

Flying The Nest : An Ethnographic film on migrant stories in Chandigarh tri-city.

A dissertation submitted for partial fulfillment of BS-MS dual degree in science.

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Certificate of Examination

This is to certify that the dissertation titled “Flying The Nest : An Ethnographic film on migrant stories in Chandigarh tri-city area” submitted by Sri Harsha Dantuluri - MS13121 for the partial fulfillment of BS-MS dual degree program of IISER Mohali has been examined by the thesis committee duly appointed by the institute. The committee finds the work done by the candidate satisfactory and recommends that the report be accepted.

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Declaration

The work presented in this dissertation has been carried out by me under the dual guidance of Dr. Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay and Dr. Anu Sabhlok at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Mohali with Dr. Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay acting as an administrative supervisor as Dr. Anu Sabhlok was on a sabbatical. This work has not been submitted in part or in full for a degree, a diploma, or a fellowship to any other university or institute. Whenever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly, with due acknowledgment of collaborative research and discussions. This thesis is a bonafide record of original work done by me and all sources listed within have been detailed in the bibliography.

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In my capacity as the supervisor of the candidate's project work, I certify that the above statements by the candidate are true to the best of my knowledge.

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- **Sri Harsha Dantuluri.**

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Abstract:

We produced an ethnographic film called “Flying The Nest” that revolves around the theme of migration in the Chandigarh tri-city area. The objective of the film was to bring the narratives of migrants from the wide socio-economic spectrum in Chandigarh tri-city area together to see how a planned city is represented and experienced by them.

Keywords : Ethnographic film, migration, planned city, Chandigarh, migrant narratives.

Introduction :

“A migrant is any person who is moving or has moved away from his/her habitual place of residence”¹. Adjusting in a non-habitual place presents diverse set of struggles that raises brows over the strength of the reason that caused the migration. Yet this phenomenon flourishes and strongly affects the dynamics of populations.

As Chandigarh was a new and the first planned city of independent India, it is understandable that “6 out of 10 people are migrants”² in the city. This city presents us with two-layered (migration + planned new city) complexity. Unlike many other Indian cities, migrants here adapted to a designed plan and the city did not evolve organically over time. This study aims at understanding how this city that was planned at a critical moment in Indian history and how it is being experienced and claimed by the significant migrant population. A central aspect of the Nehruvian vision was to propel India into modernity through industrial planning. The city thus was to create a new kind of citizen for modern Independent India through a modernist plan. Seventy years down the line, we can look at the urban planning and urban experience in hindsight and inquire into the ways in which the migrants responded, adapted to and altered the city. I tried to pick individuals that represent wide socio-economic range and used film-making to contrast the diverse narratives against each other in conveying the story of reasons, struggles, adaptation, and selfing the city.

Using a chain of extended networks, often referred to as the snowballing technique³, I interviewed 8 migrants. These include a veteran who came and settled in Chandigarh decades back, a student, an IT professional, a hotel manager, an immigrant entrepreneur, a double migrant (Indian Nepali from West Bengal), an autorickshaw driver, an outdoor barber.

Through this write up, I wish to set up

1) The context of Chandigarh

¹ <https://www.iom.int/who-is-a-migrant/>

² Hindustan times, Dec 06/2016

³ Longhurst, Robyn. "Semi-structured interviews and focus groups." *Key methods in geography* (2003): 117-132.

- 2) The definitions, thoughts, and principles I had used in making the movie
- 3) A reflection on using ethnographic film as a research methodology for urban research
- 4) My story as a migrant, contributions to this movie. I also document my experiences while making the film, the challenges I encountered, insights gained and reflections on future prospects.

This report attempts at being a key to understand the methodology and insights gained in this ethnographic research of the documentary which could contribute positively to understanding of the urban condition in postcolonial India, particularly the case of the planned city of Chandigarh. Ethnographic film is seen as a multisensory research process within the disciplines of geography and anthropology and not merely as a representation or medium for dissemination⁴. While I have largely conducted interviews with my respondents, the video footage also documents their 'rhythms in time and space' and records non-verbal aspects of communication. Moreover, since all of the interviews were conducted in the various city spaces (public and private), the video recordings reveal stories about these city spaces that might be lost in an audio recording⁵.

⁴ Garrett, Bradley L. "Videographic geographies: Using digital video for geographic research." *Progress in human geography* 35, no. 4 (2011): 521-541.

⁵ Asch, Timothy, and Patsy Asch. "Film in ethnographic research." *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, In Paul Hockings Editor 2 (1995): 335-360.

Chapter -1: Chandigarh tri-city area and its planning.

Context :

Chandigarh, Independent India's first planned city is located at the foothills of Shivaliks, an outer Himalayan mountain range. It is 260 kilometres north of the Indian capital city, Delhi. It is a common capital to the states of Punjab and Haryana but also governed as a union territory of India. Regarded as one of the cleanest cities of India, it boasts the second highest per capita income in India⁶. Filled with greenery and planned architecture, the place is called as “City Beautiful” by the locals. Chandigarh extends into the Punjabi city, Mohali and Haryanvi city, Panchkula. They collectively form a Tri-city area. My inquiry has been towards understanding how the planned spaces of the city, the rhetoric surrounding the ‘modern’ city, and the city’s unplanned developments shape people’s experiences and mindsets.

Historical Background of Chandigarh City :

Gone was Lahore city, capital of united Punjab when the city fell into Pakistan’s premises during the partition. There needed a new city that acts not only as a capital city for the new Punjab region but also (in Jawaharlal Nehru’s words) “an expression of the nation’s faith in the future”⁷ as India began its journey into the new era of Independence. The reasons articulated by the team responsible for choosing a site for the new city were centrality of location, abundant water supply, sustenance of soil fertility, optimum climatic conditions, proximity to the national capital, and beautiful backdrop of Shivalik mountains, present location was selected in 1948.

As there were villages in the allocated area, populations in those villages had to move out for the city to be built. Construction of the city not only caused a major influx of migrants but also a major displacement.⁸

American architects, Albert Mayer and Matthew Novicki were first commissioned to make a master plan in 1950 and they came up with a fan-shaped master plan. They also conceptualised “Superblocks” which are self-sufficient neighbourhood places. But the

⁶ <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/chandigarh/community/city-s-per-capita-income-2nd-highest/343568.html>

⁷ http://chandigarh.gov.in/knowchd_gen_historical.html

⁸ Sarin, Madhu. "Urban planning in the third world: The Chandigarh experience." (1982).

project was abandoned as Novicki was killed in a plane crash. Later, the project was given to French architect Charles Eduard Jeanneret aka Le Corbusier in 1951⁹.

Ideas of Le Corbusier on city planning :

Le Corbusier, referred to as ‘the father of modern architecture’ has written extensively outlining his vision for a modernist city. He saw urban planning as a central tool to counter the challenges of the crowded industrial city. He writes: “On the day when contemporary society, at present so sick, has become properly aware that only architecture and city planning can provide the exact prescription for its ills, then the time will have come for the great machine to be put in motion and begin its functions”¹⁰ I outline here, some of his ideas, that played a role in shaping his plan for the city of Chandigarh.

Le Corbusier averred that one can positively reshape the society in certain way by planning the city accordingly. He argued that there is a scientific, rational solution to all ills and that infrastructure could solve them all. According to him, a planner should isolate the city from its history, context, and traditional values. He believes that organically grown cities only lead to chaos and causes misery to people in them. He trusted that order in the city brings order in living. He insisted on the serene environment with simple, repetitive, organized structure in his plans. He even standardized the elements in a building like doors, windows, bricks etc... He said that present-day city was not according to geometrical one fourth. He believed that repetition is the way to achieve that feat. He even believed that one could achieve this order by following the order of human anatomy.¹¹ He refers to open spaces as lungs and a contemporary city as an organ with a well-organized centre. He even went onto say that towns are biological phenomena and that a plan arranges organs in order to create an organism. This was confirmed by the official site of Chandigarh administration.

⁹ Kalia, Ravi. Chandigarh: In search of an identity. Southern Illinois University Press, 1987.

¹⁰ **Le Corbusier** (1967). *The Radiant City*. New York: Orion Press, 142

¹¹ Amit Tungare, LE CORBUSIER'S PRINCIPLES OF CITY PLANNING AND THEIR APPLICATION IN VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS p16-17

Planning of Chandigarh :

“The city of Chandigarh is planned to human scale. It puts us in touch with the infinite cosmos and nature. It provides us with places and buildings for all human activities by which the citizens can live a full and harmonious life. Here the radiance of nature and heart are within our reach.”¹² - The edict of Chandigarh, statement by Le Corbusier in an attempt to enlighten the citizens of the city and prescribing a path they should follow.

The city was comprised of a fundamental unit called “Sector”. Each sector was scaled as 800 metres by 1200 metres which can hold from 3000 to 20,000 people. It was designed in a way that each sector can function independently holding schools, marketplaces, sports fields, recreational facilities, parks etc...¹³

Every sector was enclosed by roads that connect the entire city to facilitate fastest possible transport between any two places in the city. Houses were given direct access to the roads. There are green strips in every sector which accommodate schools, walks, parks that must not be invaded by the motor culture and its noise. Sector 17 - City centre dubbed as “Pedestrian’s paradise” was also denied any vehicular interference. Industries that run on electricity were only allowed to safeguard the city from pollution. Sukhna Lake was created to endorse the serenity and any kind of motored boats are banned on the lake.

Keeping the economy in mind, high rise buildings were not allowed especially to the northern part of the region such that everybody would get the mountain view in the city. The architectural style was also said to be maintained across new buildings to preserve the vision of Chandigarh, to facilitate cost-effective construction.

¹² <http://203.100.69.89:81/chdmuseum/home/restshowcase/12#group-1> , printed in sector 10 and cast in bronze.

¹³ Visits to city museum in sector 10, le corbusier museum in sector 19 and Chandigarh.gov.in website

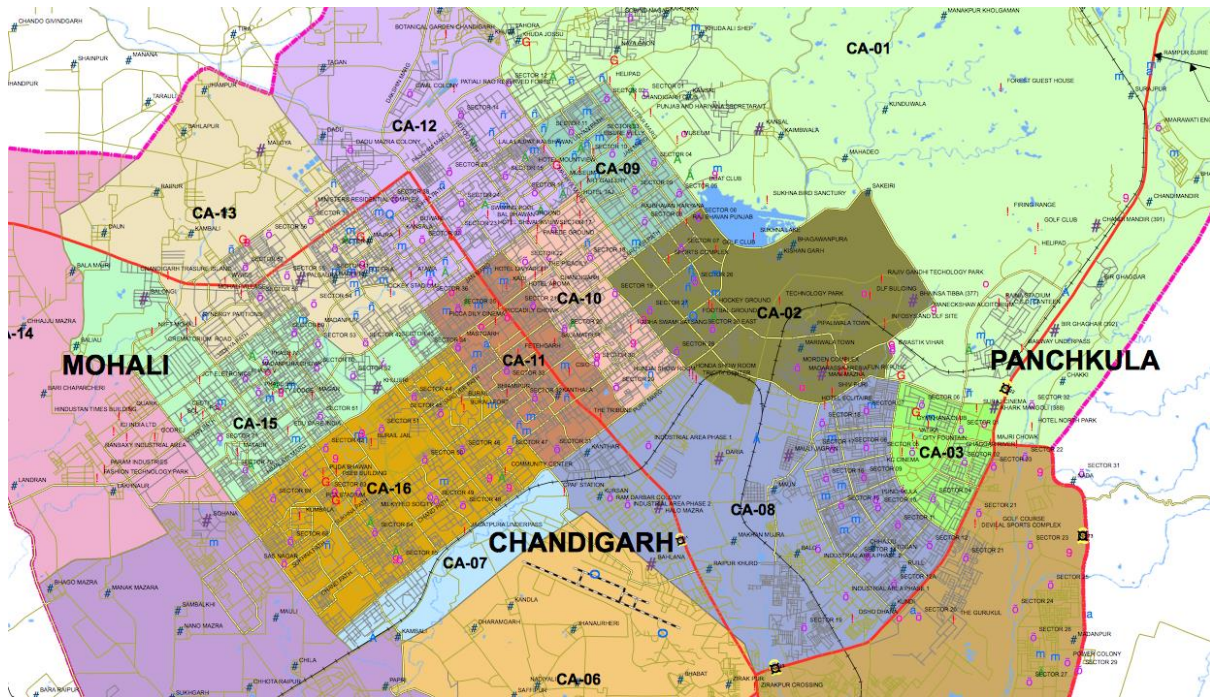


Figure 1 : Guide Map of Chandigarh tri-city¹⁴

Le Corbusier planned Leisure Valley to maintain the greenery of the Chandigarh. Although Chandigarh has a lot of green patches across, Le Corbusier placed an 8-kilometre long green space that runs across the city owing to the importance he attributes to nature in a city. It comprises of Rose Garden, Shanti Kunj, Terraced Garden, Topiary Park, Hibiscus Garden, Garden of Fragrance.

Le Corbusier's road plan is popularly called as the V7 system. Understanding the importance of roads in city's mobility, 7 kinds of roads were designed for the city.

V-1 Arterial roads - connects Chandigarh to the other cities.

V-2 Major boulevards - they have major institutional and commercial buildings across them.

V-3 Sector definers - Horizontal lines that cut the V2. Each sector is either surrounded by V2 or V3.

V-4 Free Flowing shopping streets - They are inside sectors. They are placed according to the sun direction with an intention that shoppers always walk in the shade while shopping.

V-5 Sector circulation roads - Circulation roads within sectors.

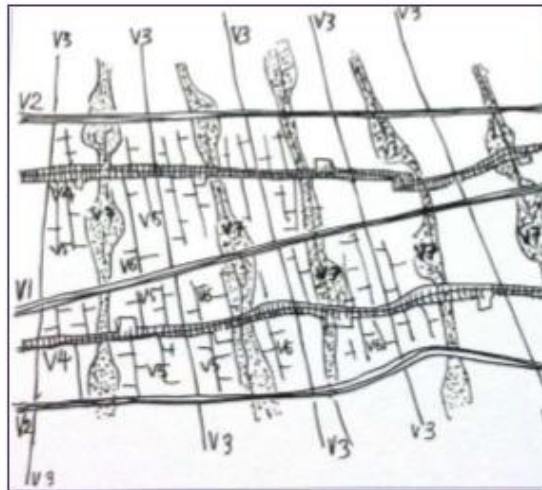
V-6 Access roads to houses - provides direct access to the houses.

V-7 Footpaths and cycle tracks - Pedestrian paths.¹⁵

¹⁴ www.pngrb.gov.in/

¹⁵ http://chandigarh.gov.in/knowchd_edict.html

CORBUSIER'S CONCEPTUAL SKETCH SHOWING THE V-ROAD SYSTEM



- V-1 Fast roads connecting Chandigarh to other towns.
- V-2 Arterial roads.
- V-3 Fast vehicular sector dividing roads.
- V-4 Meandering shopping streets.
- V-5 Sector circulation roads.
- V-6 Access roads to houses.
- V-7 Foot paths and cycle tracks.

Source: Documenting Chandigarh

Figure 2 : Chandigarh road system¹⁶

Extension of Chandigarh planning into Mohali and Panchkula :

While sketching the master plan, Le Corbusier proposed for a periphery zone of 16 km around the Chandigarh city to maintain the “environment and ecological balance”¹⁷ of the city region. Once Chandigarh became the capital, population influx heightened thus creating pressure for additional space which gave birth to two towns outside Chandigarh. They are Mohali and Panchkula. Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Mohali) is situated on the western side of Chandigarh city. Keeping in mind the increasing demand of Chandigarh and its periphery zone, the government of Punjab wanted to develop the adjoining areas in a way that shares the similar vision of Chandigarh. This led to the development of a comprehensive policy framework that promised the planned expansion and prevention of mushrooming slums. The Punjab New Capital Act, 1952 was put in place to preserve the idea. An authority called Greater Mohali Area Development Authority came into place to ensure the development which hired JURONG consultants to sketch the plans.

Similarly, Panchkula Extension-I was implemented in sectors 22-30 of Panchkula. Now another extension (Panchkula extension - II) is planned to comprise 26 sectors to cater the needs of ever-increasing population.

¹⁶ Documenting Chandigarh

¹⁷ http://www.puda.gov.in/img/approved_masterplan_files/Regional_rpt_2011.pdf

Main Critiques of Le Corbusier's Planning :

As Le Corbusier believed that there is a scientific solution to all social ills and city planning could solve them all, he imposed a form on the city with little regard to the existing culture and traditional values. This thinking could result in the alienation of citizens in their own space and little to no connection with the space they are inhabiting.

Le Corbusier claimed to strive for the democratic living by producing identical living conditions through his repetitive model for all citizens whereas he himself denied them the democracy by making the plan dictatorial.

As put by Ravi Kalia,

“That these [visions of Le Corbusier and Nehru] objectives have not been fully accomplished in Chandigarh can be attributed to the absence of local authority, to a lack of understanding of the local culture and values on the part of the planners, and to the subsequent history of the region”¹⁸

“The sectors, which make up the residential section, are marked by a sameness that leaves a visitor lost, without landmarks. Each sector is self-contained, providing essential services within walking distance of every dwelling” “Chandigarh was meant to be something beyond a new state capital. But it lacks a culture. It lacks the excitement of Indian streets. It lacks bustling, colorful bazaars. It lacks the noise and din of Lahore. It lacks the intimacy of Delhi. It is a stay-at-home city. It is not Indian. It is the anti-city.”¹⁹

¹⁸ Kalia, R. (1985). Chandigarh: A Planned City. *Habitat Intl.*, 9 (3/4), 135-150.

¹⁹ Kalia, R. (1985). Chandigarh: A Planned City. *Habitat Intl.*, 9 (3/4), 135-150.

Demographics of Chandigarh Tri-city²⁰ :

2011 census	Population	Literacy rate (%)	Sex Ratio (F: M)
Chandigarh	1,055,450	818:1000	86.43
Mohali	1,76,170	909:1000	91.96
Panchkula	5,58,890	870:1000	83.40

In Chandigarh, 80.78% people are Hindu followed by 13.11% Sikh population. While English is the official language, 67.53% speak Hindi 27.89% speak Punjabi. Population growth is 17.2%. Lowest since Chandigarh's inception.

67.1% are migrants. 53.6% are males 46.4% are females. Migrant population rose by 22% from 2001-2011.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION					
Work	Education	Business	Marriage	Movement (after birth)	Movement (household)
30.8%	4.2%	1.4%	16.3%	8.8%	28.4%
RESIDING FOR 10 YEARS AND ABOVE					
32.6%	2.5%	1.7%	18.3%	8.9%	26.3%

Figure 3 : Migration demographics ²¹

²⁰ Indian census - 2011

²¹ Hindustan times - Dec 06/2016

CHAPTER - 2 : Definitions, ideas, and principles.

Defining a migrant :

In the new era of globalization and connectivity, transportation had become easier than ever. It no longer takes ages to cross borders and reach the destinations. Despite having the idea of human migration around since ancient times, new innovations facilitate populations to move beyond in search of finding whatever they were searching for. It does not always have to be voluntary as well. Government officials get transferred across borders with little regard to their wishes. Children of Indian army officers (based on personal interactions) almost never spend their entire schooling in a single city.

What about the movement of population in the same state where the same language is being spoken? Is that migration? Should the amount of stay have any effect in labelling somebody a migrant? What about an individual who travels 100 km (to and fro) from his village to his workplace which is in a city? Should the cause of movement be considered in labelling someone a migrant? These questions complicate the notion of a migrant. There needed a well-articulated statement that defines these sub-populations that move around, a phenomenon that is majorly affecting the dynamics of populations.

“IOM (International organization for Migration) defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person’s legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is.”²²

This include students that crosses states for their favourite universities, professionals who get hired by multinational companies, manual labour in search of better paying conditions, parents moving into cities just for the sake of better educational facilities, non-profit organizations workers who cross countries to contribute to the humanity, and the combinations are countless.

²² <https://www.iom.int/who-is-a-migrant/>

Idea of home town :

Taking evolution into case, we all came from a single home. What makes a native a native? How long does it take for a migrant to become a native? Can an exotic migrant ever become a native? Or is the idea of home town something that is more individual dependant and cannot be generalized?

Although dictionary suggests that a native is somebody who is associated to the place by birth, usage of the word “native” attributes towards the person who carries the character of the place. While second generation migrants are born in a new place, they have intangible qualities that are being embedded into them by their parents which they (parents) acquired at their “home town”. As new adult migrants (parents), it gets tougher to extract and acquire the character of the new place which could result in second generation kids not having the character of the place they were born in, like a native. There is a good chance that second generation would not be natives to the new place just because they are born here.

Becoming a native would be generations of work. This gets further complicated when one generation of migrants move to another place. It is possible that they identify themselves only as “migrants” while not being a native to any place. Case in point, army officials children.

A new planned city :

When a new planned city is being built, it offers a new world of possibilities. It could even offer a new world. Primarily it offers new job opportunities and residential places to live. This tends to attract people from the whole wide world to come and claim the space. When new planned cities are being built, they are more out of human consciousness of the ruler than the utter need of public like “organic” cities. They would be built with a vision, a way the city is supposed to be experienced. As no ruler could be perfect in knowing the public’s needs, this could potentially be a conflict between the ruler’s vision and public’s needs.

I think the first significant migrant population could later establish themselves as the “natives” of that place. But in the early years of the city, it would likely be an empty slate for the people to come and make a mark.

Chandigarh presents us with the opportunity to learn about the new planned city and how populations relate to it. As 67% population of Chandigarh are migrants²³, there is a need to understand the migrants take on it. It is important to see whether the Chandigarh is going along the path of its vision or dynamic human populations are giving a new flavour to it. What is the character of the city? After 70+ years, which population is considered as the

²³ Hindustan times, Dec 06/2016

native of Chandigarh? Is there a new native identity that had formed? Where do migrants locate themselves in the city and how do they relate to it? Looking at the significant amount of migrants, can it be even called a city of migrants? Being a capital of Punjab and Haryana, which character does it possess more?

Above are the larger questions I wish to address through this project. Although I might not make a definite statement immediately, I could start the process towards the answers.

Ethnographic film :

As I mentioned I produced an ethnographic film to achieve the objective, I wish to define what I believed as ethnography and what is an ethnographic film?

I followed the definition of Ethnography given by Sarah Pink,

“Ethnography is a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture and individuals) that is based on ethnographers own experiences rather than just a method to collect data”²⁴She argues that there is no need that the knowledge thus created has to be an absolute reality but it should be conveyed by an ethnographer with as much honesty as possible. Pink defines “Ethnographic film (as) any video that can be judged by the viewer as it contains information of ethnographic interest.”²⁵This opens up the possibility of calling or using any video as ethnographic film when put in the context of an ethnographic project.

I approached my subjects with help of my extended networks and asked for permissions. Later, I used personal interactions with subject, interactions along with a companion who could be a translator for me, to learn about the subject through a series of questions. These questions often dependent on the circumstances of the individual. Once I acquired the permission, I showed up with a camera to record the discussion revolving around the theme of migration in their lives. Then I used editing to create a non-linear screenplay to put narratives next to each other and achieve a central narrative of the film.

Now by reviewing two published papers, I try to address agenda and interpretation aspects of documentary filmmaking.

A critical reflection on documentary filmmaking : Agenda

Brothels and Big Screen Rescues (BABSC)²⁶, dealt with an Academy award-winning documentary, “Born in Brothels: Calcutta’s red light kids” (BIB). BIB, according to the author, is about the kids of sex workers in the red light area district of Calcutta. The film

²⁴ Pink, S *Doing Visual Ethnography* Sage Publications 18

²⁵ Pink, S *Doing Visual Ethnography* Sage Publications 78

²⁶ Svati P. Shah (2013) Brothels and Big Screen Rescues, Interventions, 15:4, 549-566,

documented a process where the kids were taught photography by the researcher and were given cameras to document their own lives. The researcher claimed and the film showed that the children had come to form a special bond with her, revealing aspects of their precarious lives that might otherwise be invisible. However, it was also problematic in that the documentary presented the researcher as a 'saviour' showing the children as facing the serious mortal threat in their everyday lives and leading to evacuating them from their homes. Many of them eventually, return home.

The critique of such an approach, is that the filmmaker instead of honestly trying to find nuances in sex workers lives, went on to glorify the already stereotypically set view of the Indian subaltern lives. It not only never intended to draw distinctions between prostitution and violence, but also tried to unify them further.

The author attempted to explain this nature of the film using the film's vignetting nature in showing the bad living conditions of Sonagachi, the place where the film was set. It used visual metaphors to assert that the adults of the locality are "bad" by using "bad" living conditions like unhygienic nature of the place. It even erased the local NGO's (DMSC, Sanlaap etc...) efforts that strived for sex workers rights and any alternative perspective that they pose. It highlighted the difficulty of the shooting in the area and attributed it to the fear of exposure, singularly. After declaring the sinister that the area presents by leaving out all other perspectives except the unification of force and prostitution, the film apparently went onto the steps of saving the children. The author presented the narratives of individuals from the locality that posed questions ranging from the commercialisation of third-world lives to the derogatory declarations that their children needed to be "saved" to prove the existence of other nuances in the area.

The author then went on to cite the genealogy of films and documentary photography which maintained that prostitution is a social wrong. She cited "Falkland Road", another visual photographic documentation that declared the place as timeless and without future, not only in photographs but also by the photographer in an interview. It was re-issued just after BIB was released and author raised eyebrows regarding not presenting the conditions that render them to be relevant at re-issuing time as well.

She analyzed the "Slumdog Millionaire" rescue scene of Latika as the migration of "marketing the prostitution" from documentaries to narrative films, which shows the market strength of Indian slum life. This genealogy shows the film-makers discovery of market in producing the timeless conditions and their saving. The author ended it by saying that timelessness, violence, and third- world problems must be had a nuanced treatment for a better understanding. Brothels and Big Screen Rescues (BABSC), I feel, presented an issue that could be portrayed as an antagonist of art. I personally think that there is no good or bad art (after qualifying certain basic technical rules) but only an honest or pretentious one. BABSC tried to show a kind of this pretentious art which is "Documenting with an agenda for selfish interests". There is also a possibility that the filmmaker was honestly dogmatic and could only see through a particular worldview, which is pathetic and

disqualify them from being a documentary filmmaker as documentary filmmaking is essentially about attempting to discover the truth which must be done with an open mind.

Interpreting a documentary :

Reflections on Migration through Film²⁷ (RoMtF) discusses the reactions of the audience to the screenings of an anthropological film *Living like a Common Man* (2011) that revolves around the social conditions of youth who migrated to London, England from Gujarat, India. It tried to explore the effect of pre-conditions and even the present conditions of populations on how they perceive the movie. Thus, it expanded on the usage of the film as a tool for anthropological research through the audience reactions.

RoMtF started off by giving instances where varied opinions were expressed for a particular scene in *Living like a Common Man* (LCM) and made a point that polarised opinions exist amongst the audience. LCM followed seven young Indian migrants from a lower-middle-class status and currently living (in the movie) in a paying guest accommodation. The reality was different from what they dreamt of to an extent that it is worse than their lives in India. They live in inadequate conditions and feel downward social mobility. Parents of protagonists felt that their kids cannot sustain in the futuristic world if they keep depending on their home.

When the movie was screened to the protagonists, the themes of decline in living conditions were confirmed by the responses. They demanded that the film is shown to the present youth to make them realise the reality of dollar dreams. New migrants could also relate to the characters of the film and wished to have seen the movie before. Their parents realised the gravity of the situation through the visual although they had a faint idea of the difficulties. They only had the faint idea.

Indian migrants across Europe could relate to the movie with regard to their experiences in the early days of their migration. They could also relate to the societal pressures of the migration that they would have better lives and considered as successful if they migrate to the west. One of the main aspects that connected this audience was the fact that they had to take care of all of their works which also included cleaning their bathrooms. This new decline which they could not imagine connected them emotionally.

The rural population of India had mixed opinions after watching the film. Prior, many were keen to test their luck abroad. Later, substantial amount of them expressed disappointment. Provided a chance, they might want to visit London but they decided against migration . Still, there were positive mentions regarding the independence from the societal pressures

²⁷ Mario Rutten & Sanderien Verstappen (2015) Reflections on Migration through Film: Screening of an Anthropological Documentary on Indian Youth in London, *Visual Anthropology*, 28:5, 398-421

and new friendships that they would build in a strange environment. Some even thought of it as a chance to become responsible and stand on their legs.

While strong connection was shown by the lower-middle class migrants in the audience, “othering” was done by the urban middle class. Social isolation of Indian youth from the host country was denied by these audiences. They even blamed the filmmakers for the narrow portrayal of India. But, several audiences later agreed about the social isolation in private which brought the social capabilities into the picture. Lower-middle class families from rural India despite having financial backing did not have proper communication skills or urban-like social skills to get along with the British.

Film-makers divided the audience into two types. Self-seeing and the specialised. When showed to the youth of Netherlands, they empathised with the characters despite the disparities in the cultures. They showed some judge-mentality by calling out the young migrants are “mummy’s boys” as they struggled to take care of themselves (it is common to become independent while they were young in the west) but they did appreciate their ability in choosing tougher lives.

Another interesting aspect was the group dynamics in the locality where the film was viewed. The audiences are getting informed by some of the peers (who shout out their reactions) to how the scene was supposed to be perceived. Film is powerful. It can be easily transferred and consumed even in non-academic settings. This gives the anthropologist an opportunity to use film as a tool to study humans and also study the responses that are being elicited which itself could tell a story. It is an added layer. A deeper understanding of socio-economic layer of Indian population is required to get a hang of the varied opinions among the middle class. The othering or relating to the characters depend a lot on the social backgrounds, age, status, and even the setting where the film is being viewed. These responses can provoke new questions and open new horizons of understanding even beyond the anticipation of the film-maker.

With the help of above ideas, definitions, and information, I set out to make an ethnographic film using ethnography and filming. *Brothels* and *Big Screen Rescues* taught me not to have any defined agenda while learning about a society which could drive my film out of proportion, *Reflections on Migration* through film taught me that audience responses are defined by the circumstances they grew up in or presently are in. An honest ethnographic filmmaker should consider the audience reaction to study further into the topic.

CHAPTER - 3 : Flying The Nest

Choosing the characters :

This project was just not academic to me but also personal as I myself am a migrant. I believe ethnographic studies also depend a lot on the individual who is conducting the study. So, it is important to note that I am a South Indian who comes from a lower-middle class background whose origins are in a village near Visakhapatnam. We moved to a nearby town called Tuni for my primary schooling and further moved to Visakhapatnam for my high school. My hindi knowledge was also limited which demanded me to take a friend along with me for interviews who can speak when I could not weave the words.

With the intention to understand how the planned city is being experienced by the migrants, I prepared a question set that could potentially help me explore the causes, struggles in the migrated city, adaptation to the migrated city, and finally how they interact and relate to the city. I thought the narratives of above aspects would not help me develop a rapport to ask complex questions on relating to the city but also give an idea of the process of migration in the city.

To understand the city through migratory lens which itself has a lot of variation in it, I set out to pick individuals from wide socio-economic spectrum. I started from picking a veteran migrant who settled in Chandigarh decades back and who had seen the city evolve into what is now. With the help of PhD student at IISER, Mohali, I met Inder Mohan Singh, a retired banker who moved to Chandigarh in 2013.

Being a South Indian, I empathize with the struggles in adjusting to Chandigarh where Hindi and Punjabi prevail. So, I wished to rope in a South Indian which made me visit Kartik Restaurant in sector 47 where I met Pandiya Raj who worked as a manager.

Being fascinated by the fascination of Indians who I came across to “settle” in life, I was curious about the IT sector. Having been from the middle class of Andhra Pradesh where almost every parent’s dream is to see their children sail to IITs and then to IT sector, I saw many of acquaintances shift to various places in India for their jobs. As IT sector create major employment opportunities and thus creating significant amount of IT professionals, I went to ManiMajra to interview Varun from Ghaziabad and Gaurav Singh from Agra.

Believing in the capability of a Taxi driver in knowing every nook and corner of the city, I wished to pick one. I ended up finding a Auto Rickshaw driver who could be equally capable and gave an interesting economic flavour to the mix. I met Uttam Singh at the junction of Phase 11 wallowing in his afternoon break.

I was introduced to Sunny, a barber under the tree by a friend of mine who interviewed him regarding a documentary for a film-making workshop. Hoping that he would be vocal owing to his previous experiences, I approached him who hailed from Saharanpur.

I picked two students from IISER Mohali itself. One is Meghnad Kayanattil who is my friend from a village in Kerala and the other one is Abhimanyu Noubagh. When I met Abhimanyu for the first time who is a 2nd year student now, he introduced himself as a Nepali. My first thoughts were to associate him with the Nepal nation although I know about the Gorkhaland. After some interactions, he explained to me how a lot of people don't know the concept of Indian Nepali. This prompted me to take his narrative to understand the condition of people who migrated centuries back.

Although I wanted to add gender to the recipe, various practical circumstances allowed me to only include one woman. Interestingly, she stood out not only because of the gender but also because of her origin. She is Marta from Barcelona, Spain who runs Casa Bella Vista in Sector 10 of Chandigarh. In this century where cross country migration has become common, I interviewed Marta who interestingly is also an entrepreneur.

Central themes of Exploration :

- 1) Reasons that cause migration : My understanding of nuance in the reasons of migration started by introspecting my own reasons. It was not just for good education that pushed me to move from Chandigarh to Vizag. I also wanted respect of studying in an Indian Institute from my extended family and the societal circles. This prompted me to explore various financial, educational, occupational, spiritual, explorational, societal reasons.
- 2) Experiences or struggles when moved to a non-habitual place : I believed when one moves to a new place, one has to deal with not only everything that is new but also the loss of direct contact of his old self. Here I mainly explored discrimination, alienation narratives along with linguistic and cultural struggles. I also prodded regarding missing the old place.
- 3) Adaptation to the migrated place : Narratives of making friends, interacting with city, travels, future plans in the city.
- 4) Opinions on the planned nature of Chandigarh, relationship and interaction with the city, opinions on the difference between Chandigarh and old place along with difference between Chandigarh and rest of India as some of my subjects travelled across the country. What one likes and hates about the city and everything in between.

Narratives :

Inder Mohan Singh :

Our interaction started with him trying to shy away from doing a video interview. But once we started our discussion, he got comfortable. Then, my camera stopped recording videos due to a technical problem. Just when I was panicking, he offered his own camera to shoot the video. He began with sharing his knowledge on the history of Chandigarh which is the opening sequence of the movie and went onto speak more on his take on Chandigarh.

He was born and brought up in Delhi where he finished his studies as well. He later took a job in the banking sector which allowed him to travel across the country. Although he was born and brought up in Delhi, he has little love towards the city as he loathed the ever increasing pollution and “ills” of the city. After coming across Chandigarh which was the first planned city of India, he was fascinated. He heard people saying that Chandigarh is just a place of green bushes and white hares. With this fascination, he moved to Chandigarh in 1993. Remembering the days of the 90s, he explained Chandigarh was a laid-back city for the retired people.

He explained that the train of thought regarding Chandigarh being a concrete city without any emotions is, in fact, true because it is a newborn city. He even asserted that Chandigarh does not have a street culture. Talking about the religion, he said that the Sikh population when he arrived in Chandigarh was “80%” and being a Sikh made it easy for him to settle in Chandigarh. However he stated that the situation is changing now as Sikh population, according to him, is reduced to “60%” now. He said Chandigarh is a very welcoming city which encourages migrant influx and now constitutes all kind of populations. Despite having the wide variety of cultures, he was happy that no communal riot took place in Chandigarh. He attributed this to Chandigarh being a new city and planned city. He thought a lot of migrant influx is also a reason for the peaceful environment. While he did not explain how migrant influx helps in keeping it peaceful, I feel the insecurity levels of migrants are more than native citizens which prompts them to maintain peace with everybody as they would not want to get into any tussle. He said Chandigarh is still a Punjabi city where one can see “shouting and fancy outfits” but it has started to change with the younger generation coming up. He sees more vehicles, educational opportunities, and pop culture emerging.

He stated that he gradually started to feel home at Chandigarh and doesn’t feel have much nostalgic love towards Delhi. He said, “The bads of Delhi are so much that you forget your memories. I try to come back as soon as possible”.

While explaining his early morning trips to Sukhna lake, he narrated regarding a morning when he was the only person at Sukhna with no other soul except him. Even though the place was empty, he didn’t feel any fear running up his spine. He felt safe. He said he enjoys

the character of Sukhna where even a stranger would wish you a good morning. He ended with saying he is a Chandigarhian and he is proud of it.

It was interesting how a migrant is turning gradually into a native and I feel religion contributed significantly to it. Although Chandigarh is a common capital for Haryana and Punjab, he asserted that Chandigarh was meant for Punjabi population. Having a significant amount of population from same religion could make one feel home in a brand-new city and could potentially form a “native” identity at that place.

Pandiya Raj :

When I went to interview the owner of Kartik Restaurant, he was out of the station. I unexpectedly asked Pandiya Raj there who was eating his lunch. It took little prodding from another Tamilian there who I later discovered to be Pandiya Raj’s cousin.

He introduced himself as a South Indian. He was from a village called Kadakottai in Virudhunagar district of Tamil Nadu. He did a diploma in civil engineering in Chennai where two other brothers of him had their education. He took civil engineering on his brother’s suggestion that it has “scope”. He presented a classic case of “scope” in Indian education system. From my own experience, I can recollect brilliant friends of mine who chose streams against their wish because the people around them said a certain field has scope to produce job opportunities.

His story was further intertwined with toxic extended family relations. He worked for a civil engineering firm in Chennai for 2 years which couldn’t a new project. Hence, he was out of the job. He was then called by an uncle of him who resides in Chandigarh and owns a chain of restaurants. Promising Pandiya Raj that he would get him a job, he requested Pandiya to work for 2 months as a manager in their hotel as they were low on manpower. As he is a relative, Pandiya agreed and started working. By the time I interviewed, it was two years and a job was still a pipe dream.

While I went to explore the linguistic problems a South Indian would face, I was presented with a complex struggle of exploitation of relationships. Pandiya did not explore much of Chandigarh as well. His outing in the city is limited and was restricted to a couple of movies. Recent development after the interview was that he quit the job and went back to Tamil Nadu to start a business with his brother.

After working for two years in a South Indian restaurant in North India, he felt that South Indians were easy going when compared with North Indians. In a deleted scene of the movie, he explained a North Indian would be ruder if a server had mistakenly spilt chutney over the table. Pointing out other differences, he said he could never marry a North Indian girl because of the vast differences in the cultures. He mentioned the difference in clothing

was one reason why he could never relate to a North Indian girl. He clarified that he did not think it was wrong but was much different than his comfort zone.

Explaining the days when he took a gap year after 12th standard because his family could not afford more sons (five in total) studying at a time, he said he used to cry every day for the first 15-20 days. Speaking about the feeling he said, “I can not explain it. It was an unexpressive feeling”

Varun & Gaurav Singh :

I went Rajiv Gandhi Chandigarh Technology Park of Manimajra where multinational IT companies are running. I met Varun & Gaurav Singh there who currently work at Infosys. While Varun was from Ghaziabad, Gaurav Singh was from Agra. Their reason for moving out of their hometown was the IT placement they received. They were trained at Mysore Infosys branch.

Gaurav believed that one has to move out to grow in life. Gaurav narrated one of his experience in South India. When he went to a restaurant in Chennai, he was asked to show his identity card and doubled up the price as he was not a local citizen. He was agitated while narrating and stated that he was not a foreigner, he was also an Indian. He said that restaurant people told him that North Indians would also discriminate against them (South Indians) in their local places. He ended the story that “Chennai people are discriminatory”.

Continuing with the struggles, he spoke about the food problem and language problem he had at his Mysore training. More than these, he stressed on the stress in IT jobs. He said he had to work for 18 hours to survive the training where he had to 65% of the marks in the exams. While this worried his parents, he apparently could not talk to them for more than 5 mins owing to the hectic schedule.

On the contrary, Varun thought that India is a country where one can move out to any corner and one would be accepted. He said he always wanted to explore more places. Telling about his travels, he found a lot of difference while travelling in different places. Giving an example, in Bihar, people always try to illegally invade the seats.

Later, another friend of them joined the discussion and added his views. His reason to move into Chandigarh was Himachal. He felt Chandigarh made it easier for him to explore Himachal’s beauty. They felt that Chandigarh was the best place after retirement. They said they love the low crime rate, peaceful, less traffic, cost-effective traits of Chandigarh. Given an equal opportunity in Chandigarh and any other city, they said they would choose Chandigarh.

They added that they would not want to encourage the street culture in Chandigarh. Although they miss the street food, they would not want to risk the cleanliness of Chandigarh. They were appreciative of the planned nature of Chandigarh.

Barqat Ali aka Sunny :

Sunny was from Saharanpur of Uttar Pradesh. There were a number of barbers back in town. So, when his brother opened a salon (chair under a tree), Sunny moved to Chandigarh. Sunny's name was Barqat Ali. Sunny's brother's name was Sunny. As he worked at the same place, customers started calling him with the same name. He thought this suited well to the city he was in. It was an interesting case in which a place gives a name to somebody. It also represents city demanding a certain type of behaviour from the individuals.

He never roamed much in Chandigarh. Even in future, he would roam only when somebody from the village comes to meet him. Here Sunny and his relatives would have the similar amount of interaction with the city at large, despite Sunny living in the city. This presents a case where an individual is restricted to certain part of the city unless he wanted to show off his social and urban status to his relatives.

Sunny apparently never could stay at home for so long as his customers might think that he was gone because of the disappearance of his temporary salon. This showcases the extra effort a street hawker has to put in maintaining his business. He had to keep on claiming the place. Sunny spoke about the automobile culture of Chandigarh that he hates. He stated that nobody gives respect to the people on bicycles, especially rickshaw wallas who recklessly take a turn before the running bicycle.

On Chandigarh, Sunny thought that the greenery of the city was the best among its traits. He felt Chandigarh people were nice and gave respect to the greenery. Contrasting to his town, he said his village would not mind at all to uproot a tree.

Marta :

Marta hailed from Barcelona, Spain. She was working in corporates and did masters in Sociology. She decided to work with Mother Teresa to help chronics and terminals as she could not satisfaction in her corporate job. In Manali, she met Giri, in a yoga class. They got along and married shortly. After running a restaurant in Manali for a while, they decided to move to Chandigarh as kids were coming up and Giri was from Chandigarh.

Marta claimed she never faced a language problem in India. She could easily communicate as everybody spoke English and sign language worked as well for her. Speaking of being a daughter-in-law to an Indian family, she was never forced to do or follow any customs. But as a foreigner woman, she always felt watched even though India had been very safe

for her. She recalled the instances where people point at her from distances. She said it happened less in Chandigarh. But, she found Chandigarh as a boring (nothing to do), conservative, judgemental city where everybody knew everybody.

She observed that the central region of Chandigarh had rich people whose children were insecure. They would not do anything independently, even travelling. They would go to a place only if there was a relative there. They would marry amongst each other and would not risk anything for the fear of losing money. She said she had been seeing some change. She could see the emergence of “middle class” who were fearless because they had got nothing to lose. They had been taking bold decisions and the conservativeness of Chandigarh might vanish with these new trends.

Speaking about the biggest challenge she had faced, she said she missed the Barcelona’s weather and the sea. She said once a person left home, one had to live in the present and make it as a home. Or else, one would live his life in regret. While she would not mind a planned city, she would love a city with history and artistic flavour to it.

Abhimanyu :

Abhimanyu was from Jalpaiguri of West Bengal. He was a second-year BS-MS student at IISER Mohali. Having shown promise by securing All India 2nd rank in 10th standard, he left his hometown after 12th to pursue higher studies at IISER.

He came along with me to interview the Nepali momos vendors to help me with the translation. There he met and spoke with them in his mother tongue. After his advent, rapport with one of the guys turned much better than before. This made me appreciate the beauty of mother tongue. Language’s role in building a rapport was major. It took me months to even convince a guy to feature in a documentary while this new development barely took days. Unfortunately, that documentary had to be shelved despite many attempts at making it work.

Abhimanyu spoke about how the two populations are diverging now. Their languages and accents had been going in different directions. He said, “The people you feel closest are the people who can speak your mother tongue. I felt happy interacting the momos vendors”

Abhimanyu highlighted that he could not grasp the geography of Chandigarh quite easily. He said he was confused in finding ways. He attributed it to the numbered names of the city. He said he could not associate memories with a particular place if it was named after an arbitrary number. He indeed called Chandigarh “Robotic”.

Recalling the early days of his life in IISER, he said people thought he was from a foreign country because he introduced himself as a Nepali. “I am an Indian in every right”, he said.

Although it made him sad that only a few had a good idea about his community, he had started educating everybody now.

Meghnad Kayanattil :

Meghnad was brought up in a small village called Eookottukavu in Palakkad district of Kerala. “In India, when you study well, you try to get into IIT”, said Meghnad subtly pointing at one of the most pressing problems in Indian education system. Taking advantage of the “scope”, various coaching institutes managed to manipulate entire nation into believing that one’s child was meant for IIT. This not only puts the students through extreme stress at a very young age but also destroys any non-engineering dream. It could have made sense if it was the case that everybody who went through this gruelling coaching would get into IITs.

After not getting an IIT seat, Meghnad did not want to go to NIT Calicut. He felt it was too close to his home and wanted to explore the world. He wanted to experience new cultures in first hand. He decided to pursue sciences at IISER, Mohali as it was at the other corner of the nation.

Speaking about living in a city, he stated that he had to be vigilant in a city regarding the way one behaves. In the village, he said the whole village was a big home for him and could run around in whichever way he wanted without a second thought. Although understandable, I have experiences that made me feel only a few cares about what happens in the next household in cities while a village felt more vigilant. But, I could not ignore the fact that city demands behaviours.

Speaking about Chandigarh, he described it as a “chill” city. Given an option, he would want to settle in Chandigarh after his hometown.

Uttam Singh :

Uttam Singh s/o Sri Pramod Singh hailed from Himachal Pradesh. Failing to find job opportunities in Himachal, he left his home. He joined a company as a non-skilled labour which was shut down later. He subsequently joined two more companies and raised his children. Once he was old enough, he got himself a fund using which he bought an Auto Rickshaw.

He could not really believe that he was driving an Auto Rickshaw in the early days as an Auto driver. Nevertheless, he earned 1000-1500 rupees per day which made him respect the profession. Through the discussion, he conveyed that no profession was socially less. He said at a point in time, he was not counting the money he was earning but only look at the size of his pocket. He, then, took out a handful of currency notes to show us his earnings.

He said there had been a difference with the advent of Ola and Uber. People were split now. But he denied having a significant business loss. Throughout the discussion, he was also indulged in promoting the value of Auto Rickshaws. Opening up on his struggles, he said he never had to struggle much owing to his positive and extroverted nature. He said he gelled well with people.

CHAPTER - 4 : Conclusion

My story :

As I gave a glimpse already regarding the reasons for me moving out of my hometown, I wanted to introspect more. I started my kindergarten in a village. My parents moved to a nearby town for my primary schooling. We moved to Visakhapatnam for my high school (11th and 12th). I had this feeling planted that as I go higher up in my education, I had to move out further. Having been watching the kind of respect from people and also self for moving out, I felt this migration in itself was growth. I desperately wanted to move out of Andhra Pradesh for my higher education.

Despite the desperation, I was also scared. My school environment weirdly made fun of people who spoke English and Hindi was never attempted. This put me in a conflict where the will to show off to my friends won. Like Meghnad, I could not get into IIT as well. As I once mistakenly said I wanted to be a scientist in school, I was called a scientist in school. This planted an idea in the depths of my mind that made me look up for IISER.

My father and mother came along and left me here, with a proud smile on their face while travelling back. It was then the hard reality hit me. The show was over and I had to actually deal with running along with some of the brilliant minds in the country, without any pressure pushing me to do so. Not completely realising that pressure was all that pushed me till now, I put efforts into socializing instead of studies.

The language was the first barrier. I could not find any Telugu person to talk. All the stories I wanted to tell, I had to think in Telugu, then translate it to English and deliver. On top of these insecurities, I tried speaking in Hindi once which was mocked by a contingent of classmates. I dropped it there alienating myself from Hindi speaking population. I tried to find refuge amongst fellow South Indians who also were struggling in Hindi.

Adaptation started when I befriended a Telugu senior whose friends were voluble in English. Down to earth they were, helped me in honing my English to a manageable level. Confidence developed along with English. Thus the socialization as well. Now I can speak Hindi, of course with a ton of mistakes but without the fear of judgement.

There were other facets of struggles with food, loneliness, homesickness which I got used to without any particular strategy. Speaking about the personal opinions on Chandigarh, I could not find a lot of stories to photograph on streets in Chandigarh which made me thought of it as boring. When I got better at photography, I started to see how chaotic India is seeping into the organized patterns of Chandigarh which gave it a unique character. I find my way around the city with the help of visuals but not streets and numbers. As everything is repetitive in Chandigarh, I still struggle even after 5 years. There were often times when Chandigarh made me feel I was not in India.

It was easy to get movie tickets in Chandigarh whereas, in South India, one cannot simply get a ticket for the first show of a movie. Looking at the cultures, Chandigarh people made me feel inferior to their level of grooming. I felt they put in an honest effort to look good and shiny.

Thoughts on making an Ethnographic film :

Although my intention was to explore reasons, struggles, adaptation, and relation to spatial-organization, little did I expect that I would find more complicated characters. Each person brought a unique story and struggle with them. While I stereotypically assumed a taxi driver would have dramatic struggles, his narrative ended up more on the positive note. I also did not expect counterintuitive narratives. I confess having a stereotype that higher in the economic strata, more open the mind would be. Marta's narrative presented me with a counter-argument which made sense. In this way, I felt ethnography changes the ethnographer to be more open-minded, rational, and patient.

Over the course of the year, I happened to try two approaches to conducting fieldwork and making a documentary. First, one included, slowly building a rapport over months. After building a strong enough bond, I wished to take the camera out and shoot the subject. My subject was an immigrant street hawker who sells momos. I learned that he was a part of a network run by a Malik who gives fixed salaries and accommodation at his home. Although I made a good bond (with a lot of struggle) with an immigrant street hawker, I somehow scared the malik once I started shooting. He did not allow me to shoot further and put conditions on his workers that they should not be seen with me. Potential reasons could be that he was doing something minorly illegal which he did not want to be recorded. Or he was simply scared of the camera as it had the ability to intimidate people.

The second one was that I pick people on the other extremes of the extended branches of my networks. I hoped that this network assured the subjects that I would not be taking advantage of the footage. Except for Uttam Singh, I met all the subjects of Flying The Nest through extended networks. It did give fruitful results according to me. The intimidation factor of filmmaking equipment was something that worried me since the beginning of the project. I planned to use Go-Pro which could fit in any pocket while I tried freestyle hunting of subject who is a taxi driver. I believe it helped me sit in the Auto and also to get a wide angle. Owing to its small size, it did not grab much attention around the place which I thought allowed Uttam Singh to speak wholeheartedly.

I compromised on getting a solid audio-equipment (boom mike) and used phone recorder instead. Although there was noise, it made the interactions easier. I consider myself lucky to have such narratives in one or two interactions while months of rapport left me disappointed. There is another facet of thought that using camera early in the meeting attracted the subjects to speak, as they understood that I am committed to making a

documentary. The thought of being in a documentary or participating in something different apart from the routine might have also affected the enthusiasm for the participation.

Contributions of the movie in a nutshell :

Reasons: Owing to my own complicated reason, I was excited about the nuanced reasons I could find from other migrants. I did find educational, occupational, explorational reasons. Along with them, Uttam Singh presented a case in which he stayed in Chandigarh because he had his in-laws in Chandigarh. As it was easy to interact with closed ones in Chandigarh, he was away from his hometown. Marta moved to Chandigarh because of her husband despite all the hardships she had been facing in a foreign country. Interestingly, she revealed that she had never thought hard about making the decision, instead, it just happened. Sunny loathed his village and found a refuge in the city. He hated that his friends were exploiting his services. Chandigarh made him happy as he felt it was fair and square. Because of the character trait of Chandigarh that it belongs to retired citizens, Inder Mohan Singh decided to spend his retirement time at Chandigarh.

Struggles: The diversity in the struggles was something I underestimated. Pandiya's deadlock with his uncle hindering him from trying to establish himself in civil engineering. Although jobs were tough to get in civil engineering, his hatred towards the work he was doing made him miserable. Sunny lost his love (deleted scene) because of the distance barrier between them. Sunny still thought long distance should not be a problem as love resides at heart, according to him. Abhimanyu's struggle to establish his identity as both an Indian and a Nepali questions the struggles of migrants even after centuries. Despite being in India for 15 years, Marta still felt watched. Can a migrant of odd ethnicity to the region ever become a native?

Gaurav Singh's discriminatory narrative and Pandiya's image of North Indians (in the deleted scene) could portray the classic north-south conflict.

Relating to Chandigarh: There was diversity in opinions on Chandigarh as well. While Marta thought Chandigarh was a boring, conservative, and judgemental city where nothing much ever happened, IT professionals described it as heaven to settle in citing the low crime rate, less traffic, low pollution, and cleanliness. They would not encourage the street culture at the expense of cleanliness. Inder Mohan Singh made Chandigarh a home for himself although he agreed that it was a concrete city with no emotions which he would not mind. He prayed to God that no communal riots should ever happen in Chandigarh. Sunny thought that shifting back to the village from Chandigarh would be a decline in his status and claimed it as no 1 city. Abhimanyu commented on the numbered system in identifying a place, he was interested to live in Chandigarh to see how a planned city would feel like.

It is ubiquitous across all the migrants that they were claiming a little piece of Chandigarh for themselves. Although they agreed they were migrants, they were equally selfing the city. Everybody equally found the city beautiful, clean, and safe.

Through the B-roll shots of Chandigarh tri-city area, I tried to showcase how the traits of India like “easy going” as explained by Marta, street hawking, and subaltern population were seeping into the city despite being excluded from the vision of Chandigarh.

I believe I had shown the diversity amongst migrants, their narratives, experiences, opinions along with visuals of Chandigarh to view the Chandigarh from a migrant lens and how they are claiming their own spaces in it.

Future prospects :

- 1) Due to runtime issues, I had to edit 7 hours of content into 38 minutes. Some important narratives were edited out as they did not fit well into the narrative flow of the documentary. Each interview deserves to be a stand-alone short film where they talk about every aspect and emotions of their lives.
- 2) During the interview, Marta suggested that maybe natives could also be interviewed regarding how they feel about the migrant influx and the constant change in the character of the city. This makes a potential sequel to the movie.
- 3) I was limited by my extended networks in sampling a different kind of migrants. Other kinds of migrants like manual labour, circulatory migrants could be picked next.
- 4) As some of them talked about the crime rate, the emergence of middle class etc..., local authorities could be interviewed and the reality of the situations could be found out statistically.
- 5) Audience reactions to the narratives could be studied.

Endnote :

I decided not to derive conclusions and generalize the character of the Chandigarh tri-city area. Instead, I wish to present Chandigarh in all its complexity. I hope this movie would act as an archive of intimate stories for future research projects dealing with Chandigarh and Migration.