

Elisa T. Bertuzzo

Archipelagos – From Urbanisation to Translocalisation

καδμος

Kulturverlag Kadmos

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Internet: <http://archives-of-movement.net/>

Cover design: based on a sketch of Elisa T. Bertuzzo

Typesetting: kaleidogramm, Berlin

Printed in the EU

ISBN 978-3-86599-408-0

ePDF-ISBN 978-3-86599-425-7

*for those whom this book tells about
and for Khorshed Alam, who could not read it*

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Zeigen möchte ich Ihnen, daß die Tendenz einer Dichtung politisch nur stimmen kann, wenn sie auch literarisch stimmt. Das heißt, daß die politisch richtige Tendenz eine literarische Tendenz einschließt. Und, um das gleich hinzuzufügen: diese literarische Tendenz, die implicit oder explicit in jeder richtigen politischen Tendenz enthalten ist – die und nichts anderes macht die Qualität des Werks. Darum also schließt die richtige politische Tendenz eines Werkes seine literarische Qualität ein, weil sie seine literarische Tendenz einschließt.

Walter Benjamin, 1934

For in the immediate world, everything is to be discerned, for him who can discern it, and centrally and simply, without either dissection into science, or digestion into art, but with the whole of consciousness, seeking to perceive it as it stands: so that the aspect of a street in sunlight can roar in the heart of itself as a symphony, perhaps as no symphony can: and all of consciousness is shifted from the imagined, the revisive, to the effort to perceive simply the cruel radiance of what is.

James Agee, 1939

A user's guide

Taking off from Bangladesh for the first time, I remember, I was impressed by the similarity of its topography made of rivers and sinuous streams drawn by the pre-monsoon tempests with another, more familiar topography. Seen from the airplane, the *char* or sand islands covered with grass and dotted with sparse houses—or were we crossing ordinary agricultural lands submerged due to the season's floodings?—strikingly resembled the view that filled me with the love of the homecomer and the nostalgia of the migrant every time I landed in Venice. Only that the lagoon was a 'microcosm'¹ with an ageing and declining population, while Bangladesh covered two-thirds of the huge Ganges Delta and was famous for being the world's most densely populated country.² The illusion couldn't sustain, but sufficed to convince me that I'd come back.

Voluptuous is the pleasure of seeing the whole from on high, says Michel de Certeau;³ yet it might never have matched the experience on the ground level: *that* is voluptuous. If you asked me what this book should at all costs manage to convey, I'd say it is the voluptuousness, tactile experience beside optic allusions, of the fieldwork to which it goes back: the landscapes, wrenched soils, turgid skies, people, proverbs, cuisine, whose beauty and pain accompany me till today, of Bangladesh and West Bengal. It were observations, suggestions on that ground level that prompted my initial questions; after I had bundled them in scientific language convincingly enough to be granted a research fund, new experiences on the ground impregnated hypotheses. To this stage, they carry a bit of the fieldwork's dirt, like the minuscule grains of clay one cannot shower off her toes after a long march on Bengal's *kancha* roads drenched by the monsoon.⁴

I'll linger on that scale illusion for a moment. The two topographies' similitude was to do with the location on respective deltas, incommensurable as their dimensions might be. Down below, the aerial views dear to geographers, planners, designers and directors of photography unfold in landscapes where sand and water play with each other beautiful games: humidity- and mosquito-prone habitats, coloured in clay-red-greys and paddy-or-wheat-yellow-greens. And all around and multiplied in uncountable water bodies, the sky, gloomy for part of the year, constantly threatening to fall on earth and flood it, like in one of William Turner's paintings, or in Jibanananda Das' poems. Adding the factor *time*, now I could pass from the three-dimensionality of the travelled landscape to the four dimensions of social space. I would then speak of the biographical and economic ties linking the two seemingly far-removed deltaic regions, which in the last decades have been invigorated through migration and industrial ex-

ploitation—attested, for example, by the privileged lane for textile investors at Dhaka's airport, or by Milton wandering these days on some Italian beach with sunglasses and toys for holidaymakers on his shoulders.⁵ Yet this will have to fill a future book, because until recently I was obsessed with another level of the production of social space and precisely, the 'urban'. It all started in Dhaka: I was mesmerised by the way this city was squeezing a whole country's people and its soft landscapes into a hard corset of residential blocks, highways, embankments and flyovers. I dived into its streets as good as I could, learning to accept the obsolescence of my European concepts of urbanity and urbanisation. Orienting myself in that mess took me a few years: I started by studying everyday life negotiations of space at the city level and later, I engaged in research in one of its self-organised settlements, Karail Basti. Exactly there, in the heart of the city, the 'rural' got me.

What is the 'rural'? An extinguishing mode of production, or the constantly re-emerging effector of a morphed everyday? Some regard cities like Dhaka or Kolkata with all which is around them as effects and witnesses of 'planetary urbanisation'. The ambiguous attire of the modes of production and life forms that shape them, however, prompt one to doubt: is the production of space (still) determined only by what Henri Lefebvre called the 'urban'? Others have insisted that the path taken by the urban phenomenon especially in non-EuroAmerican contexts is different from that delineated by Lefebvre on the basis of the opposition of rural and urban production.⁶ I on my part am interested in what appears to mark a rupture, a diversion or a subversion in the historical process of urbanisation: the classic city–village relationship being supplanted not by the 'urban', but by the *motional*. This distinction becomes necessary in face of settings in which rural and urban modes of production appear, more than interdependent, overlapping in 'urban' and 'rural' areas;⁷ and of a deeper transformation of the norms of production of space which extant descriptions—from 'rurbanisation' through 'peri-urbanisation' to 'desakota'—don't in my view reflect.

Back then, the fact that entire families vacated Karail Basti in the harvest periods and seasonal workers moved in and out all through the year, helped me realise that village and city were the complementary sites of well-tuned livelihood cycles, rather than opposites. The 'rural', on its part, stood out as producer of habitats and stories: it was sensible in the architecture of the settlement's older clusters, built around a courtyard like in the countryside,⁸ as much as in the gifts and seasonal dainties brought by relatives from *desh*, the village. *Desh*, indeed, was a constant reference in the debates of my neighbours and in the stories of Furkhan-*bhai*, my 'landlord', where it attained an intriguing allure of natural splendour and social anomy.⁹

That the reverse, that is, the 'urban' manifesting itself in the countryside, was the case too, occurred to me looking at the men unloading iron rods on shores never touched by electricity (villages were not even in sight) during the one night and dawn it took us to travel on a battered ferry boat from Dhaka to Bhola, Furkhan's native island 250km down the Meghna. He stayed back for some urgent family matters and I returned via train, crossing pristine landscapes but also strangely expanding settlements I couldn't make sense of: they weren't for sure the product of urban sprawl—the train didn't pass big, not even medium cities; perhaps new industrial hubs, Export

Processing Zones like that of Savar on the fringes of Dhaka, which as I continuously heard had propelled a chaotic urban growth? The passengers getting in and off didn't give the impression of being industrial workers though, and I would have expected at least some groups of women like those I usually saw coming home from the garment factories to be among them. Sensing that whatever was going on, someone ought to examine it closely, I noted down: *people moving along the patterns of rural–urban exploitation, and not intangible forces such as development or capital, are changing the known shapes and concepts of settlement*. This book is the outcome of my subsequent efforts to understand *how* they are doing it.

'It is well known that numbers of people all over the world don't immigrate permanently but move between the city and other places in regular intervals! Studies around circular migration in South Asia abound, you should know that', you might remark. Well, my goal was from the very beginning to uncover what, to me, lay behind and simultaneously beyond the sociological phenomenon of circular migration: a shift in the production of space and its effects on human settlements. In fact, it were the implications for urbanisation theory that I wanted to inspect. Cause if and insofar as 'strange' settlement formations of the kind I got to see on the return journey from Bhola, deep in the 'rural', correlate with the augmented movement of people, the narrative (as Lefebvrian terminology permeates the book, I'll speak of *representation* and stick by that from now on) of urbanisation as process of concentration–extension is called into question.¹⁰ If other, decentring or even ex-centric, forces are impacting urban growth and reshuffling all levels of social space—the near (habitation), the middle (the city) and the far (state and its macro-level connections)—the city-hegemonic views that dominate urban studies must be abandoned once for all, and the new norm of production of space analysed and defined.

Long before embarking in the *Archipelagos*-research, I started to enquire about the shifts, moves and returns that had characterised or still characterised the lives of my neighbours in Karail Basti. A remarkable experience those days was that the events they narrated were somewhat irreproducible in a time–space sequence: I could try and try to 'order' them, but I invariably ended up with renditions that were either oneiric or didn't make sense. Was I failing to retain a full, deep understanding of the stories due to my rudimentary language skills? Was my impression to understand them at the time of oral production only an illusion, nourished by empathy and the helpful hints of hand movements, gestures and face expressions? I can't exclude that, however the diagrams and drawings I soon turned to in order to document those conversations¹¹ suggested a different explanation. Namely, that stories told for the simple purpose of sharing them with a casual listener don't follow a linear logic, since the ways human beings report their experiences underlie, like life itself, dynamic influences—respective audiences and environments, changing moods, emotions evoked by the work of memory, etc. Those scanty sketches made the image, the *Denkbild* as Walter Benjamin would have said, of archipelagos emerge in the first place:¹² I saw how crucial events emerged from the sea of one's life and got temporarily connected to others via a fleet of vessels, unpredictable and complex like a half-public-half-private-sector ferry network.

Meanwhile, the term *Archipelagos* stands for different aspects and foci of the research on translocalisation that this book ought to condense. As said, it renders the idea that people's experiences of space and time—conveyed in life stories, among others—are at once semantically linked and semiotically connected: similar to the islands of an archipelago, which communicate via the sea but are also part of the same geological unity (visible only underwater), they don't constitute a continuum, but a holey and multilayered mesh of connections, references, affiliations. Further, the concept of *archipelagic economies*, introduced by the economist Pierre Veltz, will help me describe at least some of the economic and social interdependences backing the ex-centric urbanisation that looms on the horizon of almost each of the story-tellings. At once more generally and more concretely than that, it will also help me discuss the hypothesis that in the current transition towards livelihoods and lifestyles-on-the-move, human beings arrange and explain their experiences according to new representations. Collecting-sketching stories back then, it intrigued me that similarly to how they lacked a before–after order, also the localities of specific occurrences were mostly discounted: did it mean that representations of space–time shift along with increasing mobility?

The simple possibility has explosive potential: if representations of space co-produce social space along with spatial practice and representational or lived space,¹³ the fact that they're shifting might signal an interruption of the usual relations of production of space. This frees potentialities—for a realignment of representations, spatial practice and lived space, to start with; and thinking only a bit further, for a subversion of settled gender, class, or economic hierarchies, pushed forward by people brave or desperate enough to choose *other* ways to live, produce, dwell. In short, for new social relations. Yes, I imagine that a motional experience of space–time should yield a fully different type of relationship to habitation, production–consumption, personal interactions, etc. (certainly, augmented movement could also presage a transformation for the worse: but this only increases the importance of monitoring representations, cause tracing their possible reconfigurations, we might identify measures to handle the implications, rather than only enduring them).

All that, however, is discussed at length in *From Urbanisation to Translocalisation*, which is the final essay of the book; here, at its very beginning, I need to dedicate a few words to the task evoked a little ago: re-presenting the fieldwork, voluptuousness included. No, not via migration biographies, though life story-tellings of highly mobile persons were the starting point; nor via a 'travelogue', though I moved between home and South Asia repeatedly and there, travelled to innumerable sites. Rather, by mediating from there and then to here and now, the stories of *people-on-the-move*. Behind the concept, there is the plain fact that none of the persons I talked to during the fieldwork perceived themselves as 'migrants' (or for what matters, as commuters)—not even Sahabuddin, who could pass for a full-fledged migrant labourer indeed. Many alternated to indefinitely long phases on the move, that is, travelling and/or pursuing a temporary job and/or monitoring a certain activity elsewhere, periods of work at the places of origin and there they felt, in fact, rooted. Put another way, moving between one's village and the city, or other places, was understood as an exceptional, ad hoc (or 'coping') tactic even when it had long become a consistent livelihood strategy. 'People-

on-the-move' should convey all this: their being 'suspended' between different places and identities, the instability of their livelihoods, as well as a silent, forced and poorly reflected adaptation to being-on-the-move that points at the deeper, historical process I strive to define. By exposing the experiences, struggles, the dignity, of Durga, Dulal, Soyjuddin, Sahabuddin, Aijer, Badal, Kartik, Milton and Enamul, I cannot hope they (who have no access to the English language) or individuals in similar circumstances will automatically start to question the structural factors which compel them to move. But I can hope *their* ways to read the concerned developments, and *their* answers to the same, will at least refresh the somewhat exhausted, at times self-referential debates around globalisation and urbanisation of these days.

You find these stories, or more precisely the not-at-all-systematised representations and vivid experiences they mediate, in *Part 1* of the book: they lack an encompassing historic-geographic introduction (made for by more or less exhaustive addenda), and come along with sketches, drawings, references to newspaper as well as scholarly articles, government acts, expert reports. Bear with the uncanny sides of this combination, do not disdain the puzzling effects for want of specialised knowledge of which I can anyway provide little, and please don't jump prematurely to the effort at a synthesis offered in *Part 2*: in order to grip, theory and its understanding demand the guidance of lived experience. You might recognise instances that are peculiar to Bangladesh and West Bengal and, one page later, wonder about their pitiless resemblance with the stories that people could tell you, if you listened, in other parts of the world. You should notice they're neither work of anthropological self-reflection, nor of sociological analysis and its magistral censorship, nor of artistic aestheticisation.¹⁴ As I elucidate in *Nandi: Everyday–Life–Stories of Movement*, they are intended to be stories with many lives of their own.

Aside straddling villages and cities, industrial and agricultural hubs, regions with differing climates, languages, cultures, those who entrusted me with these stories conciliate a number of temporalities. They didn't pay attention to chronologies, but told their stories according to god-knows-what expectations, or to the mood, with their own words, hands, eyes, face expressions, not rarely contradicting themselves. I decided to retain the dialogue form that had characterised our interactions in order to pluralise voices and interpretations and to effect a *Verfremdung*, a 'distancing' (yes, I mean the 'distancing effect' that Bertolt Brecht devised to prevent the spectator from sousing in the circumstances displayed on stage, appraise them critically, and draw consequences). 'Staging' dialogues, as opposed to composing one story, made it easier to reproduce the constant clashes between my questions and the story-tellers' concerns, my visions of revolution and their humbling struggles, and at the same time, it was a way to deal with the transformative power of certain life-story-tellings. Respective individuals, in fact, deployed stories to embody, enact or dramatise their lives: story-telling, in such cases, offered an occasion to rethread stories and, why not, *trade* events, *knowing I may or may not understand, may or may not believe them*. Under these premises, 'distancing' inaugurated a sensitisation to the chasms of experience—chasms determined by class, gender, language and ethnic disparities that it was impossible to bridge back then, and

it would be pointless to ignore now. This implies that you should look for the ‘truth’ in between interactions-interferences and perhaps even between the lines, because as hardly the experience of these people-on-the-move with their weird everyday life and ideas can be given *one* explanation, as individual and subjective were my reactions.

One last remark, regarding the ‘partition’ of this book. Setting off to write, I realised I had to find ways to deal with the impossibility to *grasp* movement—I was clear about the fact that movement is comprehended relationally (very similarly to the way one appreciates a photograph, a painting, a map, or even the bird’s-eye view of a little ago: not by reading single colour patches, or pixels, but apprehending the whole) and simultaneously, as it happens; and that its experience lies exclusively *with* and *in* the person that is moving. Thus, what I could strive to render was exclusively the shift in space and time of myself and of my object of research; yet how to do that? May such a shift be made sensible, repeatable, *rehearseable*, via a separation, a rupture? Well, that’s the idea. Note that this is not a separation between ‘experience’ (although *Part 1* clearly focuses and transfers the experiences of the field) and ‘theory’ (although *Part 2* presents itself as an attempt at theorising), but between viewpoints impacted by contingent experiences, on the one hand, and by the desire to convey something urgent and to do that with solid arguments and an adequate terminology, on the other. *Part 1* principally gathers *Nandi* and nine independent volumes, following one another according to a purely constructed gradient of distances and of principal, but definitely not exhaustive, themes: *trade*, *landscape*, and *travel*. *Part 2* by contrast propounds a full-fledged essay on translocalisation, whereby you shouldn’t let the linear structure mislead you. The reflection I present there emerged less from a logic concatenation of arguments than from the impressions and intuitions, the readings and interactions, the rage and the delights of innumerable time–space shifts.

You might of course move between these two, following the margin notes or your mood, setting your own focus, pursuing your questions, drawing your conclusions. Then, the *Verfremdungseffekt* would be perfect.

Notes

- 1 The down-to-earth, rough-soft poetry of this region is portrayed masterfully in Claudio Magris’ award-winning book *Microcosmi* (1997).
- 2 Excluding city states and island countries like Monaco, Macao, Bahrain, Malta, or Singapore.
- 3 As is well known, de Certeau was critical of such fascination, an ‘exaltation of a scopic and gnostic drive: the fiction of knowledge ... related to [the] lust to be a viewpoint and nothing more’ (1988: 92).
- 4 ‘Bengal’ is a cultural and historical region corresponding approximately to today’s Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal.
- 5 A study carried out by students of IUAV University under the direction of Wolfgang Scheppe (2009) provided a visually impressive assessment of the impact of immigration on Venice and its hinterlands. Nonetheless, the complex interrelations between Italy and Bangladesh in times of globalisation haven’t yet been specifically looked into.
- 6 The thesis of planetary urbanisation is mainly proposed by Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, who analyse urbanisation through the lens of Lefebvre’s theory, in particular of his hypothesis of the

complete urbanisation of society (2003a). Cf. Brenner/Schmid 2012, 2015. Among the critics of this stance, Ananya Roy (2009a, 2015) has suggested that the ‘urban’ is continuously made and unmade, and that the current logic of urbanisation is rather the ‘informal’. I shall deal more closely with all these positions and arguments in the book.

- 7 I’m referring to settings that are characteristic at least of parts of South Asia and Southeast Asia. Stephen Cairns (2018) has advanced the hypothesis that a specific quality of the landscape in these regions, namely its being forged by the cultivation of rice—that is, by the abundance of water—explains their ‘other’ urbanism.
- 8 I write about this in Bertuzzo 2016b.
- 9 I should mention that most of them were fully integrated in the local labour market or in Dhaka’s commercial networks and had settled down permanently.
- 10 As far as concerns visions of *villes mobiles* or ‘mobile cities’ (Friedman 1968), or ‘walking cities’ (Herron/Harvey 1964/online), they didn’t seem to go far enough: the role of the city as centre and basis of social progress remained unchallenged, whereas I presumed exactly this role to be at stake.
- 11 I refrained from taking written notes for language and technical restrictions: first of all, I wasn’t trained in written Bengali; simultaneous translations into any of the languages I was fluent in resulted in a noisy confusion. I also avoided recordings because the audio device often had an embarrassing or intimidating effect.
- 12 *Denkbild* is a concept that goes back to Walter Benjamin’s 1928 essay *Einbahnstraße* (*One-Way-Street*) and was later specified in *Lehre vom Ähnlichen* (*Doctrine of the Similar*) as well as *Über das mimetische Vermögen* (*The mimetic faculty*) of 1933. He described *Denkbilder* as *thought figures* that took shape in his mind by combining images with observations of the nature, heard stories and autobiographical reminiscences. So, as stressed also by Michael Taussig (2004), *Denkbilder* originate from a surrealist intercourse that is obviously gravid of unexpected fruits, between signs and objects, language and perception, propositional and non-propositional reasoning, knowledge and intuition.
- 13 Also here, I’m drawing on Lefebvre’s theory, in particular on his conceptualisation of the dimensions of the production of space (1991).
- 14 Here I am addressing those who, reminiscent of misuses in the wave of the ‘narrative turn’, deem storytelling a depoliticised, escapist, self-complacent bourgeois exercise. More on the issue in *Nandi* as well as in the *Afterword*.

Part 1

Archipelagos

There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard.

Arundhati Roy, 2004

Action and speech are so closely related because the primordial and specifically human act must at the same time answer to the question asked to every newcomer: 'who are you?'

Hannah Arendt, 1958

Può, la 'coscienza', parlare?

Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1946–47

Ayto sundar desh

Maitree Express was gaining the horizon and beyond the horizon lay, flat and watery and gold-lit, the same paddy fields dotted with the women's bright printed cotton saris, the same brick and mud houses fenced by braided jute sticks, and even the same mangrove forest, where the crocodiles lurk in brackish waters. Yet the horizon was a national border and it cut that uniform landscape in two uneven pieces. Soon, we would have to get off the train and produce our documents. Departure-red stamp on one page, entry-blue stamp on the next. Darshana-Gede, and between them, a few kilometres of nothingness enclosed by barbed wire railings that cease abruptly at some distance, where people continue to buy the subsidised sugar from this and alcohol-based medicinals from that side.

The two men might have been acquainted with each other; or might have not. He, with his *tupi* and prominent belly under the white *jamaa* with machine-stitched embroideries, looked like a regular of Kolkata's New Market; maybe a trader in textiles. Would spend the next one or two days at the wholesale market, cross Jamuna in the opposite direction and one week later, the *salwaar kapor*, packs of *dupatta* and cotton and georgette saris would already be on display at Dhaka's New Market. Yes, they don't call them *dupatta* in Dhaka. He would chant *kal-ka-tta ornaaaa!*, and women would gather around the stand. The second man, a head shorter than the other, had the semblances of a salesman or accountant. Pence-trousers-stripped-shirt-hand-knitted-gilet-briefcase, travelling for some mother/sister/wife's health problem. Everybody says that on Kolkata's side, hospitals are better.

None of them had come out to smoke. Both had probably felt like moving a bit, then not daring to adventure themselves further, stopped between two carriages. One can breath fresh air through the openings, and look into the countryside without the interference of the dusty glass screens inside the cart. '*Ayto sundar desh...kintu, garib desh*' noted the salesman/accountant. He sighed, almost imperceptibly. It was the western-most part of Bangladesh, submerged in mid-autumn's noon light; banana and flower orchards, small plots reserved for vegetables—flat beans, potatoes, cauliflower. The darkish soil, otherwise uncommon in the Delta, is suitable for cotton and tobacco; these days, the fields rested, and a rarified idleness reigned. The trader didn't answer, but instead talked about his relatives 'on that side'. They'd fled during the civil war, and never come back. On this side, we have got our own independence; truly, on this side, the *Bangalee* soul has outlived Partition, and 71... They don't treat you as generously on that side—

He, people on this side are friendly—
bargain hard but will always have a cup of tea ready for you...
On that side, they have different manners, people have less time—
Kolkata's *misti* are very good, better than on our side, even better than Bogura's. I carry
back one–two KGs for my daughters every time...
What to do, Hasina–Khaleda keep fighting—
last week we were closed on four days, the losses they're causing!
The country suffers, but don't think they'd stop it...
We're trying Kolkata, *Bally General*. We brought there father-in-law, the doctors were
very good. Years ago.

'*Such a beautiful country, but a poor country*'. That timid sentence recalled memories,
close and remote. How many times, in how many variations had I heard these words,
and how many more times was I to hear them from people who didn't cross the national
border for trade or medical treatment, like them on this Dhaka–Kolkata journey, but
commuted in their own countries, on both sides of the border, just to get work. Every-
thing in our villages is so beautiful, but the salaries are low. We would fancy to visit
other countries, like you, but we're poor. We have fruitful soil here, but no industries.
I made my son study, but I couldn't pay for his appointment, so he's left. Our *desh* is
the best, but to work, we must go outside... That *but* chased me. That nostalgia for a
desh, a home place, where the difficulty to ensure one's sustenance backs the decision
to leave—

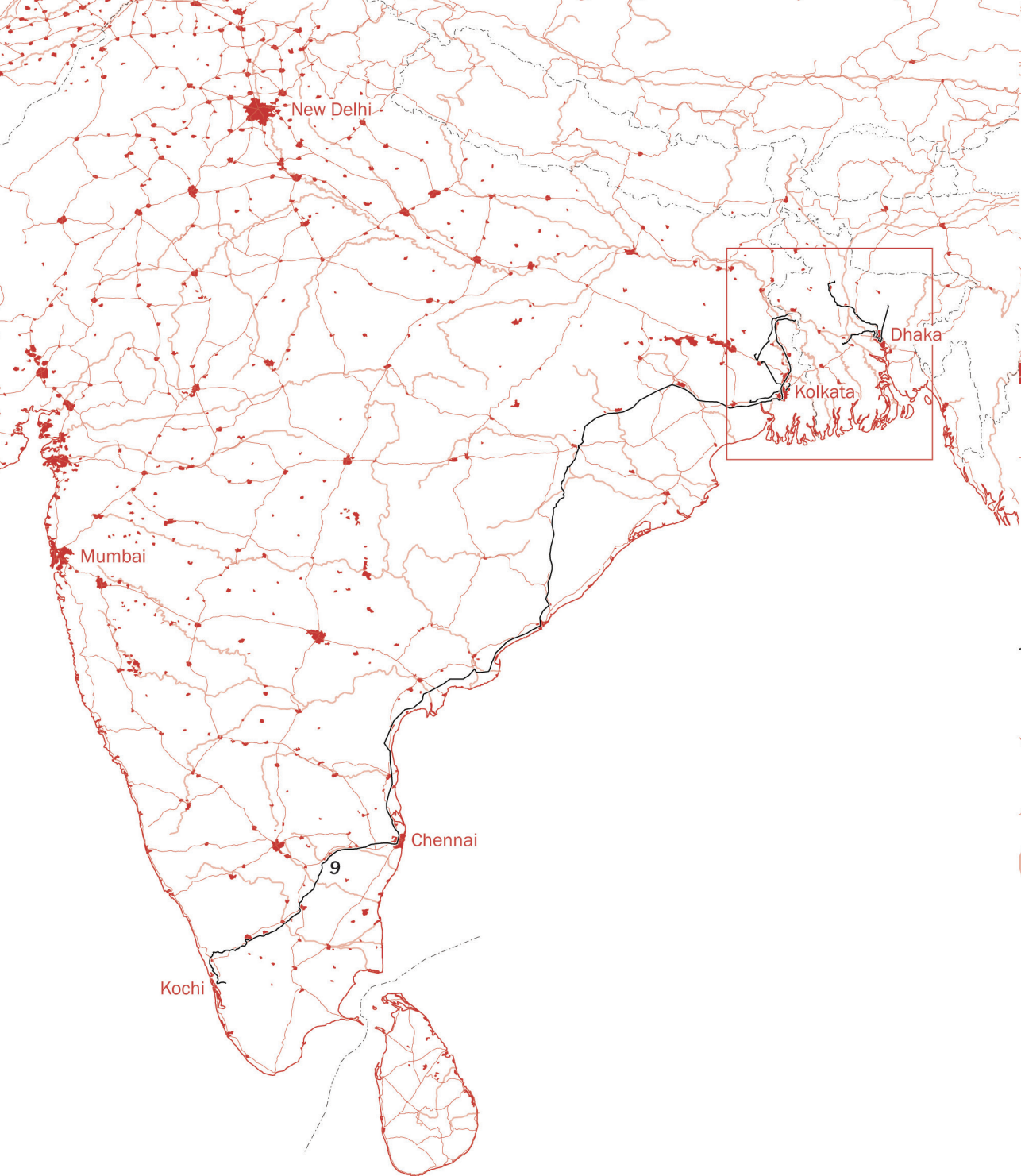
Not always for good, though. Like the *tupi*-businessman and the salesman/ac-
countant, they came back home. In different periods, for different reasons, drawn by
nostalgia and kinship relations, by pending works and sometimes, by jobs that return
seasonally.

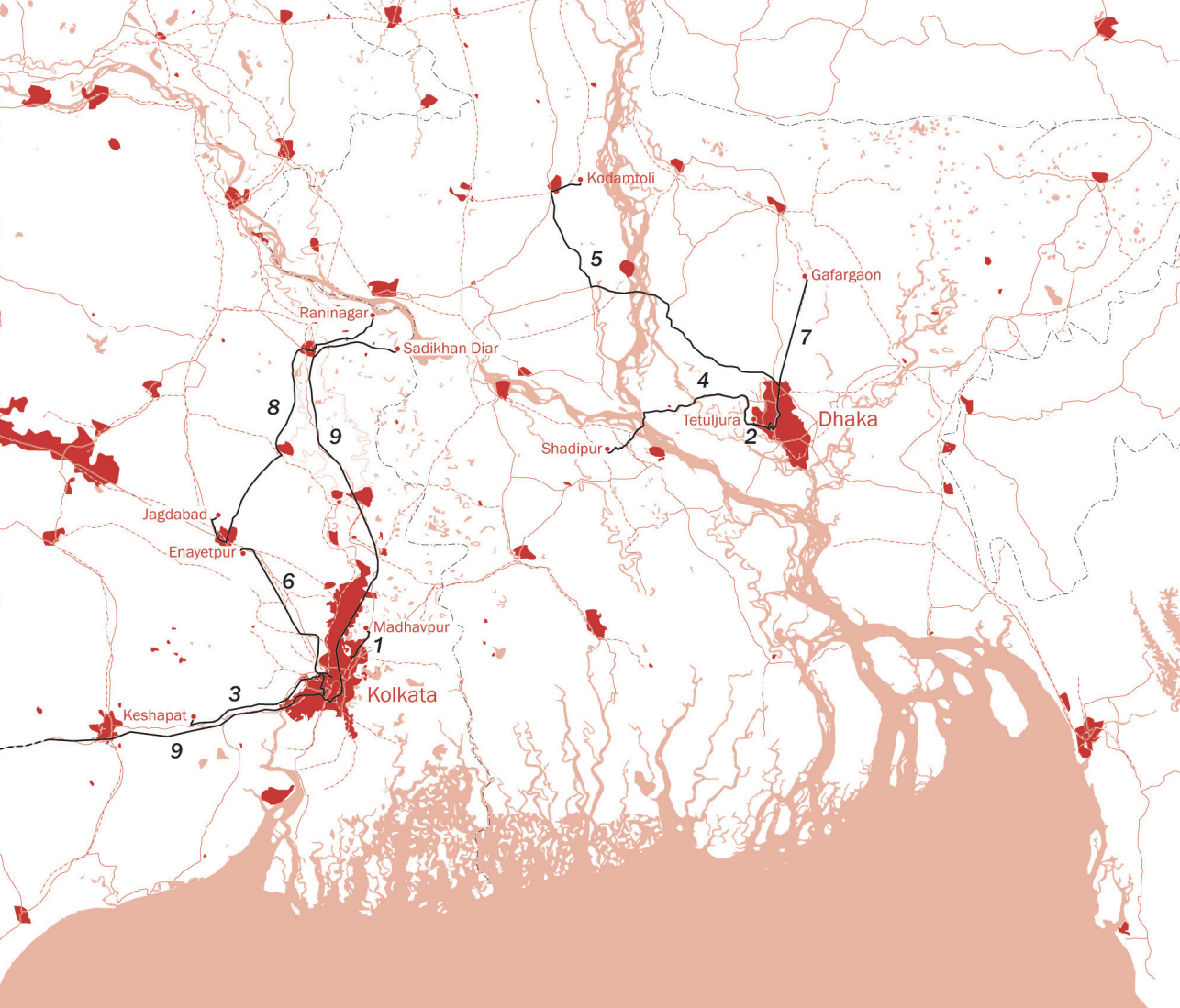
It's their stories collected here. Stories of people that leave, and come back.

Author's notes

People-on-the-move may have hardly anything, or a lot, to hide; if I opted against full anonymisation, it is partly because in trying to understand something as new and unstable as the impacts of augmented movement on social space, I thought it preferable to start with at least some sort of dependable information. And, partly, because I trust that readers who are familiar with the regions and circumstances I report about will be able to reconstruct, with the help of localities and events that will resonate in their memories, those social dimensions and historical backgrounds which I failed to grasp. The story-tellers speaking in this book are neither *figurae* nor fictional (or ethnofictional) characters, but real, physical persons who had the generosity, patience, humour to narrate their lives on the move to me; in order to ensure some extent of privacy, only their nicknames are deployed here. Removing those would have meant to tear apart lived experiences too dear, hollowing out the cognitions they actually mediated.

As pertains to the process of translating their stories and transliterating Bengali terms, I have mostly given preference to a phonetically closer rendering. This applies to geographic names as well, and means that especially in the first part of the book, 'Mumbai' (for example) is mostly spelled in the old fashion, 'Bombay', corresponding to how the city is still referred to in everyday Bengali. One of the many exceptions is Kolkata, whose old transliteration, 'Calcutta', never matched the vernacular pronunciation. 'Calcutta', in turn, is used for references before 2001, that is, before the city was officially called Kolkata.





0 25 50 km

- 1 Durga
- 2 Aijer
- 3 Badal
- 4 Dulal
- 5 Enamul
- 6 Kartik
- 7 Milton
- 8 Soyjuddin
- 9 Sahabuddin