing my camera into the field and imagining doing filmic work with young people, and in part stumbled into when I realized that the young people in my study were already producing complex multimodal representations of themselves and their lifeworlds, created opportunities to extend the idea of what a shared or collaborative anthropology could be. As Luke Eric Lassiter (2005) argues, there has been a long push within the discipline of anthropology to construct its grounds for relevance by recognizing in its dialogical method the possibility for an engaged anthropology that attempts to serve "mankind more directly and immediately"(83).   However, according to Merrill Singer (2000) many who utilize ethnographic methods in applied contexts, say education researchers for instance, argue that ethnography has been put to use to create collaborative and action oriented research for some time. For Singer (2000) it is rather the issue that applied anthropology, an anthropology that has sought to utilize the dialogic exchanges of ethnography towards particular ends, has been marginalized in the discipline. The focus on the digital, I argue, opens up the possibility to begin to bridge the divide between the applied and the basic notions of anthropology and to put those who imagine themselves on one end of the divide or the other, in conversation with each other. If we can agree that the digital age is defined by self-production and dissemination, then it seems evident that ethnographers, as they come into contact with social worlds, will necessarily find it necessary to engage in new and innovative ways with those they seek to know precisely because people as they are already creating what John Jackson (2014) has called auto-ethnographic accounts of themselves and their worlds for circulation.

The pursuit of new and innovative ways to understand social phenomena in the digital age suggest that the anthropologist should become flexible enough to share in representational production, utilize new media technologies to do so, and to engage in teaching and learning processes in the field that allow or create new possibilities for engagement. Of course, my work, as it is situated within youth cultural worlds, allows for a much clearer articulation and elaboration of these possibilities. In part this is because young people are betwixt and between adulthood and childhood, and therefore more prone to give the time and take an interest in processes of shared production in their everyday lives. Moreover, because young people in particular are already engaged in digital practice, practices that allow them the opportunity to make sense of the barrage of digital and terrestrial experiences in their everyday lives through production, a shared filmic inquiry in the right context doesn't seem too far a leap. However, the possibility for developing a shared ethnography during my time in Delhi was, as I have recounted numerous times in this chapter, most obviously underwritten by 'underground' global hip hop and its thirty year or so call for inherently political knowledge production. To work within its existing participatory network of practitioners, producers, and visionaries, no doubt created a fertile ground in which to imagine an engaged and collaborative anthropology.

The particular possibilities hip hop enabled for digital exploration with youth in Khirki and Humayunpur has led me to imagine what sorts of opportunities for collaborative digital exploration undergirded by popular culture can be developed for youth in these communities and in others in the future. In a moment where Delhi continues to convulse with change brought about by the now almost redundant term – globalization – young people in communities like Khirki seek out ways to understand the changes and participate in what becomes available as a result of these changes. It seems obvious to me that, after spending over a year in Delhi and having the opportunity to work within its youthful hip hop community, that there exists an interest amongst youth in utilizing technology and globally circulating popular cultural texts to engage in what Arjun Appadurai (2006) has called one's right to research, to know and tell important stories about the worlds that people inhabit and about the ways in which global

circulations of knowledge and the knowledge of these circulations are creating particular pockets of global connection across the world. Yet, my necessary departure from Delhi casts a shadow on the kind of work I have done with the young people in Khirki and Humayunpur. As I begin to pack my bags to leave Delhi and return to the U.S., Jeffery Nealon's (1998) critical evocation of the Odyssean traveller cum intellectual comes to mind – a figure imagined as unfettered in their ability to move unimpeded hither and thither from place to place, a figure imagined as storyteller that can arrive to tell the story of 'locals' better than the locals themselves. As Nealon (1998) suggests, the travelling intellectual in our global age all to easily has the power to become a 'tourist of the disempowered', to arrive and 'collaborate' only to move on in an instant to the next location where new subaltern subjects are putatively 'waiting' for engagement. While Nealon's (1998) take might be a bit too cynical, suggesting a kind of zero-sum exchange that always favors the researcher or the artist over their interlocutors, it certainly has pushed me to think about how to structure continued exchange with the people I have developed relationships with and in the places I have spent considerable time in as a researcher.

To create some continuity, at least with the work on collaborative film and media that I developed with the hip hop involved youth in my study, I am working with the arts organization in Khirki, an organization which has popped up several times in this monograph, to attempt secure funding to continue developing and offering opportunities for collaborative community art projects that pairs media artists, researchers and so on, with small groups of young people to continue experimenting with digitally enhanced and research focused storytelling. While the hip hop grounded collaborative filmmaking I did with youth in Khirki and Humayunpur opened the possibility for youth centered inquiry projects, certainly there are other ways of going about creating opportunities for young people to engage in critical inquiry processes that rely on their already developed capacity to engage with digital technology, their urban charismas, male and female, and their interest in the popular, as it circulates on web 2.0. Of course, my hailing of an institutional space to continue this sort of work is not without some irony for a couple of important reasons. First, more generally, it reveals that a continuity of process is often

made possible only through attempts at replication and replication requires a codification of process to garner institutional support and buy in. This, often, is represented in taking what are complex and often messy processes and writing them into a grant and curriculum formats that promise reproduction. Second, if we consider Moten and Harney's (2011) argument that non-governmental and civil society institutions through the funding streams they are connected to, represent a mechanism of governance and a way to create a particular kind of representation and inculcation of market governed interests in 'community' then perhaps what I hope to set into motion as a continued process of critical inquiry is already, as I suggested earlier by referencing Murray Forman's (2013) work on hip hop 'hood workers, limited precisely because of an unwillingness of institutions to take a chance on potentially risky representational politics. My hope lies, in partnering with the arts organization in Khirki, in that their 15-year long track record of keeping things prossesual, experimental and in the hands of artists will mitigate some of these issues.

As I return to the U.S, I hope to continue much of what I have put into practice in Delhi, practice that in many ways is a continuation of the education work that I began before I imagined social research as a possibility. In particular, I wish to continue develop the ways in which the relationships between digital platforms, popular culture, and constructions or constellations of participants that include youth, artists, researchers, activists and so on, can develop new constructions of ethnographic inquiry that connect the internal processes of dialogue around socially relevant issues within a diverse group of collaborators -- to produce artifacts that can provide innovative takes on social change for larger audiences or publics. I also wish to continue to work through the possibilities that hip hop, the site for many of my own adolescent experimentations with knowing myself in the world, offers a particularly rich site for dialogic practice and networked connection.

However, the turn to digital and collaborative or dialogic ethnography, certainly does not mean that there isn't a need for a more, perhaps, 'conventional' construction of anthropological knowledge, where written texts become critical to developing and explicating a deeper and more historical reading of the social. Indeed, while the film I

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produced with the Somali crew on the complexities of race in Khirki created a process of dialogue that opened up new vistas of understanding for all involved in the making of the film, in the end I felt the final product left too much open to interpretation when its visual texts finally confronted a larger audience. That the roughcut we screened was susceptible to a wider array of interpretation was made evident in the mainstream media coverage and representation of the film, which offered readings that overly reduced the message of the film to one that simply promoted intercultural dialogue. This facile reading, while it doesn't take away from the powerful dialogic process that yielded the final filmic artifact, does affirm the skepticism that philosophers and theorists have had for a narrative aesthetic which seeks to create an audience. Certainly a part of my work, as I return to India in the coming years, will be to continue to explore and write more nuanced, and perhaps less available accounts about how changing urban contexts of Delhi reflect global processes of change that reveal new linkages in the global south, linkages that reflect older colonial connections between India, the former 'crown jewel' of the British empire, and the postcolonies of Africa.

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