

**Kinship, reciprocity and the dynamics of translocal/trans-jurisdictional networks: the foundations and significance of South Asian initiatives 'from below'**

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The currently conventional assumption that long distance migration is a novel phenomenon can only be described as bizarre: our species has constantly been on the move since *Homo Sapiens* emerged from the savannahs of Africa 100,000 years ago, and promptly set about peopling the world. Nor did our ancestors stay put in the locations which they initially colonised. Long before Europeans set off to 'discover' the New World, and in due course to claim sovereignty over large parts of it, members of all manner of other civilizations were spreading their own traditions far and wide. It was on that basis that Islam expanded across an arena stretching the Atlantic to the Pacific, whilst Hindu and Buddhist ideas and ideologies had had a far reaching impact on the civilizations of central, east, and south east Asia long before Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope. This is not to suggest that the expanding spatial influence of these religious and cultural traditions was simply a product of migration and conquest: in most cases inflow of personnel on that basis was dwarfed by the much larger number of people who found themselves so inspired by the newcomers' ideas and ideologies that they voluntarily incorporated them into their own more indigenous lifestyles.

But just who engaged in these migratory activities? Why and on what basis did they set out for their destinations? And just how did they behave after their arrival?

Conventionally-minded Euro-American social commentators assumed they knew the answer. Drawing on their knowledge of the operation of the Roman Empire, as well as of the way in which their own immediate ancestors had also implemented a parallel 'civilizing mission' on an equally militaristic basis, they all too easily assumed that all similar initiatives must also have been underpinned by force. But as closer inspection is beginning to reveal, whilst the willingness of crusading European adventurers to deploy force as a means of getting their way was by no means unprecedented, such tactics were far less 'normal' in a global context than either the perpetrators or their apologists so readily assumed. Long-distance trade, conducted on a commercial and hence a peaceful basis, was in fact a much more commonplace foundation for the diasporic transmission of religious and cultural influences.

Have those days now entirely passed? It would be idle to assume so. To be sure much has changed in the contemporary world, especially as a result of the impact of currently much

vaunted processes of globalisation. But whilst those processes and their consequences are real enough, the label which is currently deployed to identify them needs to be approached with some care, especially in the light of the caveats above. Once we consider world history in from a global perspective, rather than through parochial spectacles still worn by most natives of the westerly peninsular of the Asiatic landmass, it is quite clear processes about which Euro-American observers have recently become so excited have a far longer history than is currently assumed.

Once globalisation is considered from this perspective, the any assumption that Euro-America always was – or can for very much longer be expected to remain – the ultimate global hub must be abandoned. To be sure the inhabitants of this region have enjoyed the benefits of imperially driven position of competitive advantage, no less in military than in economic terms, for the best part of two centuries. However that position of competitive advantage has been undermined at bewildering speed as the result of recent advances in communications technology. As result goods, people and above all information can now be transferred around the globe at an unprecedented speed, and at an ever-diminishing cost. As the global arena has 'shrunk' in this sense, there has been a sharp acceleration in the scale of transnational activity of all kinds. The world has become unprecedentedly mobile.

Yet this has also been accompanied by the introduction of ever more draconian constraints on the mobility of certain kinds of people. Hence whilst recent technological developments have ensured that both information and value (in the financial sense) can now be transferred around the globe with no significant let or hindrance, and tariff restriction on the transfer of goods (and most especially manufactured goods) have by now been all-but eliminated, constraints on the movement of people are becoming steadily more draconian. However current patterns of boundary control are highly selective. Whilst offering the minimal level of hindrance to the great mass of 'legitimate' border crossers, they aim carefully to sieve out all those deemed to be unwelcome. Hence even though the scale of long-distance travel has increased has grown by leaps and bounds in recent year, all those unfortunate enough to hold passports issued either by poverty-stricken or by 'terrorist-generating' states now find it next to impossible to cross international boundaries – unless they possesses either sufficient wealth or sufficiently impressive credentials to persuade the border guards to let them pass.

Boundaries show no sign of disappearing in our ever more globalised world. Instead 'immigration' – or in other words the passage of the 'unwanted' through, around, or beneath such barriers has recently become an explosive political issue throughout the developed

world. It also follows that term ‘immigrant’ needs careful decoding. Popular hostility is relatively rarely directed at those who arrive from elsewhere in the developed world (the so-called North), or indeed at those with advanced professional and technical qualifications from the otherwise poverty-stricken South – always provided that they only arrive in ones and twos. In contrast the ‘real’ immigrants, or in other words those who are the focus of popular concern, are those whose roots lie in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and who arrive *en masse* to fulfil menial roles in Northern labour market. Even though there may be a ready market for their labour, such migrants find themselves subjected to ever tighter restrictions, on the grounds that their presence offers an unacceptable threat to the integrity of the established socio-cultural order, and hence to national integrity.

### A View from Below

Southern perspectives on these issues differ radically from that which has crystallised in the North. Those who view these processes ‘from below’ are invariably acutely aware that the current processes of globalisation did not emerge in the context of a homogeneous world order: rather they took off just as the condition of hegemonic prosperity which the populations of Euro-America had begun to take for granted were the product of two centuries of Imperial expansion, and now that the imperial edifice was on its last legs, the centre of gravity of the global economy had begun to shift back to the regions in which it had lain for several thousand years beforehand: in southern and eastern Asia. For Euro-Americans the result of this reversion is proving to be traumatic. Hubristically convinced of their own necessary superiority, they failed to appreciate just the extent to which their now liberated southern and eastern rivals were not only borrowing Euro-America’s recent scientific and technical achievements, but playing them back in spades. By continuing to trade in goods, rather being seduced by make-believe potentiality of Ponzi schemes, Asia (although not the South as a whole) has found itself holding most of the cash, whilst Euro-America has found itself holding most of the debt. Nemesis had struck. However seemingly invincible the forces of globalisation from above might have appeared to its hubristic beneficiaries, the counter-hegemonic forces of globalisation ‘from below’ are steadily eroding the positions of advantage which they had come to regard as their by right.

From that perspective there is indeed a logic to current patterns of hostility towards ‘immigrants’. Just as the shift in manufacturing from west to east has led to millions of industrial workers in Euro-America losing their well-paid jobs, so the arrival of large

numbers of long-distance labour migrants able and willing to fulfil the menial tasks which indigenous workers had been only too willing to abandon in the years of prosperity has confronted them with a new sort of *local* competition as recession has set in. Worse still, migrants of peasant origin, and whose entrepreneurial capacities who had not been eroded by generations of reliance on the comfort and security of wages labour, have proved far more successful at operating on their own account in innumerable small businesses than their now-redundant indigenous counterparts.

In structural terms both developments have had similar distributive consequences: a diminution of the established patterns of inequality between North and South, achieved by means of a redistribution of material assets from (some) Northerners to (some) Southerners. Viewed ‘from below’ such developments appear to be nothing more than welcome benefits which have accrued as result of wholly legitimate self-resources competitive initiatives; meanwhile those self-same developments are routinely regarded as illegitimately transgressive when viewed from above. However the purpose of this Chapter is not to expand further on these dialectic processes in abstract terms, but rather to explore the specific resources and strategies on which South Asian migrants have relied to achieve these results, as well as the institutional strategies which the UK authorities have recently begun to deploy to contain and control their counter-hegemonic initiatives.

### Across the *kala pani*: the growth of South Asian transnational networks

Despite the injunctions of Brahminical orthodoxy which suggested that those who left the shores of Bharat and crossed the *kala pani* to overseas destination would suffer a loss of purity by so doing, South Asians had been contravening that principle for many centuries before Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Long-distance travels around the Indian Ocean, as well as back and forth across the passes of the Himalayas were already a feature of the South Asian world long before the beginning of European activity in the region (Chaudhury 1985). Unfortunately those who travelled beyond the shores of the subcontinent to engaged in such journeys left far fewer records of their experiences than did incoming visitors such as Al Biruni and Ibn Batuta from the Arabic-speaking world and Fa Hsiang from China; nevertheless the scale of Indic influence – no less in Hindu than Buddhist formats – over a great arc running from central Asia through Japan and China to southeast Asia and Indonesia provides indisputable evidence that the traffic was by no means one-way.

Much of that traffic was seaborne, and was carried around the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea through long-distance mercantile networks which were already well-established in Roman times. But it was only with the emergence of Islam in the seventh century C.E., and with it the rapid adoption of the new faith by many of the traders operating out of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf on the long haul to Daybol, Calicut and onwards through the straights of Malacca to Canton that we begin to have access to records (in Arabic) which enable us to gain an insight into the ways in which such networks operated (Chaudhury 1985: 34 ff).

Long-distance trade of this kind has always been a specialist operation, especially during the lengthy period prior to the availability of instant global communication by electronic means. In addition to knowledge of the location and character market opportunities in a wide swathe of locations, successful merchants also needed to find some way of constructing coalitions of mutual trust to sustain the financial logistics of their spatially extended operations (Ballard 2005), an objective which they regularly achieved by establishing collateral branches of their families in all the major ports in which they did business. Networks constructed on this basis emerged from a wide range of localities throughout the region, including Christians from Armenia, Jews from Baghdad, Muslims from Basra and the Yemen, Hindus from Gujarat and Malabar, and Chinese from Fujian. So it was that by the time the initial harbingers of future European Imperial dominance found their way into the Indian Ocean, substantial colonies of transnational<sup>1</sup> entrepreneurs could be found in all the region's major trading hubs.

But whilst the process of European imperial expansion was also transnational in a similar sense, the networks through which these processes were implemented were quite different in character. In the first place they were invariably commercially and military operations operating under a Royal (and monopolistic) *imprimatur*; secondly their ships were invariably equipped with heavy weapons, such they were frequently able to contract the trading deals under military duress; thirdly the interpersonal relationships between those engaged in such enterprises were ordered in contractual terms, rather than being grounded in kinship reciprocity; and last but not least they preferred to treat 'the natives' whom they encountered with infinite disdain, because they failed to appreciate the intrinsic superiority of Christianity, and the allegedly enlightened civilization which they held that their beliefs supported.

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that the use of the term 'transnational' in the period prior to European expansion, or even prior to the early nineteenth century should be regarded as an anachronism, since nation-states in the contemporary sense were unknown in the earlier period. Hence trans-local, or perhaps better still trans-jurisdictional could well be a more appropriate epithet for *all* networks of this kind.

But despite their hegemonic aspiration, the early European transnationalists soon found that their targets were not a push-over, especially in the Indian Ocean region. Despite the weight of arms which they brought with them, they found they had little in the way of tradable goods to offer counterparties – at least until the opening up of the silver mines of Potosí gave them access to what amounted to 'free-money' (Frank 1998). Hence the most significant initial impact of their arrival in Indian Ocean region was to boost the level of liquidity in both the Indian and Chinese economies, and hence to expand the scale of the manufacturing activity – particularly in the sphere of textiles and ceramics – in the entire region. Nevertheless the Europeans were never content with mere trade: their ultimate objective was domination, not just of the seas, but the land as well. However it took several centuries before the growing might of European military technology enabled them to make substantial progress on the latter front, and not until the beginning of the nineteenth century that European manufacturing capabilities finally overwhelmed those of India and China.

However the imposition of Imperial hegemony swiftly proved to be a double edged sword. Whilst its downside began cut deeply into indigenous manufacturing capacity, and appeared at first sight to have entirely overwhelmed all the region's indigenous long-distance trading networks, which were soon reduced to peripheralised shadows of their former selves, all was not lost. In due course *Pax Britannica* opened up a host of novel entrepreneurial opportunities of which Her Britannic Majesty's new-found subjects of began to take active advantage. However the precise basis on which this occurred varied from region to region.

Hence in his study of 'the ways in which two groups of South Asian merchants managed to carve themselves a niche in a European-dominated world economy' Markovits (2000) echoes the observations of Pan (1994) for the Chinese when he emphasises that emigration did not take not take the form of a generalised outflow from across the length breadth of the subcontinent. Rather he shows that it was initially confined to areas such as Sindh, Saurashtra, Gujarat and Kerala, all of which had been the home base of a multiplicity of long-distance trading networks in the pre-Imperial period. Pan makes the same point with respect to Fukien and Kwangtung. Nor was the outflow generalised in these narrower regional contexts either. Rather the entrepreneurs were invariably based in specific towns and villages, and very often specific castes as well. Moreover in the South Asian context virtually all the early migrants shared a common historical background in banking and business activity – no matter whether they were drawn from Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Parsee or Hindu

communities. And whilst the recruitment base undoubtedly grew wider during the course of the twentieth century to include those whose traditional occupational role was either as craftsmen or peasant farmers, prior connectivity remained crucial. Hence when mass migration took off from the middle of the twentieth century onwards largely in a response to demands of more or less unskilled labour in the Middle East and Western Europe, those who took off were either drawn from the same areas along the coast of western India from which their trading predecessors were drawn, or failing that from equally specific locations in Punjab and Bengal, largely as a result of a series of highly specific contingencies which had led British steamships companies to recruit stokers from each of these regions from the 1880s onwards (Ballard 2003).

In South Asia no less than China each such migrant outflow developed separately, in a manner which was initially largely dependent on specific set of local contingencies; but once set in motion such the processes remained unstoppable. Escalators of chain migration which first started rolling decades ago are for the most part still active to this day. This raises a pressing question: just what was the character underlying resources which drove and maintained the internal structure of these transcontinental networks?

### Translocal networks

Although Markovits does not manage to produce a full solution to this conundrum – most probably because of the limited character of the information which could be squeezed from the historical sources on which relies – his analysis nevertheless goes a long way towards identifying its most salient features. First of all he highlights the dynamic characteristics of these networks as:

Structure[s] through which goods, credit, capital and men circulate regularly across a given space which can vary enormously in terms of both size and accessibility. A network generally consists of a centre, a locality or a cluster of localities where capital is raised and where capitalists have their main place of residence, and of dispersed colonies of merchants and commercial employees which keep close links with the network centre.

Between the network centre, on the one hand, and the dispersed colonies, on the other hand, goods, but also men (and sometimes women), credit and information circulate. While goods may also circulate widely outside the network (otherwise there would not be any exchange), men, credit and information circulate almost exclusively within it...

It is the capacity of the merchants to maintain a constant flow of information within the network that ensures its success. This means two things: first, that 'leaks' have to be avoided as much as possible to the outside world, secondly, that information must

circulate smoothly within the network, both spatially and temporally, as it gets transmitted from one generation to another... The most successful merchant networks have been those most able to process information into a body of knowledge susceptible of continuous refinement.

On this basis he then goes on to discuss the most crucial issues of all in such circumstances: credibility and credit. As he puts it

.... credit circulates within the network, generally at rates which are lower than the market rate, and without collateral. This opens up the delicate question of trust. ... We are told that preferential rates and the absence of collateral are explained by the existence of a bond of trust between the lender and the borrower. The existence of this bond of trust is in its turn generally related to kinship, caste and community (Markovits 2000: 25).

But just how and on what basis are these bonds of trust maintained? Markovits gives careful consideration to the available options, but finds them all wanting. Whilst he accepts that kinship is an essential ingredient of all such networks, he nevertheless concludes that its importance can be exaggerated, on the grounds of his observation that business partnerships are often concluded between non-kin, albeit most usually still between men who belong to the same community. Likewise he dismisses the prospect that religion, at least in its wider categorical sense, might be the foundation for such bonds of trust:

neither Hindu nor Muslim merchants represented homogenous entities. Between the strongly institutionalized religion of the Nattukottai Chettiar bankers, whose Shaivite temples served as clearing-houses, and the much more fluid religious universe of the Sind Hindu merchants, there was very little in common, [even though both] ... could be defined as 'Hindus'.

The same diversity is perceptible among Muslim merchants; between the religious practices and social institutions of the Shi'a merchants, both Khoja and Bohra, and those of Sunni merchants, there was also a wide gap. Even among Sunnis, Memons clearly differentiated themselves from other groups (*ibid.* 26).

Yet despite his well-taken scepticism of explanatory theses grounded in generalised assertions about the common characteristics of 'Hindus', 'Muslims', 'Gujaratis' and so forth, one point stands out with clarity in the midst of his careful analysis: the roots of almost every network he examines is invariably intensely *parochial* in character, no matter how global its diasporic tentacles may subsequently have become.

But whilst Pan makes just the same point about Chinese networks, there is one additional feature of parochiality which has had (and continues to have) a major impact in Indic contexts: South Asian migrants' deep-rooted commitment to endogamy, no less on sectarian grounds than those of caste, as a result of which marital ties have played an exceptionally salient role in the development and maintenance of their translocal networks.

### The maintenance of trust and reciprocity in the absence of face-to-face interaction

In normal circumstances the patterns of trust and reciprocity which underpin all our most significant social relationships are played out within, and hence regularly renewed as a result of, face-to-face interactions. However the moment inter-personal networks become spatially extended, such face-to-face interactions on a quotidian basis will of necessity come to a halt – with the result that there is a very real prospect that patterns of trust and reciprocity once sustained by such interactions will steadily weaken, so much so that they may ultimately fall into abeyance. How, then, can the prospect of such an outcome be countered in long-distance transnational networks?

Of all the relationships in which we participate, those of kinship are amongst the most resistant to erosion in the face of absence of face-to-face personal contact. But in the absence of any kind of communication even they will tend to wane in significance as the years pass by. It follows that regular communication of some kind is prerequisite for the maintenance of such relationships, which can thereby be sustained even if direct face-to-face contact is postponed for years or even decades. This is where Markovits' emphasis on the dynamic character of successful long-distance networks is so crucial: it is precisely the many forms of *circulation* which such networks facilitate which accounts for their resilience. In this respect my own observations suggest that one particular form of circulation has been a salient feature of South Asian network: that of women. If males are the initial pioneers – as has almost invariably been the case in South Asian diasporic contexts – by far the best way by means of those left back home can ensure the continued loyalty of those settled overseas, and by means of which those settled overseas can likewise ensure that they still have a secure place back home despite their absence, is by making appropriate marriages, both on their own behalf, and behalf of their offspring. In other words it is marriage alliances – or to put it another way the circulation of women as between all the available nodes in the network – offers a highly effective means of ensuring their integrity over the generations. All this also has counter-intuitive consequences: far from undermining the strength of kinship bonds, spatial separation often *reinforces* their significance, especially when they provide the foundation of actively articulated translocal networks.

Given that long distance migration is normally much more of a collective than an individual exercise, transnational networks routinely develop their own dynamic. It is easy to see why

that should be so. In well-articulated networks every participant has reason to regard network-membership as a valuable asset. Beside providing all involved with access to a constantly developing range of entrepreneurial opportunities, their capacity to facilitate the long-distance circulation of capital, credit, information and reliable manpower yet further reinforces their capacity to make the most of novel opportunities, whenever and wherever they occur within their network's translocally extended arena. The result of all this serves to promote what Greif (1989) identified – on the basis of his exploration of the business practices of mediaeval Jewish traders operating across the length and breadth of the Maghreb – as *self-regulating coalitions of reciprocity*. However there is nothing specifically mediaeval about coalitions of this kind. Besides being widely cited by scholars exploring contemporary trading structures, I myself have found his model extremely illuminating in the course of my analyses of the operation of contemporary Hawala networks (Ballard 2005, 2006).

In more abstract terms specific characteristics of Greif's analysis of the significance of coalition membership are worth noting at this stage:

- i. *Membership of such a coalition is a valuable asset*: it gives access to all manner of opportunities denied to outsiders.
- ii. *Failure to fulfil ones obligations of reciprocity is potentially catastrophic*: loss of coalition membership leads to exclusion from those opportunities
- iii. *The resultant sanctions are as spatially extended as the network itself*: all the transgressor's kinsfolk, wherever they are resident, are likely to find themselves branded as untrustworthy unless they also publicly distance themselves from the transgressor.

It is precisely these intertwined processes of positive and negative feedback that underpin the capacity of such coalitions to self-regulate themselves, even in situations where face-to-face interactions between major players in the network are relatively rare.

It follows that the use of coalitions of reciprocity to build and maintain spatially extended networks is in no sense a novelty, or phenomenon unique to South Asia: rather all such networks invariably have a long history behind them, and such developments can in principle be expected to be a universal phenomenon. Nevertheless the speed of their emergence as well as the course and character of their subsequent trajectories are conditioned by three key variables: firstly the ease and effective with the resources of their members prior cultural capital can be deployed and reinterpreted to facilitate the process of network construction; secondly the patterns of opportunity and constraint present in the socio-economic niche into

which they launch their initiative; and secondly the wholly unpredictable contingencies which alerted those in the right place at the right time to the opportunities – or to put it more explicitly the potentially exploitable niches – available at some distant destination. Significant processes of network building, whether on a trans-local, a trans-national or a trans-continental scale, will only occur when all three of these variables are favourably configured; and given that the wider socio-economic environment is subject to constant change as Empires rise and fall, they must also have the good fortune to strike when the time is ripe.

However over and above all these specificities, a common element in all such structures is the maintenance of relationships of mutual trust and reciprocity amongst network members. It follows that such structures are at least as much moral as economic in character; moreover all by observations suggest that such a sense of moral solidarity is most easily founded in reciprocities of kinship, or alternatively in common religious – more precisely sectarian – affiliation. Not only does this obviate the need to create a moral order from scratch, since this one of the key elements of their cultural capital on which migrants invariably rely, but it also provides a ready foundation for further network-extension. Hence far from eroding the force of kinship reciprocity, the long-distance extension of such relationships within the context of transnational networks invariably adds significantly to their force, since they now have an additional purpose to fulfil: to sustain the structure of the network itself. Moreover kinship is a much more fluid phenomenon than is commonly appreciated. Hence in translocal contexts relationships of quasi-kinship – in which those who encounter each other in distant contexts build relationships of reciprocity between themselves *as if* they were much more closely related than they are in genetic terms – is a commonplace feature of trans-local networks, especially during their early phases of development. Moreover such alliances can readily be turned into relationships of real kinship marry their offspring to one another.

Nevertheless if the carrot-and-stick dimensions of coalitions of reciprocity are to operate effectively, clear boundaries also need to be established. Here a further dimension of Indic behavioural conventions comes into their own: the widespread commitment to caste endogamy. Hence the rules of endogamy are invariably just as strictly (if not more strictly) enforced in diasporic contexts as in South Asia itself. Sectarian loyalties frequently serve just the same function. *Tariqa*-based networks, in which faithful *murids* are bound together by

virtue of their common spiritual loyalty to a charismatic *Sheikh* or *Pir*, have regularly emerged within, and driven the development of, a multiplicity Islamic transnational networks.

### **Changing times, changing opportunities**

Even though there is every reason to believe that numerous trans-local networks spread out from South Asia across the Indian Ocean in all directions few significant records survive of their activities the period prior to arrival of the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century. As the Portuguese were subsequently joined by Dutch, English and French entrepreneurs, the region's indigenous networks were slowly but surely pushed to the periphery – only to expand once again within the hegemonic context of European Imperium. Whilst Markovits and a host of fellow-historians such as Timberger (1978), Subramanian (2005) and White (1995) have profitably ransacked the imperial archives in order to illuminate the development of mercantile networks during this period of European ascendancy, from the late nineteenth century a new phenomenon began to emerge: long-distance voluntary migration to fill vacant niches in the labour market, initially in tropical locations in parts of Britain's overseas empire, and in the aftermath of the second World War, in the imperial homeland itself. Similar developments also took place in all the other European states who had successfully constructed similar global empires.

On the face of it the agendas pursued by South Asia's labour migrants, as well as the niches which they initially sought to colonise, differ strikingly in character from those pursued by their mercantile predecessors. But before hardening up this categorical distinction, several key factors are worth noting. On the one hand the niches into which free labour migrants (as opposed to their indentured counterparts) inserted themselves underwent gradual expansion, such that metropolitan opportunities only opened up on a significant scale in the aftermath of the second World War; and on the other the labour migrants, and especially those who went overseas as fare-paying 'passengers' rather than as indentured servants soon proved to be no less entrepreneurial in their outlook than their merchant counterparts. To be sure they started out with far less in the way of capital resources, but once the second generation began to enter overseas labour markets the strategic initiatives deployed by those standing on each side of this initially fundamental divide became swiftly began to fade. The reasons for this are quite straightforward. The specific character of the strategies deployed by those punching their way upward 'from below' is of necessity determined by the character of the more-or-

less empty niches overseas which they manage firstly to identify, and then to progressively colonise; likewise their tactical success in exploiting the opportunities so identifies is largely determined by their capacity to deploy the resources of their cultural capital – and above all their capacity for network-building – as a means of making the most of them. If those resources are to a large extent a function of the regionally specific conventions of kinship and marriage which those involved routinely deployed, regardless of whether their families' prior occupation was as merchants, peasant-farmers or as skilled craftsmen, such a convergence could only be expected to occur once the processes of colony construction got firmly under way.

However this is not to suggest that such tactical convergence led to the disappearance of the underlying disjunctions. Far from it: since the patterns of reciprocity remained firmly network-based, and since their intrinsically parochial character was further reinforced by endogamous marriages within each of them, alliances between parallel networks were slow to develop. So it is that even to this day the majority of South Asian transnational networks remain remarkably caste and *biraderi* specific. What is equally striking is that whilst these endogamous disjunctions have been sustained across the board, the character of the entrepreneurial strategies adopted by members of networks with similar regional roots – such as the Gujaratis, the Punjabis, the Potoharis, the Sylhetis and the Ismaelis – are broadly similar in each case.

How are such differentials best explained? One popular approach is to rely on self-serving and hugely generalised stereotypes, to the effect, for example, that Gujaratis are inherently 'business-minded', while Punjabis and Pathans are 'militaristic', whilst the Sylhetis have a unique commitment to cookery. In my view such tautologies obscure far more than they illuminate. A better approach is one which takes explicit cognisance of the localised features of cultural capital on which migrants from specific regions were in a position to draw, together with their equally specific historical and environmental contingencies with which they found themselves confronted. From that perspective two sets of resources have been of particular significance. Firstly the characteristics of the local economy (both historical and contemporary) from which the migrant outflow emerged, and secondly the varied ways in which emigrants drew on their conventions of kinship and marriage as they set about constructing their translocal networks (see Ballard 2003, 1983).

### **Kinship, marriage and network construction**

From this perspective those emigrants who emerged from communities within which multi-generational extended households were the order of the day, and especially those households which are patrilineally extended descent groups – as is the case in much of northern India (see, for example Kessinger 1978) – found themselves equipped with a ready-made template around which to construct such networks. But although this in no way precluded members of communities whose households were less strongly corporate in character, and where descent groups are much less well developed (as amongst the Sylhetis (Gardner 1995) for example) from becoming transnationally active. However the difference had a significant impact on the speed and efficiency with which they constructed global networks, such that those constructed by Punjabis turned out to be substantially more immediately resourceful than were their Sylheti counterparts.

But whilst pre-existent ties of patrilineal descent provided an extremely convenient framework around which to build translocal networks during the pioneering (and hence usually all-male) phases of expansion, no less for merchants than for their labour-migrant successors, the maintenance construction of fully fledged ethnic colonies – as opposed to mere outposts – could never be achieved on an all-male basis. As the provision of institutional stability to their networking enterprises became a matter of ever greater priority, so ties of marriage came to be viewed as just as a valuable resource as those of descent. There were two main reasons for this. Once migrants brought their wives overseas to join them – instead of taking periodic furloughs back to their home base – fully fledged households began to emerge at their destination. But whilst family reunion brought overseas colonies to life as never before, in no way did this lead to translocal connections falling into abeyance. On the contrary there was a strong sense in which they were actively reinforced. Existing connections were doubled up, since wives invariably remained in contact with their own natal kin, but the birth of children opened up the possibility of developing further strategic ties once offspring reached marriageable age.

Whilst such strategic alliances were initially largely utilised as a means of maintaining bilateral ties between each colony and its home base, once networks expanded to include a multiplicity of colonies, marriage could be used to construct strategically valuable ties between them, and hence yet further facilitate the circulation of personnel within the network.

Indeed in those communities in which inter-colony linkages became particularly intense – as for example amongst the Khoja and Bohra Ismaili Muslims whose original home-base was in Karachi – their scale and frequency became so strong that they began to move ‘offshore’, such that their centre of gravity moved from the West coast of India to East Africa, and thence to the west coast of North America.

What is also striking is the extent to which these developments were further conditioned by an issue which we have not as yet explored: the precise format of the marriage rules deployed within each such community. Amongst the Hindus, Sikhs and Jains of northern India, and amongst many of the upper caste Hindu groups who converted to Islam, marriage rules not only require endogamy within the caste, but proscribe marriages with members of one’s own patrilineal descent group, and very often with anyone drawn from one’s mother’s and mother’s mother’s decent group as well. When marriages with anyone remotely recognisable as kinsfolk are proscribed, it not only follows that all marriages have to be negotiated from scratch, but also that all marriages are significantly translocal – at least in the sense that brides are routinely recruited from families resident in villages lying some distance away from those in which they come to join their husbands and in-laws.

By contrast many Muslim communities, and most especially those resident in the northern parts of what is now Pakistan follow a quite different set of conventions. In these contexts marriage rules are closely conjoined with the rules of incest, with the result that whilst sexual relationships with the close kin specified in Leviticus are proscribed as illegitimate, marriage with cousins of all kinds are not only permissible, but actively encouraged. Indeed in many such communities well over 50% of marriages take place between cousins.<sup>2</sup> Where this is so most marriages are anything but trans-local: on the contrary they are much more likely to take place with the girl next door. But whilst the presence of these marriage rules has in no way inhibited members of such communities from constructing transnational networks (Ballard 2008, Charsley 2007, Shaw 2000), they have nevertheless had a very significant impact on the way in which those networks have developed over time. Hence whilst ‘offshore’ marriage alliances fairly rapidly became the norm in communities where all such unions had to be negotiated afresh, as is the case where marriage with close kin is proscribed, in those where marriages between cousins is the norm overseas settlers have found

<sup>2</sup> Although their marriage rules are not derived from Levitical specifications, the Parsees likewise have no objection to marriages between cousins.

themselves under intense pressure to arrange their children’s marriages with the offspring of their siblings back home, with the result off-shore (as opposed to back-home) unions have so far remained a great deal less frequent – all of which has had strong differential impact on patterns of adaptation and upward mobility as between the two sets of communities (Ballard 1990, 2003a, 2003b).

Last but not least it is also worth noting that such strategic marriage alliances are by no means necessarily driven solely by parental preferences, even when they result in marriages between overseas-based spouses and with cousins who have grown up in deepest rural Pakistan (Shaw and Charsley 2006). Likewise as Raj records in her study of Punjabi Hindu Khatri and Brahmin families based in London, but who trace their origins to towns and cities which have been located in Pakistan since 1947, long-established patterns of endogamy are still as strongly supported by young people themselves as they are by their parents. Indeed in their case it is the youngsters as much as the elders who lead the search for suitable spouses, frequently through specialist on-line matrimonial sites with a global span. As she goes on to note:

The transnational nature of these advertisements is also apparent in their reference to origins (from Africa), to workplace (working for a US. company in the United Kingdom), and to choice of potential spouse (United Kingdom or United States). It is also relevant that this might implicate how they wish their culture to be perceived, and indeed how they perceive themselves as variously Indian, multicultural (Punjabi/West), Indian (Punjabi), and Punjabi. (Raj 2002: 105 ff)

What is abundantly clear from her analysis is that the HPs, as they often describe themselves, now form a necessarily off-shore community, in the sense that their homeland West Punjab has been inaccessible for half a century. ) Hence even though the vast majority of HPs have by now never set eyes on their homeland, they are nevertheless acutely aware of the distinctiveness of the community into which they have been born. Nevertheless their on-going commitment to endogamy is by no means solely grounded to a sentimental commitment to the maintenance of its integrity. Rather as Raj graphically demonstrates it is at least as much grounded in an acute awareness of the extent to which such marriages can facilitate further movements upwards and outwards – not least to the United States. Not that this is anything new. In pre-British days the Khatri of West Punjab maintained trading networks stretched up through the Khyber Pass, across the Hindu Kush and into central Asia. The ethnic cleansing of West Punjab was a wholly unexpected contingency. Nevertheless their networking capabilities saved the day: they may have been an ancient art, but they also proved to be equally adaptive to contemporary conditions, especially for those of their



members (by now almost certainly the majority) who are both highly educated and professionally well-qualified.

### **Indentured labourers**

The significance of kinship in the construction and maintenance of translocal networks is further underlined – albeit in negative terms – in the case of those who left the shores of the subcontinent on a less than voluntary basis: those recruited as indentured labourers to provide an alternative source of labour power to that of slaves for large-scale initiatives in tropical agriculture in British colonial possessions such as Mauritius, South Africa, Guyana, Trinidad and Fiji. Besides being drawn from poorer sections of the population that their ‘passenger’ (or in other words fare-paying) counterparts, indentured labourers were recruited, transported and set to work according to the priorities of those to whom they had indentured themselves; and since they were mere units of labour as far as their masters were concerned, their own priorities counted for nothing until they managed to unbind themselves from the ties of indenture in which they were entangled. Since this did not usually occur until at least a decade after their arrival at their destination, and often for much longer, the cultural capital available to such ‘coolies’ was invariably in much poorer shape – especially in terms of the degree to which they had been able to maintain active networks of kinship reciprocity – than who had constructed their own self-sustaining escalators of chain migration, so enabling them to move overseas as ‘passengers’.

Hence even though the heirs of the indentured labourers did eventually construct ethnic colonies whose internal structure continued to owe a great deal to their subcontinental heritage, they were invariably much more Creole in character. Moreover the key element of the social architecture of the colonies constructed by their more autonomous counterparts – translocally extended networks of kinship reciprocity – was and indeed remains much more feebly articulated in their case. Hence there are excellent reasons for concluding that the relatively restricted degree of upward socio-economic mobility which has so far been achieved by members of ‘coolie’ communities can be traced to their inability to tap into this vital resource.

### **Big Business**

Although long salient within the subcontinent itself, during the course of the last two decades a series of Indian-rooted but formally constituted transnational enterprises have leapt into prominent positions in the global commercial order. To be sure Ispat Steel, Tata Enterprises and the Reliance Industries have not yet matched corporations such as Shell or Exxon in scale: nevertheless they are immediately recognisable as multi-national corporations – almost all of which had hitherto had Euro-American roots – of the kind which have come to dominate the global economic order. Their appearance raises an immediate question: how far has their success been grounded in the deployment of similar strategies to those which we have so far been exploring?

Some parallels are immediately apparent, not least because the communities from which the great majority of the initiatives have emerged (Marwari, Parsee and Gujarati Bania in the cases cited) were in any event precisely those which have long been heavily engaged in trans-local and transnational commercial activities: in other words they have been following well-worn paths, albeit with unprecedented success. Moreover it is quite clear that during the early phases of business expansion, virtually all such enterprises made extensive use of kin and community-based networks of reciprocity to provide the core of their organisational structure; indeed the inner core of most such enterprises is still structured in precisely that way to this day. Nevertheless once such enterprises grow to a certain scale, it becomes impossible – and indeed commercially inefficient – to continue to order recruitment on such a particularistic fashion. Merit must ultimately out-trump connectedness if such businesses are to survive. Nevertheless there are strong indications that the recruitment strategies of most South Asian transnational corporations is such that the vast majority of those filling managerial and executive positions in overseas locations (as well as those located in the subcontinent itself) are themselves of South Asian origin.

Of course the Indian educational system – often supplemented by post-graduate studies in the US or Australia – now produces a plethora of well-educated professionals. Merit is consequently a relatively plentiful commodity. Nevertheless there are good reasons to believe that there are further factors at work here: namely that the patterns of mutual interaction which the staff of such enterprises are expected to maintain as between one another are grounded in a much greater sense of mutual reciprocity, as well of hierarchy, than anything

which would normally be found within the context of a Euro-American multinational corporation. In other words the behaviours associated with South Asian conventions of quasi-kinship appear to play a key role in the managerial and executive structures of multi-national corporations currently emerging from below, so much so that there good reasons for supposing that they play go a long way towards explaining the source of the competitive advantage which has precipitated their commercial success.

This argument can also be played the other way round. One of the key features of the success of multinational corporations during the course of the twentieth century has been their capacity to facilitate the circulation of goods, credit, capital, manpower and profits to the collective advantage of the corporation as a whole – precisely the features which Markovits identifies as being characteristic of merchant networks operating in and around the Indian Ocean. With this in mind it is also underscoring a point which has been implicit in the discussion so far: that all such networks, whether they operate trans-locally or trans-jurisdictionally, hegemonically ‘from above’ or transgressively ‘from below’, no matter whether they are set in historical or contemporary contexts, all set out to pursue precisely the same multifaceted circulatory objectives.

### **The impact of the post-colonial world order**

However even if there is nothing new about the operation of such networks themselves, the context within which they operate has recently changed dramatically, and not just in terms of radical advances in communications technology. Following the collapse of all the worlds’ empires – including that of Russia – there has been a veritable explosion in the number of nation states, all of whom fiercely guard their jurisdictional autonomy. Hence if international activity has increased by leaps and bounds during the course of the past half century, it is at least in part because the globe is transected by a quite unprecedented number of national boundaries, all of which provide substantial opportunities for arbitrage. In these circumstances trans-local arenas have come into their own in an unprecedented fashion, since they can now be utilised to transfer goods, credit, capital, manpower across the innumerable national boundaries and financial jurisdictions to their members’ advantage. This has led to a further transformation in the character of the world order.

As Beck has noted this new order has enabled transnational corporations to gain access to what he describes as a ‘translegal’ arena, in which they can conduct their business on an autonomous basis without formally contravening any laws, and without the consent of any specific parliament or government. He goes on to expand his point thus:

Translegal means *transnational* meta-power, inasmuch as the latter reflects and systematically exploits the cooperative advantages and hidden niches of different national legal systems for purposes of expanding global business power (Beck 2006: 72).

But whilst Beck presents his argument in terms of the achievements of formally constituted multi-national corporations operating hegemonically from above, all manner of other trans-local networks have also begun to exploit the opportunities for arbitrage as between those self-same inter-jurisdictional niches. There is, however, one vital difference between the two. Whilst the activities of Euro-American multinational corporations are for the most part regarded with approbation, at least by the representatives of what currently passes as ‘the international community’, similar strategies deployed from other sources, and most especially those emanating ‘from below’, are viewed from a quite different perspective. Far from being granted the benefit of the doubt, such networks – and especially those constructed by and on behalf of migrant workers – they have come to be viewed with ever-increasing alarm, especially by those who view themselves as representatives of the ‘international community’. As a result ever more extensive efforts are currently being made to constrain, and indeed to criminalise the translegal strategies on which members of such groups have relied in the process of augmenting their growing transgressive, rather than hegemonic, trans-jurisdictional meta-power. Not that this should come as any great surprise: it is political interests, rather than any kind of concern for equity and justice, which are the primary source of the contemporary driving forces in this arena.

That multinational corporations take extensive advantage of their translegal status to deploy strategies of transfer pricing to ensure that bulk of their profits emerge in conveniently low-taxed jurisdictions is well known (Baker 2005, Chang 2007); likewise the staff of multinational institutions encounter no significant visa restrictions as they move around between their globally distributed local offices: indeed as processes of globalisation from above spread ever more widely, the presence of such branches is invariably regarded as a sign of progress, as localities which had previously been regarded as backwaters can at long last feel that they have placed themselves ‘on the map’ as far as global activity is concerned. Hence only the most churlish of nationalists now refuse to welcome such representatives of

‘international’ business. However parallel initiatives ‘from below’ are invariably viewed as far less welcome. So in world increasingly committed to the ideology free trade promulgated by the World Trade Organisation, how can such transnational initiatives ‘from below’ be successfully – and above all *legally* – repulsed?

### **Formal and Informal networks in a post 9/11 world**

Although contemporary Euro-American transnational networks typically bear down from above, most particularly with respect to the global South, whilst those emanating from the South strike transgressively upward from below, their objectives in each case are very similar: namely to stretch their tentacles into whatever niches in the global economy their members have the skills and resources to exploit, to the collective material benefit of network members. How then, can non-discriminatory legal structures be developed in such a way to promote – or at least to turn a blind eye – to the activities of the former, whilst also providing a legitimate means of curbing and/or criminalising the latter?

The solution to that conundrum that has recently begun to crystallise is most illuminating, since it largely overlooks the functional purpose of such transactions – the transfer of capital, goods and personnel across national boundaries with the minimal level of interference from state authorities – but focuses instead on the structural character of the networks through which they are implemented. Hence whilst the activities of networks which are organised as formally constituted and audited corporations are routinely regarded as *ipso facto* legitimate, and continue to be so regarded despite the endlessly contorted internal structures they regularly devise to avoid significant external scrutiny. By contrast transactions implemented through networks which are not fully legally incorporated from end to end, and instead rely on informal relationships of mutual reciprocity to achieve exactly the same ends, are allowed no such privileges. Instead such ‘shadowy’, ‘underground’ and ‘unaccountable’ networks are regularly regarded as inherently suspicious and potentially criminal.

These tendencies reached their apotheosis in the immediate after of 9/11, which saw the passage on the USA PATRIOT Act (whose full title is *Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism*), which was passed into law Congress less than two months of the collapse of the twin towers. One of the central purposes of the act was to criminalise the operation of such networks, not just within

the U.S., but on a global scale. From our perspective there sections of the Act are of particular significance: Title III, Title IV, and Title VIII.

### *Title III: The International Money Laundering Abatement and Financial Anti-Terrorism Act*

The most significant innovation introduced by this section of the Act was the introduction of a swathe of ‘know your customer’ regulations with which all banks – not just those operating within the United States, but also all overseas banks who maintained correspondent accounts with US banks, record, and where necessary to make available to the authorities, the personal details of all the customers on whose behalf they transferred funds across their jurisdictional borders via New York. Since the US dollar is currently the global medium exchange, the central consequence of this rule that was all Banks who wished to continue participating in the global banking system found themselves required to followed US regulatory prescriptions, and to place themselves in a position where they could provide US regulators with details of the originator and the ultimate beneficiary of all the cross-jurisdictional value transfers.

By way of comment it is worth noting that this initiative can usefully be seen as a form of trans-jurisdictional network extension, such all those non-US banks (and a host of other financial agencies) which maintained correspondent accounts on Wall Street were also required to place themselves in a position where they could vouch for the credibility and the respectability of all their customers. As a result the ‘bad guys’ – including those people for whose personal reliability local banks could not confidently vouch – would find themselves excluded from access to legitimate trans-jurisdictional financial networks.

The nominal objective of this new global regulatory structure was to lay bare the financial sinews which underpinned an emergent global threat: drugs smuggling and terrorism, whose networks the US authorities had so far been unable, *pace* 9/11, to penetrate. However those with their ears close to the ground soon realised that those most vulnerable to finding themselves charged with ‘currency crimes’ were operators in the IVTS/Hawala sector had begun to expand the transfer of remittances of migrant workers who had established themselves in the prosperous North to their kinsfolk in the impoverished South into a multi-billion dollar industry, largely because the services they provided were cheaper, swifter and more convenient than those on offer from formally constituted banks. However neither the

US nor the UK authorities were much interested in theses of this kind. Instead they took their cue from the Patriot Act, and insisted that these networks primary function was to enable terrorists and drug-smugglers criminals could launder their ill-gotten assets. Goaded by FinCEN, an agency of the US Treasury, the authorities on both sides of the Atlantic began to switch their attention from Terrorists and Drugs Smugglers (whom they were finding it exceedingly difficult to track down) towards a much more accessible surrogate, the value transfer operators themselves. From this perspective the anti-money laundering provisions of the Patriot Act have met with considerable success, in the sense that they have provided the authorities in both the USA and the UK to prosecute local agents of IVTS/Hawala systems as 'money-launderers', who have promptly found themselves heavily fined, as well as being given substantial prison sentences. However there is little evidence that these initiatives have of themselves enabled the authorities to track down many criminals or terrorists – or that they have significantly crippled the capacity of South Asian transnational networks to facilitate global financial transfers (Ballard 2006, Passas 2008).

#### *Title IV: Border Security*

This section of the Act had even wider implications, since its central objective was to subject all those entering the United States from foreign jurisdictions tighter scrutiny than hitherto, amongst other things by authorising the authorities to construct comprehensive data-banks of the history and personal characteristics of all those crossing, or seeking to cross its borders. Just as in the financial sphere, initiatives of this kind have since been emulated in many European jurisdictions. But just as with all the other sections of the Patriot Act, the demographic impact of these initiatives has been markedly differential in character: indeed there can be little doubt that that was their very purpose. Only a minor sleight of hand was required to re-jig provisions which were nominally designed to target gangs of criminals and terrorists towards a convenient surrogate: the informal networks deployed by migrant workers in general, and those of Muslim origin in particular to transgress the jurisdictional boundaries which had been designed to exclude them. In other words the 'War on Terror' has provided a means whereby the prosperous states of Euro-America have been able legitimately to construct sieve-like border controls which provide no significant obstacles to the passage of those who are wealthy enough, well-qualified enough, and above all respectable enough to pass muster, whilst systematically excluding all others.

But just what was being secured behind these borders? Speaking as Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld spelt out both his concerns and his preferred response when he announced that:

Our strength as a nation state will continue to be challenged by those who employ *a strategy of the weak using international fora, judicial processes, and terrorism*. We have learned that an unrivalled capacity to respond to traditional challenges is no longer sufficient. Battlefield success is only one element of our long-term, multi-faceted campaign against terrorism. *Non-military components of this campaign include strategic communications, law enforcement operations, and economic sanctions* [my italics] (United States National Defense Strategy, 2005).

One of the most remarkable features of Rumsfeld's argument is that he – or at least his advisors – may have been reading some anthropology. His suggestion that terrorists have begun utilise underhand strategies which he identifies as underhand 'weapons of the weak' is quite remarkable, since his terminology appears to be derived from the well-known exploration of that very phenomenon by James Scott (1985). But if this is indeed the case, Rumsfeld's (mis)reading of Scott's arguments is most illuminating, since it overlooks the core of Scott's thesis: namely that the 'arts of resistance' are the outcome of dialectic processes, and hence can only be properly appreciated when understood as counter-hegemonic responses to the experience of domination (Scott 1990). Hence whilst Scott would agree that all such strategies are inherently subversive, although he also prefers to view them from a positive, rather than a negative, perspective. Moreover a key point in his analysis of the effectiveness of such strategies of resistance 'from below' is that it arises from their inherent *alterity* – the capacity to think and act 'outside the box' by standing the premises which underpin what Scott describes as 'public transcripts' on their heads, so enabling them to make the most of the strategic assets available within their own self-generated resources of cultural capital.

#### *Title VIII: Terrorism and criminal law*

However all this also now has to be understood within the legal jurisdiction which the Patriot Act sought to establish. From this perspective Rumsfeld's arguments – on the basis of which he had already taken the opportunity to identify all those who had put up armed resistance to US military initiatives overseas as 'illegitimate combatants' – emerge as being much more familiar in character than they may seem at first sight. Asymmetric conflicts, whether military, economic, cultural, racial, ethnic or gendered in character, are regularly accompanied by allegations from those who consider that they occupy the moral high ground that those seeking to upset the established order are 'breaking the rules'. Hence they are

acting illegitimately at best, and criminally at worst. Contemporary processes of globalisation have given rise to innumerable contradictions of this kind. Moreover those with which concerned in this volume have been exacerbated by two even more recent, but dialectically connected developments. Firstly the position of unchallenged industrial, economic, financial and military hegemony which Euro-America has enjoyed on a global scale for the last two centuries has begun to crumble; secondly, and just as significantly, the central reason why the central reason why this has occurred is that Euro-America has found itself faced by ever more intense competitive pressures ‘from below’, based on just the kind of ‘outside the box’ strategies which Scott identifies as weapons of the weak.

Unfortunately Donald Rumsfeld appears to have entirely overlooked careful the irony in Scott’s formulation: after all he is talking about *weapons*, even if they are located in the hands of ‘the weak’. Moreover as anyone with an iota of historical consciousness is aware, the powerless are not necessarily fated to remain in that position for ever after: on the contrary their alteric weapons become all the more powerful when their hegemony are so locked up in a condition of self-confident hubris that they fail to appreciate just how comprehensively those whom they have so long despised have begun to cut the ground from beneath their feet.

With such considerations in mind it may well be the case that that the global order may be reaching just such a tipping point. After all the current ‘credit crunch’ is not just a product of ‘irrational exuberance’ in Euro-America. Rather the events of 2008 have taught us that the assumption that elaborate derivative contracts grounded in arcane (but formal) mathematical calculations, on the back of which a ‘shadow economy’ many times greater than the real thing was rapidly constructed, could provide a better and more profitable means of managing debt and risk was profoundly mistaken. Now the house of cards has collapsed with still unimaginable consequences, perhaps the time has come to recognise that the models constructed by proponents of sophisticated modernity lacked any kind of concrete foundations, and that those who fail to invest in relationships of personal trust as they construct coalitions of reciprocity can only expect to come to a sticky end.

### **Trans-jurisdictional networks and economic development**

All trans-jurisdictional networks are intrinsically redistributive in character, since one of their central functions is invariably facilitate the transfer of assets, financial or otherwise, across national boundaries to the collective benefit of network members. With such a perspective to hand, we also have a ready means of differentiating those which operate ‘from above’ from those which operate ‘from below’: those emanating from above invariably serve to concentrate wealth in the hands of the already (or at least newly) privileged, whilst those emanating from below serve transfer resources in precisely the opposite direction. However it is also worth noting that all such evaluations are of necessity contextual in character. Hence whilst networks established by labour migrants are undoubtedly redistributive downwards as far as the developed world is concerned, in the immediate environment of their home villages a lengthy period of successful trans-jurisdictional migration has quite the opposite effect: it leads to a relative *concentration* of wealth in the hands of the immediate beneficiaries of those transfers. In the light of that insight I now better appreciate why the Islamabad office of DFID remained so disinterested in even considering the prospect of seeking to stimulate economic development in Mirpur District, from where close to half of all Pakistani migrant workers in Britain have been drawn. Mirpur, they argued, was not poor in a wider Pakistani context (Ballard 2003b: 74); hence investing in Mirpur was not congruent with their pro-poor agenda. Whilst the logic of their argument was impeccable, it also opens a whole barnful of questions about how, if at all, the potential benefits of the arrival of migrant remittances can be fitted into currently conventional models of economic development.

Similar (and equally illuminating) questions can also be asked about every dimension of trans-jurisdictional activity ‘from below’. As such networkers have grown steadily larger, more numerous, and during the course of the past half century, they have begun to substantially to reverse the concentration of wealth and power in Euro-American hands which took place during the period of Imperial growth ‘from above’. Those processes have taken many forms. In addition to the spectacular success of individual entrepreneurs such as Lakshmi Mittal and his Chinese counterparts, many millions of more mainstream entrepreneurs have utilised the resources of their self-constructed networks to penetrate labour markets located throughout the industrialised world. To be sure they may initially have been poorly paid by Euro-American terms. Nevertheless the intergenerational transfer of resources to which activities have already given rise, and to which their children and their

children may well in due course contribute, can only be described as spectacular. Leaving to one side the substantial assets which they now control at their overseas destinations, total their value of their remittances now greatly exceeds the scale of North-South transfers delivered as formal development aid (Maimbo and Ratha 2005). Better still such transfers incurs no external debt, and arrive with none of the usual strings attached.

However value transfers totalling well in excess of \$300 billion per annum attract all sorts of suspicious and greedy eyes, no less to those in command of the national economy of every state in which such value transfers arrive than in the US Treasury or the Department of Homeland Security. But just who has rights in such trans-jurisdictionally acquired treasure? What state agencies, if any, have a right to regulate its transfer, to tax it, to direct its investment or to securitize the inflow in order to raise loans on the global money markets? How much, in other words, should these transgressors of the established order be allowed to get away with? Should they be placed in the same category as kleptocrats such as Mobutu and Suharto, and every effort made to strip them of their criminal assets?

I think not. It should never be forgotten that that glocal networks 'from below' of the kind which I have highlighted in this Chapter have deeply parochial foundations, and are driven by, and indeed a manifestation of, the collective interests of network members themselves. Precisely because of their parochial character these interests are not congruent with those of the population at large within their homeland, or of those in any of the overseas jurisdictions in which they touch ground. Not that they are in any sense unique in so doing: trans-jurisdictional networks operating from above do so on a much more massive scale. Given that the availability of such transfer mechanisms is a central feature of globalisation, there appears to be no prospect whatsoever pulling this particular genie back into the bottle. If so, it seems that such flows – as well as the trans-jurisdictional networks which give rise to, is a phenomenon with which we will all have come to terms, no matter how much Secretaries of State such as Donald Rumsfeld may rattle swords.

With this in mind it is worth recalling Dhooleka Raj's reminder that members of trans-jurisdictional networks deepest loyalties are to other members of their corporate network, wherever they may be located, rather than to any specific spatial location. To be sure their success may be powerfully transgressive in the sense that they reduce the extent of the Imperially-generated disjunction between the global North and the global South. However it

is a great mistake to assume that those involved in pursuing such objectives do so as 'Southerners', or even as citizens of any given state. The trans-jurisdictional space within which such networks operate simultaneously more parochially and more globally oriented to be constrained by such artificial constructs as national boundaries, not least because they have long since developed the skills and strategies which enable them to puncture such facile barriers at will.

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