

**MIGRATION AND ITS MULTIPLE FRAMES:
CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS AND EMERGING CRITIQUES**

Panel Organisers: Ritambhara Hebbar & Mahuya Bandyopadhyay

Migration has been a persistent theme in research and writing in the social sciences. Within this academic domain, the concepts, categories and themes underlying migration have had a defining effect on how we understand questions of identity, belonging, justice, and rights of people. This panel would interrogate some of these conceptualisations and the politics they reproduce against migrants. The papers delve into some of these concepts such as village, environmental refugees, domicile, and homelessness. Through a critical examination of these concepts and their place or relative invisibility in studies of migration, the panel argues that research on migration has tended to reproduce a dominant understanding of the social; one that has marginalised the migrant as well as the significance of migration in the making of the social. The panel navigates multiple sites of migration; drawing on the narratives of places that have been left behind and on places that are being made anew. But these journeys enfold complex negotiations of networks, relationships and governance strategies. The papers uncover this complex terrain through fieldwork based research in regions such as Jharkhand and Maharashtra. The comparative perspective emerges not merely from these diverse locations but also in the linkages of migration to the concepts of domicile, homelessness, refugee and the village that the migrant leaves. We draw from the work by Bandyopadhyay and Hebbar (2016) on an emergent new sociology in India to show how tracing the connections between these concepts could lead us to new ways of understanding the making of the migrant and the constitution of the social world of the migrant in/and the city.

About the Papers

Village, Kinship and Migration: A Critical Inquiry

Ritambhara Hebbar and Mahuya Bandyopadhyay

Village has been the Archimedean point for most discussions on urban migration and there are hardly any studies that disrupt this idea of origin and the essentialist bias within village studies. Village studies has dominated not just the discipline of sociology but also the way in which India is imagined. The paper critically examines village studies from this lens and draws on an ethnographic study conducted by the authors on security guards in Mumbai to elaborate on how this bias translates into politics against migrants in a city like Mumbai.

'The Nowhere People': Globalization, Environment & Forced Migration

Manisha Rao

The paper argues that the classic migration studies have tended to overlook the category of environment refugees. At the same time, most theories of environmental governance overlook migration flows. Besides the climate change induced migration, the increasing

market and state led drives of ‘resource development’ have led to the displacement & forced migration of the local inhabitants. This is justified in terms of the ‘greater global good’. The language of development has been transformed. The transformations taking place now are more pervasive & more interconnected with the global. The paper argues that the dynamics of this space of flows and the transnational policy networks in place are non-linear, more complex and nuanced. The paper will deal with the category of environmental refugees (nowhere people) and its implications in our understanding of migration.

Domicile and Migration: The Politics of Belonging

Joy Prafful Lakra

Industrialisation and urbanisation have greatly contributed towards the migration of the outsiders into the urban spaces and industrial centres in Jharkhand. This demographic shift has greatly impacted the polity of Jharkhand, threatening Adivasi leaders to lose control over the politics of the state. The domicile issue has thus been central to how tribal and Jharkhandi identity is sought to be reimagined in the context of a lesser known and controversial urban space. This paper, focusing on Ranchi, explores the recent debates within Jharkhand on the issue of domicile and how migration has been problematised therein.

About the Contributors

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