PREFACE

In this thesis, present worker has tried to analyse the social dynamics of urban marginalisation in the Third World city of Calcutta (now Kolkata) in a broad perspective. Urban marginalisation in a Third World city, according to this thesis, is primarily the result of the state’s failure to provide adequate collective consumption (basic urban services to be provided to the city dwellers) to an increasing proportion of the urban population and thus rendering them marginalised. This process of marginalisation is further exacerbated in the SAP (Structural Adjustment Programme) regime in which the Third World states are forced to withdraw subsidies from spheres of life their nationals including collective consumption in the urban areas. This thesis has also explored the phenomenon of child labour in a Third World urban context in the background of the urban marginalisation in Third World.

This general approach has been considered fairly extensively in this thesis, drawing on empirical findings from three different settlements (called here Population I, Population II and Population III) in the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata) which were studied intensively over a period of more than ten years, and also on the findings on national as well as international comparisons. Among the settlements studied here Population I and Population II were the squatter settlements, where the inhabitants used to live without any security of tenure as well as with almost no urban basic services (state mediated) in the form of collective consumption. During this fieldwork, both these settlements were eroded from the landscape of the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata) and those acts of evicting these people were done ostensibly to undertake some development projects in the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata). Population III, on the other hand, was a recognised slum settlement where the inhabitants lived with some kind of security of tenure by virtue of an act [Calcutta Thika and Other Tenancies and Lands (Acquisition and Regulation) Act, 1981]. Present worker considered Population I and Population II as the Control Group and Population III as the Programme Group. Empirical findings (mostly in quantitative term) as well as thick descriptions on the Control Group and the Programme Group differ substantially in the present work and the people in the Programme Group were in much better condition than their counterparts in the Control Group primarily due to the security of tenure they had obtained through the legislation. Security of tenure in fact had initiated the process towards a betterment in life in the Programme Group of population and then the people in the Programme Group with the advent of time further moved that process with their own endeavours as well as with the help of different development programmes taken up for them.

In the first chapter present worker tried to introduce the work and discussed on the background of the work with particular reference to the works on Indian urban scenario. This chapter has raised the issues under the present topic and presented the background to the issues, including previous studies touching the similar issues. The second chapter, which is divided into four sections, essentially
introduced the theoretical aspects of this thesis. Present worker examined the effects of urbanisation and globalisation on the life of the marginalised people in Third World cities in general and in the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata) in particular in section one and section two of the second chapter. In the third section of the second chapter, the processes of marginalisation throughout the Third World and in the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata) have been examined with particular reference to the role of collective consumption in this process. In the fourth and the final section of the second chapter phenomenon of child labour as a major component of urban marginalisation have been discussed in detail. The broad theoretical perspective presented in the second chapter, present worker believe, has some relevance in understanding the theoretical background of the marginalisation process in the city of Calcutta (now Kolkata).

In the third chapter present worker has discussed the methodological aspects of the work in detail. This chapter is on methods and has described the collection of measures and details of the present study design. As our discipline is a relatively new entrant in the field of Third World urban phenomena particularly those with international implications like the present topic, this chapter on methodological aspects of the work has dealt with wide-ranging methodological issues with special emphasis on the ethnographic experiences in the urban areas.

Fourth chapter, which has three sections, is on the results and tells the outcome of the present study. In the first section of this chapter the details of analyses of the tables and the charts that have been given along with several case studies to illustrate the outcome of the study both in quantitative as well as qualitative terms. Second section of this chapter actually contains those tables and figures. In the first part of the third section of this chapter, present worker has given the thick descriptions of some of the key behaviours among the people in both the Control Group and the Programme Group. In the second part of this section, socially cognisant items among both the groups have been ranked in the emic way and discussed accordingly. In the third part of the fourth chapter, present worker conducted few statistical tests and analyses on the level of urban marginalisation among the few randomly selected households in all three populations, primarily to reiterate the empirical arguments presented in the earlier sections of this chapter.

The last chapter i.e. the chapter five in the present thesis is on summary and discussion. It also states the conclusion that the present researcher draws from this study. This chapter has also been closed by noting speculation about directions for further research.

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the present worker and the initial phase of the work was completed in that department. Present worker would also like to acknowledge the facilities offered by the department particularly during that initial phase. For the next phase of this work till the date of submission present worker is most grateful to the Bangabasi Evening College authority (where he works as a teacher in anthropology) for giving him the necessary supports and facilities to continue this work.

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