

# PROSTITUTION AND THE **ENDS** OF **EMPIRE**

SCALE, GOVERNMENTALITIES, AND INTERWAR INDIA



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Cover art: Indian prostitutes peeking out from doorways of their brothel, circa 1946.

Photo by Margaret Bourke-White/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images.

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## PREFACE

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In 2003 I visited Delhi as part of a postdoctoral fellowship, working toward what became my *Spaces of Colonialism* book on India's interwar capital. While chasing up a building regulation in the manual *Delhi Municipality: Bye Laws, Rules and Directions* (1933), I came across a table listing "Prohibited areas for the residence of public prostitutes and the keeping of brothels." Having studied the historical geographies of prostitution regulation with Philip Howell at Cambridge, this tabulation caught my eye. I chased up the reference as a complement to my interests in the landscapes of residential segregation, the police, and urban improvement in the new and old cities. The seam of files at the Delhi State Archives was incredibly rich, detailing the turn of the city against its "prostitutes." This was, to a greater degree than in the other forms of political landscaping that had attracted me, a process incorporating popular petitioning and campaigns, voluntary groups and charities, as well as the Municipal Committee and Delhi administration. I wrote up this material as the fourth chapter to my Delhi book, focusing on the blurred boundary between the state and civil society and the sexual intersection of the individual and public body.

The chapter, however, didn't work. While the other case studies on accommodation, policing, and urban infrastructure required national and imperial contextualization, they presented stories that could be sufficiently

told within a Delhi frame. Many of their spatial innovations originated within Delhi though, of course, drawing upon lessons, parallels, and warnings from without. Prostitution policy in Delhi, however, seemed beholden to objects, people, and developments from beyond the city limits. A Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act was debated in the late 1930s, emerging near-fully formed from the legislative spaces beyond Delhi Province. The irrepressible voice of a female campaigner, named Meliscent Shephard, announced itself through letters, petitions, questionnaires, notes, and chits in the early 1930s, while the League of Nations and the hopes of internationalism increasingly found their way into governmental debates on the fate of Delhi's prostitutes through the 1920s. Tracking these actors required the use of, among others, national archives in India, feminist archives in London, and internationalist archives in Geneva.

The last chapter of my first book slowly morphed into the first chapter of this one. That Delhi should come first was obvious to me, and not merely because it was the departure point for my archival roving. In each archive I visited, no matter how grand or global, my interest had always been in the local tolerated brothel zone, or the "red-light district." How was it depicted? How was it managed? How did it exploit women? How did it not?

Keeping Delhi first was a reminder to myself, and hopefully to the reader, that the national, the imperial, and the international are always experienced at the level of the body, the encounter, and the local. But this does not, for a second, diminish the power of distant geographies. If the first book faced the challenge of explaining the power relations of space, then this book would have to contemplate the power relations of scale. How, like space, was scale constructed? Who could use it? How did it collapse? How was it resisted or used? And how did scales tumble into one another? My grapplings with scale were informed by a long and complex tradition of writing, in geography and beyond, on scale itself. But each chapter progressively took me beyond my training in colonial urbanism to the literatures on South Asian feminism, hygiene and sexology, law and international relations, and, most centrally, sexuality. Each of these historiographies dealt with scale, even if not through scalar terminologies. But a recurrent focus was on influence: how it traveled over scale, how it was made through scale, and how scalar positioning made some people more vulnerable to being influenced than others.

Just as the first book had plotted three paths through the colonial spaces of Delhi (geographical, historiographical, and theoretical), so this book treks beyond Delhi and colonial urbanism, but also beyond the established

framework of colonial governmentality studies. At the center of this book are clearly a scalar study of the tolerated brothel and a temporal examination of the turn from segregation to suppression in the interwar years. But, and without wishing to diminish the significance of the empirical material here presented or the lives of the men and women here recounted, the book also continues a broader attempt to critically examine the excesses and neglects of colonial power relations. The challenge is, therefore, to somehow reproduce the Foucauldian feat of respecting an archival story while also outlining a broader narrative regarding power, the self, and others. As Arnold Davidson (2006, 123) put it: “Volumes 2 and 3 of *The History of Sexuality* are about sex in roughly the way that *Discipline and Punish* is about the prison.” Michel Foucault himself put it more pointedly: “I must confess that I am much more interested in problems about techniques of the self and things like that rather than sex . . . sex is boring” (Foucault et al., 1983, 229). While one doesn’t have to agree with the latter point to accept the former, this book offers few insights into the sexual lives of “prostitutes” and their clients in interwar India. But what it does offer is a critical apparatus with which to explore the ongoing exploitation, displacement, and silencing of women classed as prostitutes. The book continues a critical engagement with the work of Giorgio Agamben, appropriating his topological work on sovereignty and the in/outside. It combines this with Foucault’s thoughts on governmentalized society and the governmentalization of the state to explore the “civil abandonment” of prostitutes in cities across India. Just as *Spaces of Colonialism* drew its theoretical frame from Foucault’s Security Territory Population lecture course, so here I provide a detailed reading of the Birth of Biopolitics lectures to facilitate a deeper understanding of the scalar politics of governmentalities. The book, in this sense, extends Foucault’s antiessentialist project to that of scale, arguing that: scales do not have natural processes, whether economic, social or political; that scales are networked into existence; and that they also operate through the awesome power of naming.

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conferences and seminars, and I cannot do justice to the profound effect of them all here. Especially formative, however, were discussions during the Spaces of Civil Society panels organized by Gerry Kearns at the European Social Sciences History Conference in 2008; Anne Hardgrove's session on "Interwar India: The League of Nations and Sexuality in India" at the Madison Annual Conference on South Asia in 2009; two workshops on South Asian gender (2008) and sexuality (2011) formations co-organized at Nottingham with Srila Roy and generously funded by the university and BASAS; two workshops co-organized with Deana Heath on "South Asian Governmentalities" at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi (2011) and the British Academy in London (2012); and conversations had during visiting fellowships at Queen Mary, University of London, and the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Studies at JNU in 2011.

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## INTRODUCTION

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### SPATIAL GENEALOGIES FROM SEGREGATION TO SUPPRESSION

*Burma*—On September 8th, 1930, the police received information to the effect that a Burmese girl had been thrown out of the window from a building into the back drainage space between 29th Street and Mogul Street. The police at once proceeded there and saw a girl about 13 years old lying on her back with a broken arm. She was speedily conveyed to the General Hospital and on examination it was found that her spinal cord was also broken. On regaining consciousness, she told her story, which was to the effect that she was seduced by a young Burman and was sold for Rs.20 to a brothel-keeper in 29th Street. She was forced to prostitution and finally, when she refused to obey the keepers of the house, she was thrown out of the window.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the anatomical precision of its violent description, the above report on the injuries to a girl in 1930s Rangoon is not unique. It relates the misfortune of the numberless women and children who were enticed, coerced, or trafficked into prostitution, and subjected to sexual violence in their everyday economies. It also tells of the extreme physical violence in the exceptional cases

in which these women tried to escape. But in addition to not being unique, the report is also generic. It contains various discursive tropes that recur in narratives of trafficking and violence against women in colonial India more generally (Mani 1998, 12): the heroic, rescuing authority figure; the dastardly perpetrators; the naïve victim. Similarly, there is an affective grammar and vocabulary at play: the police rushed *at once* to the girl's aid; she had been *seduced*, *sold*, and *forced* into prostitution; but she failed to *obey*. Her price was cheap, and the sewer she was thrown to invoked the Augustinian metaphorical linkage (revived by Alexandre Parent-Duchâtelet in Paris, see Corbin 1978 [1990], 62) of the prostitute as the sewer that cleansed mankind's morality. The assemblage of language and narrative plays across time, chiming with affective dispositions against child labor, sexual exploitation, and physical abuse. But was the girl pushed, or did she jump from the window? Was she seduced, or did she voluntarily opt for life in Burma's cosmopolitan capital port city? And why should these questions matter when her victimhood seems so complete?

They matter because the horror this case induces and the contemplative methodological questions it raises are both at the center of contemporary debates in colonial historiography and at the core of this book's attempt to understand the shift from the segregation and toleration of brothels in interwar India to their abolition and suppression. The seemingly transparent archival window into the true experiences of prostitutes in colonial India gives way to the smoke and mirrors of subaltern feminist theory: the constructed image of the victim reveals itself to be as much a reflection of the researcher, the governor, and the archivist, as of the historical subject herself. The confusions of representation and interpretation are just as present in the visual as the textual or the material (as Margaret Bourke-White's photograph on this book's cover makes clear).<sup>2</sup>

This occlusion is not merely a question of class; the individualized registration and policing of prostitutes in Paris (Corbin 1978 [1990]) or London (Laite 2012), for instance, provide a much more detailed archival sociology of their brothels, streetwalkers, and madams. The insights of subaltern studies, or at least the attention they draw to obscurity and occlusion, highlight how the governing of Indian prostitutes as a racialized and sexualized class was, at every stage, inflected by questions of difference: of oriental bodies, of tradition, of caste, of demand, and of tropically pathological disease.

But if the assemblage of emotions, facts, events, and discursive tropes contained in the Rangoon report appeals to us across time, this is because it was assembled to appeal across geographical space. For this archival trace

was not found in the Rangoon police archives, or in the National Archives Department of the Government of the Union of Myanmar. It was not read in the National Archives in Delhi, or the imperial repository of the India Office Records in London. The report was read in the Official Publications room in Cambridge University's Library, reprinted in a League of Nations summary of reports on the traffic in women and children. As such, it could be read, and doubtless has been read repeatedly, in the libraries of Buenos Aires, Berlin, Tokyo, Canberra, or Mexico City. The report continues that while the alleged husband of the girl had absconded, a forty-eight-year-old and a twenty-eight-year-old had been charged under section 373 (buying a minor) and 325 (grievous hurt) of the Indian Penal Code, which the government of India had compiled in 1860 to bring legal homogeneity to its willfully heterogeneous territories. The very existence of the house was a sign of the failure of the Burma Suppression of Prostitution Act (1921), under which the report indicated that two other people had been convicted in 1930 of keeping a brothel. This act had been modeled on Britain's Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1912, which provided powers to clamp down on areas of segregated prostitution in the hope of reducing the "white slave trade," which so excited the salons of middle-class England, and so profited the newspaper account sheets of Fleet Street.

The Burmese Act turned out to be the first experimental site in a legislative network that eventually covered much of British India. It was designed to close down the routes through which women and girls could be trafficked into and around India, and the spaces in which they could be sexually exploited. During the years leading up to the First World War in India, the government accepted segregated zones of tolerated brothels as the safest way of dealing with the social and biological risk posed by prostitutes (see Legg 2012b). Broader shifts in science and society initiated a turn against the brothel, while the scandalous sites I will describe in chapter 2 discredited the segregationist system and spurred the development of legislation to suppress trafficking and neutralize the prostitute's perceived risk. In this book I set out to explain this shift from segregation to the suppression of tolerated brothels in interwar India, which approached the intimate space of the brothel as a local, national, imperial, and international problem. This book places scale at the heart of its methodology, showing how the most intimate spaces of desire and intercourse were forever enframed in broader scales of politics, terminology, and movement.

The league report on the unnamed Burmese girl, then, must be situated among the histories of prostitution and its policing through time. But

the report also points to diverse geographical origins: where these people originally came from, from where the laws, sentiments, and science against prostitution were derived, and the archival repositories that provide access to this event. That is, the report directs us to the spatial genealogy of prostitution and its governmentalities.

Drawing on analyses of colonial rationalities, materialities, and practices, this book moves beyond my previous analysis of external influences on state apparatuses (Legg 2007b) to examine critically the governmentalities of local civil society, provincial governments, imperial humanitarian bodies, and international organizations. (For further work on (post) colonial governmentality, see Birla 2009; Chatterjee 2011; and Heath 2010.) While posing the question of imperial and international governmentalities, I will retain the urge to consider governmentalities critically, with an eye to their ethos and problematization, their excess and neglect. These observations serve to continue the critical dialogue with Foucault and his Eurocentric blind spots. But they also continue the critical engagement with the colonial state, which through this engagement with Foucault (and Agamben) is brought into focus as an agent of civil abandonment rather than of social uplift.

In this book I expand colonial governmentality analytics through two engagements. The first, more theoretical engagement draws upon the concepts of “apparatuses” and “assemblages,” from Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, respectively, to complicate the way we think about scale, power, resistance, stability, and instability in colonial governmentalities. Methodologically, I draw upon an implicit logic in Foucault’s *Birth of Biopolitics* (1978–79 [2008]) lecture course to suggest that we should be wary of claims to natural orderliness and should challenge such claims with an analysis of the existence and effects of networks and nominalism. In short, I suggest that we scrutinize *naturalistic* claims (for instance, that economies, populations, societies, or sexualities have “natural,” and thus proper, orders) and insist that we think about scales as *networks* of differing lengths (such as intimate, local, regional, national, and imperial) and as the *nominalist* effects of naming (such as the body, the city, the province, the nation-state, and the empire).

The former, theoretical engagement will be outlined below and then demonstrated in practice through the introduction of the temporal and spatial scales of this study; namely, the interwar, the city/urban, the government of India/Raj, and the empire/imperialism. The methodological analytics of natures, networks, and nominalism will also be picked out in

the literature that follows, while their origins in the second of Foucault's "governmentality" lecture courses will then emerge through the detailed reading of the *Birth of Biopolitics* with which this chapter concludes. These lectures present a major shift in Foucault's governmentality thinking. A detailed reading presents an opportunity to invigorate colonial governmentality analyses with the attention to scale and the social, which has been explicitly lacking in most postcolonial theory, and to continue the now widespread evaluation of the applicability of Foucault's concepts and observations to the colonial world.

### *Assemblage/Apparatus*

In Foucault's famously controversial *History of Sexuality, volume 1: The Will to Knowledge* (1979), he suggests that sexuality was constructed through a *dispositif* (apparatus) as much as through nature, and that sexual freedoms could very well be the most intimate and persuasive forms of control. This conscribing of sexuality to apparatuses of control contrasts starkly with Deleuze's situating of desire within an overarching *agencement* (assemblage), of which power is only a secondary effect (Grace 2009, 72). Foucault would later explore pleasure as a means of escaping the mind-set of sexual apparatuses, an approach that avoids what he felt were the medico-psychological presuppositions of Deleuze and Félix Guattari's emphasis on desire (Foucault et al. 2011, 389). This productive tension between sexuality/pleasure apparatuses and desire assemblages is just one dimension of a broader intellectual dialogue.

Beyond the specific debate regarding sexuality and desire, the intersection and distinctions between apparatuses and assemblages are gaining increasing attention (Legg 2009b). Apparatuses can be described as the governing discursive network between propositions, institutions, laws, and scientific statements that serve a dominant strategic function (Macey 1993, 355), such as absorbing a surplus population, regulating sex, ordering a city square, or normalizing bodily habits. As with Foucault's broader definition of discourse, apparatuses span text and performance, materialism and hermeneutics, embodiment and thought, but functionally focus around a purpose, usually of security. In contrast, Deleuze's assemblages focus on crossing borders, disassembling organs and bodies, tracing nomadic thought, lines of flight, and de-territorialization (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). As Ben Anderson and Colin McFarlane (2011, 124) explain, assemblage "is often used to emphasise emergence, multiplicity and indeterminacy, and connects to a wider redefinition of the socio-spatial in terms of

the composition of diverse elements into some form of provisional socio-spatial formation.” However, I argue that we must think of assemblages and apparatuses together, as creating the conditions for each other’s emergence and dissolution (Legg 2011a). Neither concept has a monopoly on power or resistance, scaling or de-scaling, stratifying or smoothing space. However, in this book I will refer to apparatuses as those governing networks with a strategic function and ordering intent, while I characterize assemblages by their gatherings, heterogeneous groupings, and emergences. I will use the relationship between apparatus/assemblage to explore the dialectics of city/urban, government of India/Raj and empire/imperialism below. By paying attention to assemblage theory we can think beyond Foucault’s ordering categories and norms. Though he developed governmentality, as a concept device, with the intention of exposing and unmasking apparatuses, when we apply it we often reinscribe the power of those apparatuses by making our thought and investigations equally neat and containable.

Because they are also resisted and contested, we must think about sexual apparatuses (such as the regulation of prostitution) alongside assemblages of their unraveling, expansion, and dissolution. Some women labeled as “prostitutes” in Delhi, for example, refused to move from their centrally located brothels and directly petitioned the chief commissioner in person, invoking complex assemblages of artistry, rights, and precarity. Women’s reform groups campaigned at the provincial level to secure “social legislation” to rescue exploited women from pimps and brothels, and international humanitarian bodies pressed the government to restrain its military and to bring tolerated brothel zones within the purview of a reluctantly interventionist state, mobilizing texts, theories, and statistics from sexology, hygiene science, and anticolonial nationalism. These forms of resistance signpost a route that we can follow today to trace the colonial state’s exploitation and neglect of the Indian population and territory. This will expose a state that outsourced the regulation of prostitution to a ruthlessly reformative civil society, yet refused to fund “rescue work”; that encouraged provincial suppressionist legislation but refused to support it centrally; that tactically supported imperial campaigns against tolerated brothels while failing to effectively police military prostitution or fund preventative and curative medicine for the Indian population; and that signed international agreements against trafficking but blocked any measures thought to impinge upon its “scalar sovereignty” (Legg 2009b).

To construct a *spatial* genealogy of this history, this book takes up Foucault’s concerns with bodies, power, knowledge, security, and liberalism.



Rather than taking a body or event and moving *back* through time, it takes a place (Delhi) and moves *out* through space to explain the shift in the interwar years from segregationist to suppressionist legislation and attitudes regarding the brothel. As these scales of study expand, however, the space at the center of this study does not; rather, increasing scales are used to recast the brothel as a local, national, imperial, and international space.

### **Histories and Geographies of Sexuality**

#### *From the Colonial Brothel to the Imperial Globe*

Worldwide research into colonial prostitution, and historical studies of colonial Indian sexuality in particular, is still very much indebted to Kenneth Ballhatchet's (1980) pathbreaking work on the introduction in 1868 of the Indian Contagious Diseases Acts (CDAs), the forcible registration of prostitutes serving the military, the acts' repeal in 1888, the military regulations which preceded and succeeded them, and the politics of European sexuality in India. In the thirty years since Ballhatchet's publication, historical studies of prostitution have been accepted as legitimate subjects of inquiry and have moved beyond a sole emphasis on regulation. Such research has explored methodologies from social and women's history, examining the structure and organization of commercial sex, to cultural and literary studies that analyze the symbolic and discursive construction of the prostitute (Gilfoyle 1999). Recurring tropes in investigations of prostitution in Russia, Europe, Nairobi, and Argentina after 1800 include the increasing dominance of sexual, over companionship, relationships in prostitution as the modern age progressed. Social analysis has proffered increasingly broad explanations for this phenomenon, while evangelical Christianity globalized its attack on legal brothels. Yet this literature also warns against simplistic generalizations regarding modern trends toward or away from oppression. For example, prostitution regulation in London between 1885 and 1930 increased repressive measures even as social purity arguments declined in force (Laite 2012). The criminalization and pathologization of the prostitute made her the subject of increasing control, yet definitions of "brothels" were worked around by prostitutes and pimps, while the police were loath to enforce the powers they acquired.

Attention to the international geographies of prostitution also reveals diverse connections between nations, states, and colonies (for an early review, see Bryder 1998). Rich contrasts have been drawn, for instance, between debates across the British Empire over age-of-consent legislation, homosexuality, and the regulation of prostitution (Phillips 2006). There

were complex variations in regulatory policies regarding prostitution in the empire before the CDAs (Howell 2000), while British feminism itself was deeply imbricated with the imagined lives of Indian women (Burton 1994). Philippa Levine's (2003) brilliantly detailed comparative work has examined contagious diseases laws and broader cultural and political practices in Queensland, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, and India. She displays a keen awareness of each site's complexity and reflects at the end of the book on the landscapes and micro-spaces of selling colonial sex, yet the emphasis is very much "out" from each site toward comparison. While displaying similar interests and frames of reference, Howell's *Geographies of Regulation* (2009) is sensitive to the politics of place, which inspires the methodology I follow throughout this book; his work both goes "in" to the local spatial policing of sexuality and "out" to the geopolitics of the imperial state at the global scale.

While Howell expands from Britain out to its empire, showing that the flow of regulation was bidirectional across the borders of the United Kingdom, this book moves from Delhi to the national, imperial, and international contexts that frame the move from the segregation and toleration of brothels at the turn of the century to the abolition and suppression of brothels in the interwar period. Other scholarship has noted this shift in different parts of Asia. The commercialization of sex in twentieth-century Shanghai mapped itself onto the specific cultural geographies of the treaty port (Hershatter 1997). In Malaysia the state was involved in the medical inspection of brothels until 1907, and it was only with the international shifts in the 1920s in thinking on medical health, the protective role of the state in terms of the abuse of women and minors, and concerns over reproduction that the colonial government turned against brothels (Manderson 1996). Few investigations, however, focus on interwar prostitution in Asia. South Asian scholarship, like that of Levine and Howell, tends to end its investigations at the start of the First World War. There has also been a broader tendency to lapse into lazy orientalist assumptions about Hindu religion as a cause of Indian prostitution (Ringdal 2004), or that brothels in the "East" had not changed in several centuries (Simon 1975, 88).

There is, however, a rich body of work on nineteenth-century prostitution to draw on. This covers the different ways in which prostitutes could use and subvert the CDAs (Hodges 2005); the evolving rates of, and discussions about, venereal disease (Arnold 1993b; Levine 1994, 1996); the changing fortunes of courtesan culture (Oldenburg 1990); and the gradual association of the *devadasi* tradition with prostitution (Jordan 2003). In this

book I am concerned almost entirely with urban prostitution, not the traditional courtesan or devadasi cultures that exceeded both the commercial purchase of sex and the capacities of colonial orientalist sociology to comprehend alternative sexual economies (Kumar 1993, 35). Erica Wald (2009) has outlined the nineteenth-century naming practices through which an increasing range of women were comprehended as “prostitutes.” Rather than substituting a more contemporary term like “sex worker,” I retain the term “prostitute” throughout this book. However, the creation of the prostitute through different apparatuses of regulation will highlight how constructed and contested this name was. In this book, as in the vast majority of documents consulted, “prostitutes” are presumed to be female. The League of Nations inquiry into trafficking in the East found almost no evidence of male prostitution, although “homo-sexual prostitution” was suspected among some Indian boys in Karachi. It was suggested that some of them had been trafficked to Basra and the pearl-fishing islands of the Gulf for immoral purposes.<sup>3</sup> Where homosexuality occurs within these texts, it is usually mobilized as a fear of what might result from depriving men of their brothels (a view that was fast falling out of favor; see Legg 2012b). The term “brothel” was likewise constructed and contested. It was a global term that came to encompass the range of *kothas* (apartments), *pukka* (well-built) huts, and *basti* (slum) shops in which women worked, but which was generalized to mean the prison and/or entrepôt of victimized women.

If brothels themselves have a complex nomenclature, so do the campaigns against them. The actions taken against segregated brothel zones in the interwar period built upon the successes of nineteenth-century campaigns against brothels that were registered, licensed, and inspected (embodied in the CDAs in the United Kingdom and across the British Empire; for broader examples, see Limoncelli 2010). This “regulationism” provoked a ferocious campaign to repeal the laws, spearheaded by Josephine Butler’s Ladies National Association, which was later supplemented by the International Abolitionist Federation. The CDAs were repealed in 1886, a year after the Criminal Law Amendment Act (CLAA) introduced “abolitionist” legislation that increased penalties against brothels, procurement, and homosexuality. The campaign for such reforms continued throughout the empire.

Abolitionism did not, however, only campaign against registered brothels. In twentieth-century India we can identify at least three further, inter-linked stages that targeted segregated brothel zones, brothels themselves, and trafficking. Prostitutes and local governments reformed their tactics

around the new landscapes of regulation that each abolitionist victory produced. The expulsion of prostitutes from registered houses led to the clustering of brothels in red-light districts (Legg 2012b). This system of segregation was accepted by the Indian government until the years of the First World War, when a series of scandals discredited it (as I explain in chapter 2). The abolition of segregated brothel zones, pioneered by Bombay and Rangoon, dispersed women into un-clustered brothels, the toleration of which became the subject of abolitionist campaigns in the 1920s and 1930s. Legislation passed from 1923 banned brothel keeping and forced women into apartments, to work by themselves, or onto the street, where they were said to be more vulnerable to pimps or traffickers. Ironically, these powers were contained in legislative acts designed to target trafficking itself. This fourth stage of abolitionism, however, took up the new mantle of “suppression.”

The term “suppression” was not new; there had been British campaigns for the suppression of juvenile prostitution in the 1840s, while the CLAA (1885) aimed to “suppress brothels.” By the turn of the century, however, the term had been appropriated by the sensationalist campaigns against the “white slave trade” (E. Bell 1909). International meetings for the “suppression” of this trade were held in 1899, 1904, and 1910, and their provisions were incorporated into the League of Nations’ International Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children in 1921, to which India was a cosignatory. At the insistence of Japan, the terminology of the “white slave trade” was de-racialized and replaced with that of “trafficking of women and children,” regardless of race. The following fifteen years would see an occasionally heated debate regarding the extent to which brothels (licensed, segregated, or tolerated) encouraged trafficking. Under pressure from its member states, the league classified India as abolitionist because it had no registered or inspected brothels. However, the provincial acts passed in the 1920s and 1930s were explicitly suppressionist because they targeted trafficking as well as abolishing (on paper) or even tolerated brothels.

Abolitionism evolved with regards to its approach to the prostitute, to morality, and to space. In terms of the prostitute, the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene championed her rights against the more punitive National Vigilance Association, for instance. In the moral debate a social-purist emphasis on chastity faced an increasing acceptance of women as desiring subjects. Regarding space, abolitionists targeting registered broth-

els identified certain buildings to close and laws to repeal. The abolition of segregated zones targeted particular localities through new laws, while tolerated brothels had a much more diffuse geography. The suppressionist phase of abolition had a relational geography that saw brothels as hubs of broader networks that had to be tackled in their entirety, which required the cooperation of organizations that could span nation-states with a concept and target that was more expansive than “prostitution.”

In this book I combine an awareness of international networks with a committed focus on the city. Many insightful local studies of Indian brothels and their occupants bring to light the oral traditions and experiences of prostitutes in Calcutta (Banerjee 1998) and the shifting forms of regulation in Madras (Raj 1993). The latter strays into the twentieth century, but only Ashwini Tambe (2009a) has provided a thorough microanalysis of the shift from nineteenth-century regulation to the abolitionism of interwar Bombay. Chapter 2 will examine the cases that Tambe studied, including the murder of a young woman in the brothel district in 1917 and the template-setting legislation that followed, but it will work out from this site to provide a comparative analysis of suppressionist legislation across India in the fifteen years that followed. This time period, as much as the spatial scales that will narrate the shift from segregation to suppression, demands explanation.

#### INTERWAR

“Interwar” is as unsuitable a category as “late colonial” for the period under study. These categorizations teleologically tether the 1920s and 1930s to a war and to decolonization that took appeasers and die-hard imperialists, respectively, by surprise. Similarly, there is a scalar assumption that ties the interwar to the international and the late colonial to the imperial state. And despite the radical newness of the violence and technological change provoked by the First World War, the cultural, political, and economic legacies of the previous era were not so quick to disintegrate as is often assumed. The monumental changes wrought by the two world wars do, however, justify this period as a time scale of investigation.

In terms of prostitution, the two world wars led to suspensions of usual practice across the world, as hundreds of thousands of troops were mobilized, increasing the demand for prostitutes. Under the Defence of India Act (1915), Regulation 12C was passed in 1918, providing powers to close down brothels in or nearby military camps (cantonments) for fear that they were infecting the troops. This marked the first of many surprising coalitions

between feminist campaigners and military officials.<sup>4</sup> The Second World War would, however, see the faltering of the abolitionist drive among the armed forces and imperial campaigners, leaving the campaign to be taken forward by Indian social reformers and local groups. The gradual spread of penicillin as a treatment for syphilis after the war radically altered the perception of venereal diseases, if not the gendered and sexualized politics of policing prostitution.

Beyond policies regarding prostitution, the interwar period was also a dynamic time of rapid change and of the spectacular evolution of the spatial logics of imperialism, globalization, nationalism, and internationalism. India's support for the imperial war effort led to expectations of reward in terms of increased self-government that were only partly satisfied by the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918 and the Government of India Act (1919). The resulting constitutional improvisation was termed "dyarchy" and instituted a particularly scalar divide between essential and nonessential powers, associated with central and local government. While foreign policy, military, and financial subjects were reserved for central government, education, health, and statistical services were devolved to elected ministers in provincial government. The Government of India Act (1935) granted provincial autonomy, though with checks and controls for New Delhi, although the Congress Ministries resigned their posts in 1939 in opposition to the British decision to send India to war. The provincial geographies these constitutional reforms created were vital in providing the financial and governmental spaces of biopolitical experimentation that the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Acts (SITAs) filled in regional Legislative Councils.

At the international scale, the First World War secured India's membership in the League of Nations, although, again, its representative capacities were heavily curtailed (Legg 2014). Though the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885, and the partition of Bengal in 1905 sparked *swadeshi* (self-made) and revolutionary movements, it was M. K. Gandhi's Rowlatt Satyagraha in 1919 that inaugurated the period of mass-movement nationalism in India that would reflect and provoke political and social reform throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The interwar period also saw new concerns emerge for all developed nations, ranging from the threat of Bolshevism, to women and labor movements, and revolutionary nationalism as well as constitutional anticolonialism (Sinha 2006, 33). These changes were, however, felt and responded to through the filters of scale (the local, the



national, the world) and locality (between cities, provinces, and empires), as I explore below.

#### THE CITY AND THE URBAN

Current research on cities can be situated between two urges (see Legg and McFarlane 2008). The first is to appreciate cities as relational spaces, in which global cities sit at the center of vast networks (Sassen 1991), and in which even the homeliest of places is acknowledged to be constituted by its outsides (Massey 2005). At the other extreme is the urge to recognize all cities as “ordinary cities” (Robinson 2005) that deserve to be judged on their own terms, and in all their uniqueness and specificity. The happy medium is to attend to the specificities of city life while acknowledging the broader conditioning factors of city governance. A series of recent works has balanced these demands by, for instance, examining the networked port of colonial Bombay (Hazareesingh 2007), the architectural manifestations of British imperial power and its local hybridizations in Lahore (Glover 2008), or the municipal and local governmental efforts to modernize and securitize Mughal urban infrastructures (Hosagrahar 2005). While these apparatuses and ordering strategies are central to the management of the city, they should not be confused with the encompassing concept of the urban: “The urban is a myth, a desire and an ideal as well as a set of experiences; it is a kind of place, perhaps, but one that has a distinct temporalization; it is also a legal assemblage that has always been shot through with non-urban knowledges and powers and rationalities, both public and private” (Valverde 2009, 154). While cities perhaps lend themselves more easily to scalar delimitation—with city limits and definable authorities—the “urban” suggests a more radically open and enfolded assemblage, one linked to the broader world not just through capitalist accumulation or infrastructure, but through imagination, circulating ideas and designs, and mobile populations (McFarlane 2011). As such, the urban is a representational as much as a materialist category, as Swati Chattopadhyay (2005) has shown for Calcutta.

This book opens with a detailed case study of Delhi, which is fascinating precisely because it was *not* a scandalous or experimental site in terms of prostitution (as I explore in chapter 2). Though a fascinating local site of campaigning, controversy, and sex, all within the context of a sensitive and rapidly expanding capital, Delhi was largely influenced by innovations originating elsewhere and as such presents an ideal forum in which to first

encounter emergent trends in prostitution regulation as governmental technologies that moved into Delhi and were gradually taken up in local governance, whoever those governors might be.

In chapter 1 Delhi will be presented as an urban sphere of rumor, myth, and desire, where injunctions to social and moral hygiene were persistently flaunted or ignored by a population increasingly attuned to the culture and politics of networks across national and international scales. But it was also a space that was claustrophobically penetrated by apparatuses of the colonial state (central, local, and municipal) as well as by civil society organizations of both imperial and nationalist sympathies, both of which abandoned the prostitute in different ways. Delhi was saturated with various organizations that brought demands for urban order. The central state was represented through the capital of British India in New Delhi; the Province was run by the Delhi administration under the command of centrally appointed European chief and deputy commissioners; and the “old city” was served by a partially elected Municipal Committee. Added to this were the demands of the Army Cantonment in the Fort, the Delhi Improvement Trust, the New Delhi Development Committee, and various other branches of the state.

The majority of the material informing chapter 1 is drawn from the Delhi State Archives, including the files of the deputy commissioner, the chief commissioner, and the Confidential Department. It was in this archive that this book project was conceived, as figures from ever more distant origins intruded into what I was reading about Delhi’s local affairs: military orders from the commander in chief in New Delhi, amendments of municipal codes from the Punjab, scandals from Bombay, campaigners from London, questionnaires from Geneva. What the Delhi archives highlight is how this complex of “state” organizations was being governmentalized by an embryonic colonial civil society. For instance, the Delhi Health and Social Services Union was established in 1928 with the express support of the chief commissioner and the active participation of many members of Delhi’s social elite.<sup>5</sup> It sought to coordinate existing organizations, like the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA), and to investigate social ills. The union aimed to address people’s conduct through seven subcommittees that would tackle maternity and child welfare, tuberculosis, education and publicity, the creation of acts to protect children, overcrowding and economic surveys, the beggar problem, houses of ill fame, and venereal diseases. This general organization was complemented by elitist women’s organizations, most notably the Delhi Provincial Council of Women (DPCW).

The council had been formed in 1925 and operated under the presidency of Lady Grace Glancy from the prestigious address of 10 Queensway, New Delhi. Despite this high standing, it claimed to work among rich and poor, the English and the Indian.<sup>6</sup> This work was educational, through personal contact, social activities, and lectures, but also practical, by supplying garments for the poor and bandages to hospitals. By the late 1930s the council was also campaigning against the traffic in women and for a Delhi rescue home.

This approach to prostitution as a social and biological disease was very much opposed to that of the Delhi Women's League (DWL), which will emerge as a decisive actor in chapter 1. It had been founded in 1926 by Rameshwari Nehru as the local body of the All Indian Women's Council (AIWC).<sup>7</sup> The latter was the predominant forum of debate regarding the social, educative, political, and economic status of women in India. The DWL sent a representative and between five and ten delegates to each annual AIWC conference, drawing upon prominent women from Delhi's educational, political, commercial, and charitable spheres. While refusing to be dragged into the uptake of an anticolonial stance, many AIWC members were involved in the nationalist movement and, in response to inquiries being made by the chief commissioner in February 1944 the superintendent of police in the Criminal Investigation Department commented that the league did not "come to notice as an organisation for its political or communal affairs although many of its workers are known for their political views and activities."<sup>8</sup> In the late 1920s, however, the DWL focused its attentions on abolishing child marriage, undermining caste prejudice, and educating women.<sup>9</sup> In the early 1930s it organized various public lectures advising women on their electoral rights and duties, and encouraged their further education. The mid-1930s saw the league encourage swadeshi manufacture, a fundamental tenet of both economic regeneration and Gandhian nationalism. By 1939 the DWL had diversified and supported subcommittees that addressed famine relief, rural reconstruction, education, labor, legislation, medical issues, and indigenous industries, but it retained a subcommittee to investigate the traffic in women and children. This had been formed in the mid-1930s alongside DWL calls for the retraining of prostitutes and the creation of a rescue home (Basu and Ray 1990, 64, 77–81). On the recommendation of a specially convened subcommittee of 1937, all local branches of the DWL were urged to press for the application of a Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act and the creation of a state-aided rescue home. Not long after this, members of the DWL would clash with

the British-born representative of the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene, who bluntly inserted the white authority of imperialism into Delhi's dense urban apparatuses of security (see below).

In terms of the broader theoretical and methodological argument, what we will see here is the nonnatural and agonistic functioning of urban "civil society," exposed as the product of dense and conflicting local networks that also provided the way for outside influence to enter and constitute the "local." It also named the city as sexually respectable and stigmatized the prostitute, while also hosting resistant acts of naming (the refusal of the term "prostitute" in favor of "radio artistes") and mobilization (most notably a procession to the deputy commissioner's home).

Chapter 1 examines Delhi's struggles to evict prostitutes from the walled city by, first, engaging Giorgio Agamben's work on abandonment, suggesting that this concept is more useful than abstract and nihilistic speculation over states of exception and bare life. It also helps us think about the closer imbrication of sovereign powers and biopowers in colonial governmentalities, in a way that is difficult to achieve through a simple transposition of Foucault's concepts to India. I combine this work with literature on the supposed *naturalness* of civil society and the "social" to present colonial voluntary organizations as agents of "civil abandonment." The first section looks at the exclusion of prostitutes from the walled city of old Delhi; this involves the *nominalist* process of their stigmatization, the petitioning against their central location, and the women's fight against this "purge." The second section focuses on the "rescue" of women and children and the debates between *networks* across the state-civil society divide to find a place to put them, their inclusion back into the city through a rescue home, and the Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act that was eventually introduced into Delhi to facilitate these inclusions. Chapter 2 traces the origins of the SITAs in nationwide networks of scandal, experimentation, and diffusion.

#### THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE RAJ

Viewed as an assemblage, the government of India stood as a construction of intimidating diversity and power: its military, civil service, wealth, architecture, geographical scope, literature, scientific output, spectacular violence, paintings, poetry, pageantry, and subject population popularly inspire an awe that even merits the assemblage its own name: the Raj. Viewed not as a semiautonomous domain of natural, colonial sovereignty but as an apparatus that created, emerged from, and had to support the

edifice of the Raj, the government of India appears as a more fragile and less comprehensive network.

While “India” was associated with a subcontinent of territory, debate continues to rage about what India *was*: from Immanuel Wallerstein’s (1991 [2001]) question of historiography and capitalist economy; to Manu Goswami’s (2004) study of geography, pedagogy, and finance. As a League of Nations–sponsored report commented, the census of 1921 had shown that India included one-fifth of the world’s population (320 million peoples, Hoops 1928). One-third dwelled in the “Native States,” governed by royal families who were guaranteed their qualified independence in 1858. British India was divided into the nine major provinces of Bengal, Assam, Bihar and Orissa, Bombay, the United Provinces, Punjab, Madras, the Central Provinces, and Burma. Calcutta and Bombay were the largest cities, with over 1.25 million dwellers, while Madras had over half a million. Ten other cities had over 250,000 inhabitants (Delhi, Lahore, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Cawnpore, Poona, Karachi, Rangoon, Hyderabad, and Bangalore). The administrative hierarchy ran from the king, to the secretary of state for India in London, to the viceroy and his six-member Executive Council in New Delhi. Under the dyarchy system following the Government of India Act (1919), the departments of local self-government, education, medical administration, public health, and agriculture were transferred to provincial administration, where they were run by Indian elected ministers, who took up further powers in the reforms of 1935. The Raj’s attempts to name and network this heterogeneous space into a coherent state from its capital in New Delhi were often ineffective and became more difficult during dyarchy and provincial self-government, as progressive regional parties further exacerbated the contrasts between “local” governments.

The archive for the majority of the material in chapter 2 was the center of calculation through which the government of India attempted to reform, constitute, and marshal its regional provinces into some semblance of a colonial state. The National Archives of India (the old Imperial Archive, housed in part of the complex designed by Edwin Lutyens at the intersection of Kingsway and Queensway, the geometrical heart of New Delhi) allows one to trace central government attempts to encourage, coerce, stimulate, and suggest policies for regional governors who, from 1919, had control over most policies relating to prostitution. While provincial policies are also here studied using regional sources such as Madras’s *Stri Dharma* or reportage from the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene’s the *Shield*, the diverse channels through which the central state collected

information on the provinces are daunting in their range. Annual police reports, CID information briefings, committee reports on proposed bills, governor summaries of provincial affairs, letters of complaint, voluntary association reports, and statistics that were forwarded on to the League of Nations in Geneva provide a phenomenally rich archive of sexual regulation, but also of the attempt to network together the regions, provinces, and cities of India itself.

The scalar tactics deployed in this attempt were, in part, repeated in different brands of South Asian historiography. The Cambridge school of imperial history analyzed the “vertical penetration of local elites by the colonial state,” in contradistinction to the “horizontal affiliations of class,” while studies of economic nationalism focused on the more abstract “epic battle between forces of nationalism and colonialism” (Chakrabarty 2000, 13). Bernard Cohn even provided a scalar typology of (precolonial) Indian state forms, from the imperial/Mughal to Mughal-governed secondary states, regional spheres, and local “little kingdoms” (see Ramusack 2004, 3–4). Subverting these scalar narratives, the subaltern studies school suggested an autonomous domain of the people, beyond the “vertical” mobilization of elite politics, and focused on “horizontal” affiliations of kinship and territory.<sup>10</sup> Recent literature has been pursuing a “flatter” epistemology within India’s political networks beyond its shores. This asks how we can think beyond both the territory and the category of the nation to, for instance, the Indian Ocean arena (Tambe and Fischer-Tiné 2009). Such investigations highlight India’s role as a sub-imperial metropolis, orchestrating colonial economies and administrations from west Africa to Malaysia (Metcalf 2007). But such histories are also part of a broader desire to destabilize core/periphery scalar divisions, as well as to consider links between colonies and empires.

Chapter 2 suggests that we need to extend this model to consider the internal political geographies of the colonial state itself and proceeds in two parts. After a summary of debates about the supposedly *naturalistic* orderings of colonial law and gender politics, and the sexological debate about the brothel, the first section examines the *nominalistic* discrediting of the segregated brothel system after the First World War in the scandalous sites of Rangoon and Bombay. These sites also provided the first experiments in suppressionist legislation, which informed the first SITA in 1923 in Calcutta. The second half of the chapter traces the diffusion of these acts through the dyarchical landscape of the 1920s and 1930s, stitching together India into a more and more comprehensive suppressionist *network*. This approach



draws upon the histories Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy (2006) outline, which are attentive to the origins and implementations of differing types of colonial modernity as well as to the variety of forms that colonial governmentalities could take, and which stress that types of freedom and collective action also circulated through and across empires, that is, to India as part of a new imperial history.

#### EMPIRE AND IMPERIALISM

As the assemblage out of which the apparatus of empire arose, imperialism defies neat definition in terms of period, place, content, or politics. Edward Said's definition (1993, 8: "the practice, the theory, and attitude of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory") highlights how formal and informal imperial actions, intellectual justifications and investigations, dispositions, aesthetics, and representations were assembled into a world-spanning whole. The imperial domain was assumed to possess seminatural processes of trade, civilization, Christianity, and domination. Russia and the USSR, the United States (Stoler, McGranahan, and Perdue 2007), and British dominions in their regional spheres of influence (Pedersen 2006) took up imperial practices that were comparable to those of European states. Attention to these comparisons and connections has been central to the study of "new imperial histories" (Howe 2010), which denaturalizes imperial relations by emphasizing the contingent networking and naming of empire. Bringing the methodology and theoretical toolkits of postcolonial studies, gender and sexuality theory, race and identity politics to the study of imperial assemblages, these new histories also have specific geographies. As Alan Lester (2013) has made clear, previous debates about the core- or periphery-led nature of imperial expansion have been replaced with a network ontology that looks at the mutual constitution of the European self and colonial other. Augmenting interests in space and place with a concern for "levels and units of analysis" (Howe 2010, 11), methodological nationalism is here supplanted with a fluid sense of mobility and exchange within empires and, to a lesser extent, between them (Grant, Levine, and Trentmann 2007). The best of these analyses recognize that "imperial networks" are limited, grounded in competing discourses, and face appropriation and contestation in places such as the Cape Colony (Lester 2010), Morant Bay and Birmingham (Hall 2002), or seventeenth-century Madras (Ogborn 2007). In addition to this attentiveness to space, a scalar appreciation of the named divisions of the empire apparatus can make us more attentive to the problematized flows of technologies, people, and goods within the

“British space” of “World-Empire-Continent-Nation-Region-Locality” (Keith 2009). The forceful coherence of “empire,” conceived not as a vertical hierarchy, but as a series of distanced networks spanning borders and boundaries, fragments under analysis into a haphazard collage of dominions, the Indian Empire, sixty colonies and protectorates, mandates, and a vast empire of informal influence.

The scalar constitution of the empire underwent major shifts in the inter-war years in the face of debates over imperial overstretch, the emergence of the modern commonwealth, controversies of protectionism and economic integration, and the question of trusteeship (Butler 2002). However, to reduce imperialism to the acts of an empire would be to underestimate the diversity of its assembled parts. Trade and industry were symbiotic with the empire but in no way reducible to it, and neither were imperial social formations. The analysis of the latter has pushed Mrinalini Sinha (2006, 16) to “a simultaneous widening and deepening of a multiply scaled mode of analysis” that attends to how imperialism assembled different societies into relationships of interdependence and interconnection, and the uneven effects resulting from these connections. This combines an analysis of macro-political operations of empire with micro-political discourses operating within practice, that is, a “multiply scaled context” (Sinha 2006, 26). Such a framework can draw our attention to geographies of humanitarianism (Lambert and Lester 2004) or imperial feminism, both of which highlight tensions within what can still be termed an imperial project, as I will examine through imperial humanitarian anti-brothel campaigns in chapter 3. Here any sense of a natural and orderly imperial domain was fractured by the feminist and racial politics of the main campaigning body, the Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (AMSH).

The AMSH was formed in 1915 by the merger of the British, Continental, and General Federation for the Abolition of Government Regulation of Prostitution and Josephine Butler’s Ladies National Association, the latter of which had campaigned so effectively against the Contagious Diseases Acts. The AMSH fought for gender equality through its general goals of achieving a high and equal standard of morality and sexual responsibility for men and women, the abolition of state-regulated prostitution, the suppression of profiteering from prostitution, and hygienic reform. Its journal, the *Shield*, documented its efforts throughout the United Kingdom, but also throughout the empire and beyond.

The *Shield* itself is a remarkably rich archive with which to examine the AMSH, but chapter 3 also makes use of the association’s diverse collected

records, stored at the Women's Library in London. As with the imperial archive in New Delhi, the AMSH had to string together representatives and issues across the empire into a coherent body that could be disciplined, defended, and funded. The data sources in the archive are phenomenally rich, as are the intensity of friendships and loyalties formed between women working across the globe. The achievements of these women can also be traced in the archives of their places of work. The AMSH appeared as a frequent correspondent in colonial archives and, in India, this left the indelible fingerprint of an astonishingly versatile, and controversial, figure. Meliscent Shephard was trained by the AMSH and sent out to Calcutta in 1928 on a three-year program, but went on to represent the AMSH in India until 1947. The influence and spread of the AMSH in India make it the main focus of chapter 3, but this necessarily becomes a study of Shephard and her controversial networking efforts in India.

As I will illustrate, there were also other British institutions vying for influence in India. Most notable of these was the British Social Hygiene Council (BSHC, named the National Council for Combating Venereal Disease between 1917 and 1925), which had been established to organize propaganda and education about sexually transmitted diseases (Legg 2013). Because it was established as a result of a Royal Commission in 1917 and funded by the British government until 1929, the organization was more aligned to the state and to curing disease scientifically than the AMSH was. The BSHC established initial but unsuccessful footholds in India in the early 1920s, ultimately being outpaced by Shephard's tireless campaigning. Both bodies were criticized for being complicit with the Indian government and of being first and foremost *white* organizations, for which social and moral hygiene was simply a new name for an older civilizing mission. This was, in large part, borne out by the groups' often racist and arrogant practices, their determined name association with empire and London, and their refusal and inability to network themselves successfully with Indian social reform groups. This was reflected in their attachments not just to London, but also to the new experiments in internationalism emerging from Geneva.

Chapter 3 opens with a contextualization of the AMSH in debates about a naturally civilizing international civil society, colonial public health, and hygiene, and outlines how the analytical categories of governmentality analysis can be used to narrate institutional and individual biographies. It then proceeds in three parts, tracing Shephard's initial three-year stay in Calcutta, her four years of independent work in Delhi, and the four years

in which she accepted a stipend from the government, leading to accusations of complicity with the colonial state that she had spent so long condemning. Each period is analyzed through the problematizations, ethos, nominalistic identities, and networked technes that allowed the AMSH to exert its influence so widely.

#### RELATIONAL SPACE, SCALE, AND SEXUALITY

The scalar construction of the urban, the national, and the imperial are the focus here. This necessarily excludes an explicit focus on other scales, which will recur throughout and have been addressed elsewhere (on the brothel see Tambe 2006; on the provincial see Legg 2012b; and on the international see Metzger 2001). What is clear is that scalar terms and networks were fundamental to interwar India. But an emphasis on scale also serves as a useful corrective to an overly networked emphasis on mobility, flows, and transit across space. As Martin Jones (2009, 493) has stressed, the case for understanding spaces primarily through their relations with other spaces has been seriously overstated, neglecting the constraints and structuring influences on spatial relations. Territorial, cultural, and political strategies often close down these relations, lived experience is often woefully deprived of the chance for openness, and material and discursive effects of spatial permanence are powerfully enforced. But mobility and fluidity should not be seen in opposition to territory and borders. Philip Steinberg (2009), for instance, has shown that European state and territorial boundaries were solidified just as sixteenth-century merchant capitalism began regularly bypassing and transgressing these very borders. How, then, should such barriers be envisaged, if they function as much through their transgression as their containment?

A broader concern over the fetishization of mobility and borderlessness, especially in writings on globalization, has prompted provisional debates over scale in a variety of disciplines. In ethnography, Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2003) have pondered the “awkward scale” of the local that contains social and economic forces from broader scales. Marilyn Strathern (1991 [2004], xv) has considered the problem of scalar organization and complexity in anthropology, while Antoinette Burton (2007) has called for a debate over method and scale in world history (also see Aslanian et al., 2013). Mariana Valverde (2009) has used scale theory to consider jurisdiction, security, and the law, just as Nancy Fraser (2010) has considered political spaces of globalization in *Scales of Justice*. It is from within the geographical discipline, however, that scale has received the

most consistent, if not resolved, discussion. Moving beyond scale as a cartographic measure of representation, Peter Taylor (1982) established a materialist scalar framework for political and historical geographies of global capitalism, replacing Wallerstein's (1974) horizontal division of the world into core/semi-periphery/periphery with a vertical division into global/national/urban. The subsequent debates about scale in geography have been phenomenally rich (Moore 2008; Herod 2011) and informed by Marxist analyses of capitalist equalization/differentiation and uneven development (Smith 2004). Here scale has been envisaged as relational, in that it is a process that emerges through practices of capital accumulation, and as that which comes to provide a vertical and material framework linking global capital to local labor. While some have welded this vertical ontology to horizontal notions of network (Jessop, Brenner, and Jones 2008), others claim this verticalism is inseparable from scalar thought and discredits scalar analysis entirely (Marston, Jones, and Woodward 2005; see Legg 2009b, for further discussion). The suggestion is that scalar categories incorporate vertical assumptions about size or level, which map onto binaries of micro/macro, agency/structure, or local/global. As other critics have shown, this can pose the global as powerful beyond reach (Gibson-Graham 1996) and romanticize local struggles (Escobar 2001). However, while scale as "level" should be guarded against, the value of scalar narrations of networks of different lengths should not be dismissed (Jonas 2006), while the continued reality of scalar social constructions cannot be wished away.

This has been made abundantly clear in work on gender and sexuality where, for instance, we are warned against macro-generalizations and micro-romanticization that surface in assumptions about domination from "above" and resistance from "below" (Basu et al. 2001). Similarly, Kathleen Barry's (1995) radical work on prostitution strives from the outset to overcome the macro/micro, personal/political division. Ann Laura Stoler's (1995) reading of Foucault's work on sexuality alongside his lecture on race and society allowed her to think through the imperial circuits of sexuality. These networks linked metropolitan sexual identities and practices to imperial anxieties and encounters, overturning earlier suggestions of a mono-directional release of repressed European libidinal energies through colonial outlets (Hyam 1990). In Stoler's later work she moved from the discursive to the intimate realm, as defined by a series of micro-political sites such as those of parenting, nursing, and illicit sex, which also formed the "affective grid of colonial politics" (Stoler 2002, 7). Though she combined the imperial and intimate scales with great skill, these remain sites of

European privilege, involving the intense surveillance and pastoral concern for the elite population; intrusions into the sexual lives of the Dutch East Indies population (or the reasons for their absence) do not gain the attention attempted in this book, and in the broader field. While Stoler drew upon Foucault's (1975–76 [2003]) *Society Must Be Defended* lectures to reread his *History of Sexuality* in terms of imperial circuits, I attempt a similar rereading of Foucault's sexuality work, but through the text of the *Birth of Biopolitics* and the geographical register of scale.

As widely acknowledged, Foucault's shift to a genealogical methodology brought his interest in power relations to bear directly onto the body (Foucault 1977b) and onto sexuality specifically. Bridging individual self-conduct and the reproduction of the species-body, sexuality was targeted by both disciplinary surveillance and the biopolitical guidance of freedoms. These practices produced sexuality, rather than repressing it, through apparatuses such as sexology (explored in chapter 2 to frame the shift in approaches to the brothel in interwar India) and hygiene science (which chapter 3 introduces in its moral and social hybridizations). While the *History of Sexuality* (Foucault 1979, 103) stressed the need to examine local geographies of sexuality, the book's broader geographies were largely underdeveloped (for contemporary work on geographies of sexuality, see Browne, Lim, and Brown 2007). As Howell (2007) has suggested, Foucault's speculations about the Eastern practice of *ars erotica* are saturated with a sensual orientalism, while the geopolitical ramifications of his work are not elaborated.

Yet a hint toward Foucault's more explicitly scalar work is embedded within his discussions of sexuality. In an interview from 1978 he suggested, "I think that, now, it will be necessary, in a sense, to take a jump backward—which does not mean to retreat but rather to retake the situation on a larger scale. And to ask, but what, in the end, is this notion of sexuality?" (Foucault et al. 2011, 387). This built upon his *History of Sexuality*, in which Foucault proposed four rules for analyzing power (Foucault 1979, 93). The rule of immanence warned against assuming that spheres, such as sexuality, existed that could be studied; this "sphere" itself would be a product of power relations that established the object of investigation in the first place. Better to study sexuality in "local centers" and study the subjugation and schemes of knowledge, what one might call networks and naming practices. The second rule reminded us of the continual variation of power, and the fourth of the tactical polyvalence of discourses, which were multiple and fragile. The third rule, however, referred to the relationship between the individual- and population-poles of biopower and dismissed any scalar association of



the individual with the small and the social body with the large. For instance, the role of a father and a head of state as governing figures was not a representative one, nor were they projections of each other “on a different scale.” Rather, they were linked through specific power mechanisms. Foucault presented the rule of “double conditioning” to address the relationship between local centers and overall strategy: “There is no discontinuity between them, as if one were dealing with two different levels (one microscopic and the other macroscopic); but neither is there homogeneity (as if the one were only the enlarged projection or the miniaturization of the other); rather, one must conceive of the double conditioning of a strategy by the specificity of possible tactics, and of tactics by the strategic envelopes that make them work” (Foucault 1979, 99–100).

How, then, do we think about and narrate geographical scale within a sexual and spatial genealogy? While attuned to the networking of body politics, genealogies resist the urge to situate dynamism, meaning, and explanation at a larger scale, reducing local examples to mere examples of a greater logic. Embedded within Foucault’s Nietzschean turn, I suggest, is the latter’s lament regarding the tendency to place “highest” and general theories or concepts first, as they often turn out to be the emptiest, or little more than the “last smoke of an evaporating reality. . . . That which is last, thinnest, and emptiest is put first, as the cause, as *ens realissimum*” (Nietzsche 1888 [2007], 19; cited in Philo 1992, 140). This is not the tale of a global structural shift, with national conjunctural movements and eventful brothel closures. The League of Nations, the British Empire, and the government of India are the elements, not origins, of the shift from segregation to suppression in interwar India. As such, the narrative methodology of this book stubbornly refuses to shunt the smaller scales of study, such as the city, to the back of the scalar hierarchy.

But why, then, not do away with scale in its entirety? First, I retain scale here because of the significance of distance; the sheer material and political energy involved in traveling over space lends scales of particular lengths particular importance. Secondly, the naming of people or things as local, national, or imperial has particular effects that must be acknowledged. These two facts lend scale a narrative role in this book that attests its historical significance, and its utility in the present, by allowing the past to be recounted in a coherent way (a historical geography of regulation in a city, a state, and an empire). But this narrative coherence of scale will be undermined by disrupting linkages between the local and the micro, the imperial and the macro. This will be done by highlighting first, the institutional

struggles to create the impression of these scalar distinctions, and, secondly, the ways through which scales of different lengths and of different naming effects constantly intrude into any tidy sense of the local, national, imperial, or international, highlighting the significance of the macro in the local or the pivotal role of micro events in global forms. As such, scales are used and evoked here under “erasure” (see Spivak, xiv–xv, in Derrida 1976), just as Agamben (2005, 36) spoke of the “*law*” to denote “the force of law without law” (cited in Coleman 2011, 129). Here, this erasure acknowledges that as a local network and a name the city has great force, but that the city is always constituted by its outsides and is a radically unstable signifier, as are states and empires.

The methodological categories I employ throughout this book have emerged from a detailed engagement with Foucault’s governmentality lecture courses. I see this as forming part of a larger project to explicate colonial governmentality as a detailed analytical methodology. As a geographer, my aim is to contribute to thinking about Foucault’s spatial (and scalar) politics in light of his recently translated works. I thus present the following reading, which provides a deeper theoretical analysis of my emphasis on natures, networks, and nominalism in relation to scale, which will hopefully be of interest to those pursuing a governmentality analysis of colonialisms, and to Foucauldians interested in the geographies of governance more broadly.

### **Scalar Governmentalities**

#### *Nature: Scale as Domain*

During his 1978–79 lecture courses Foucault explicitly used scalar terminology to describe the scope of European networks of governmentality, his methodological shift from micro to macro powers, and the domains (economy, population, society) that emerged in political thought as checks on overambitious sovereign powers. This marked an explicit turn away from his earlier scalar imagination. This element of his archaeological work has been criticized (summarized in Legg 2007b, chapter 2) for its suggestion of autonomous scalar domains of discourse. In *The Order of Things* Foucault (1970, xxii) established his object of inquiry to be the epistemological field (*episteme*) that lay between the empirical order of culture and the scientific or philosophical order of theory and interpretation. Despite his refutations, this period saw Foucault at his most verticalist and structuralist, etching out the synchronic connections in categorization between grammar and philology, natural history and biology, and wealth

and economy. The synchronic connections were split by diachronic epochal ruptures between the classical age and the modern age in the early 1800s, the latter of which saw the emergence in the human sciences of “man.” Foucault returned to these themes in the *Birth of Biopolitics* lectures, but with a different conception of man (*homo oeconomicus*) and of the historically contingent *production* of the *belief* in epistemic domains, not their use as a basis for methodological investigation. Yet, even in the volume that systematized this methodology, Foucault had begun his attack on scalar thinking in historiography, if not epistemology. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault (1972, 10) famously insisted on the shift from total, civilizational, essentialist histories to general, dispersed, and local histories (see Philo 1992, 143).

This shift would eventually result in Foucault’s Nietzschean turn to power, the body, and genealogy. The micro-political sites it discovered have been richly mined, but such studies have been criticized for neglecting attention to broader scales. It was, in part, to answer such criticisms that Foucault sought to connect changes in power over bodies to broader shifts in government, although his first attempts to do this retained his archaeological focus on epochal shifts (see Collier 2009). In his first *History of Sexuality* volume (published in France in 1976, translated in 1979, 25), Foucault linked changes in individuals’ understandings of their sexuality to the emergence of “population” as an economic and political problem, in relation to wealth, manpower, and resources, in the eighteenth century. This domain was thought to have its own specific phenomena and peculiar variables (birth and death rates and life expectancy as related to diet and habitat). Sex linked these general processes to the individual, making it the target of individualizing, disciplinary surveillance and general, biopolitical measures to regulate the population. The scalar shift in Foucault’s methodology is explicitly described in the contemporary *Society Must Be Defended* (Foucault 1975–76 [2003], 242) lectures, where his earlier focus on the disciplinary anatomo-politics of the individual was conjoined with an emphasis on man-as-species, or population, in biopolitics. The combination of these two scalar poles marked the emergence of biopower, power over life, not just territory. Yet, as Agamben (1998) famously critiqued, such powers were dissociated here from the sovereign’s powers to “take life or let live,” in pursuit of a modern age of normalization. Stephen Collier (2009, 85) has argued that the 1978–79 lectures elaborated biopower into a historically and methodologically complete concept of governmentality that was less epochal, relating sovereign power to biopower, and more attentive to

spatial difference. But these lectures further elaborated the significance of the “emergence” of semiautonomous domains with their own logics, whose “naturalness” checked the ambitions of authoritarian governments and ushered in the conditions for liberal governmentalities.

In the *Security, Territory, Population* lectures, Foucault ([1977–78] 2007, 22) suggested that in the artificial milieu of the town, the problem of the “naturalness” of the human species in their milieu emerged (see Terranova 2009). Here it was acknowledged that interventions in the town were necessary to guarantee population processes. This logic was encapsulated more completely in physiocratic (literally rule [-*crat*] of nature [*physio*], 90) approaches to the economy that, again, detected regularities and processes (such as the price of grain) that demonstrated their own laws *but* were tied to the *realities* of grain (soil, climate, transport, demand; see Foucault [1977–78] 2007, 36). In place of an archaeology of physiocratic thought, Foucault’s genealogy of their economic episteme led to technologies of power (the objectives, governing strategies, and program of political action that such thought initiated). This analysis of the economy inevitably led to the market, a self-curbing reality that provided a window onto the checks, balances, and laws of the economy, but which had to be maintained and protected (Mitchell 1999 [2006]). The domain of the economy was thus thought to be semiautonomous, to have a nature that needed sustaining. Bernard Harcourt’s (2011) exploration of the “illusion of the free market” has detailed how the physiocratic belief in natural orderliness was revised through Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham into eventual thinking on equilibrium theory, which sustains the idea of a realm of natural, economic order, and masks the regulation and disciplining of the market by the state that this nature requires.

Explicitly reflecting on the scalar consequences of this shift in thought, Foucault (1977–78 [2007], 42) identified two emergent “levels of phenomena”: the population, for the government’s economic-political action, and the multiplicity of individuals. The latter became pertinent to governmental thought only in that, if properly managed, maintained, and encouraged, they could produce effects at the scale of the population (see Selmeczi 2009, on the individual abandonment this can lead to). The processes that operated at the scale of the population were described as centrifugal and “aleatory” (dependent on uncertain events), and constituted their own “effective reality.” The politics of this reality was the foundation of liberalism because, for such processes to work most effectively, they required a multiplicity of *free* individuals, the rational decisions of which

were the reality upon which the laws of population, economy, and society were grounded.

Stressing again the links, and differences, to his archaeological work, Foucault ([1977–78] 2007, 77–78) revisited his *Order of Things* interests armed with the concept of population and found it to be central to the shifts he had earlier described: from grammar to popular philology; to evolutionary “populations” mediating organisms and milieu in biology; to the emergence of the sciences of life, language, labor, and production. The latter shift would become Foucault’s central focus; the emergence of political economy as the science of government that instructed the sovereign to stand back, instead of intervening in the disposition of things. This would be the focus of the 1978–79 lectures, but even here Foucault drew attention to the parallel, potentially agonistic, emergence of the social: “It is society as a naturalness specified to man’s life in common that the *économistes* ultimately bring to light as a domain, a field of objects, as a possible domain of analysis, knowledge and intervention. Society as a specific field of naturalness peculiar to man, which will be called civil society, emerges as the vis-à-vis of the state” (Foucault 1977–78 [2007], 349). Foucault concluded the 1978 lectures by defining the elements of the new governmentality as society, economy, population, security, and freedom. Liberty was the reality upon which the naturalness of the three scalar domains—analysis, knowledge, and intervention—depended; their processes, and a sufficient degree of freedom, would be guaranteed by security apparatuses whose purpose was precisely to bridge both the anatomo- and biopolitical poles of biopower, but also to both know and govern the multiplicity and the population. Foucault’s *Birth of Biopolitics* expanded upon the scalar arguments made in the previous lectures, but addressed them much more explicitly:

What I wanted to do—and this was what was at stake in my analysis—was to see the extent to which we could accept that the analysis of micro-powers, or of procedures of governmentality, is not confined by definition to a precise domain determined by a sector of the scale, but should be considered simply as a point of view, a method of decipherment which may be valid for the whole scale, whatever its size. In other words, the analysis of micro-powers is not a question of scale, and it is not a question of a sector, it is a question of point of view. (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 186)

The above quote shows how directly the question of domain and scale was central to Foucault’s self-description of his project by March 1979. This

quote, however, is a direct adaptation of four pages that Foucault left out of the preceding year's lecture course, where the language was that of micro to macro, rather than of domains (see Foucault 1977–78 [2007], 119). But if these two lecture courses are linked by the analysis of governmentality, they are significantly different in certain ways. Foucault (1978–79 [2008], 2) opened his first lecture by stressing that he would be moving from an analysis of applications of the art of government to the reasoning behind and reflection upon government; that is, how a “domain of government” was established so as to improve governmental practice. As such, Mike Gane (2008, 361) sees the *Biopolitics* lectures as a top-down analysis of political-economic texts, while the *Security* lectures focused on a bottom-up analysis of liberalism. Collier (2009, 94), likewise, comments on the greater emphasis on “thinkers” in *Biopolitics*, but stresses how Foucault's understanding of thought had evolved. Against archaeological notions of autonomous discourses speaking through subjects, the later Foucault was concerned with ethical self-formation and critical thought. To understand, for instance, the “emergence of the market” in eighteenth-century thought requires a “polyhedral” appreciation of gold and monetary supply, demographic growth, changing agricultural production, and the technicalization of government, which were inseparable from the way economic problems were being given theoretical form (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 33).

The recurrent analytical challenge in these lectures is to expose the domains and processes that are commonly assumed to constitute the primary nature of sovereignty, the state, or civil society as historically produced practices of government. As such, the existence of universal domains employed in sociology, history, or political philosophy is shown to be historical a priori, creations of a specific scalar imagination (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 3). Yet such thought acted back on the realities it described, intervening through the application of rationalities from the natural sciences to “society” and “economy” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 115). Through recasting the *Security* lectures in this new perspective, sixteenth-century *Raison d'État* was said by Foucault to have imagined the state as an autonomous reality that was dominated by laws above or external to it. Yet while the European balance of power checked the state externally, mercantilism presented the police state with no internal check (Terranova 2009, 237). The emergence in the eighteenth century of a scale of economic processes, as defined by political economics, beyond the state provided this check, not through the dramatic, external language of rights or law that the sovereign *should* not transgress, but through the internal realization that the sovereign *could*

not manage the laws better than they naturally managed themselves under conditions of sustained freedom. Liberal constitutionalism would thus work to displace the leader (in terms reminiscent of Carl Schmitt (1922 [2005]), who “in complete sovereignty and full reason, will decide on this internal limitation” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 12), with free discussion and conflict over how to govern. Sustained freedom provided the government’s new role: the creation of *homo oeconomicus*, as exercised through the new reality of civil society (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 295). Whilst checking overextensions of state sovereignty, civil society also allowed the state to access society and to mold a multiplicity capable of sustaining a healthy population and profitable economy. The latter would be accessed by government through the market, but the nature and complexity of the scalar domain the market revealed meant that the government itself would be judged by its truth-telling (“veridiction,” Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 31; although see Walter 2008, for a critical reading of Foucault’s periodization of the emergence of the “economy”).

The existence of these domains was not, however, totally harmonious. (Neo-)liberal theorists in post-Second World War Germany argued that, just as classical liberalism in the eighteenth century had intervened into urban infrastructures to remedy the social breakdown and epidemiological disasters of Victorian cities, the state should intervene to buttress society from the untrammelled consequences of free market economics (an anti-naturalistic conception, for Lemke 2001, 193). However, the obverse to this investment was that heavy interventions would be made to guarantee conducive conditions for the market in “social factors” (technology, science, law, geography) but not in economic processes themselves (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 141). American neoliberalism, however, viewed society as part of the economy and applied market logics across the range of governmental commitments. The historical span of this genealogy of liberalism is obviously extensive, but running through the 1978–79 lectures is a consistent narrative that returns to the analytical categories that have emerged from governmentality studies (see Legg 2007b, 12) (see table I.1).

Foucault thus provides a political theology of sorts: describing how domains of autonomous laws that should govern individual conduct, previously preserved for God and divine law, became secularized and operationalized to check the sovereign and limit government. But running throughout this work is Foucault’s obsession in the late 1970s: power. Before his comment on the scalar point of view quoted above, Foucault (1978–79 [2008], 186) reflected that his object had been to find concrete content for the analysis of power relations. Indeed, power was said to constitute the domain of



**TABLE 1.1 Analytical categories for governmentality studies**

Problematizations	The town, the unchecked sovereign
Ethos	Antieconomic-sovereignty, pro-circulation, pro-liberal freedoms
Techne	Security apparatuses of civil society, political economy, and biopolitics
Visibility	Statistics, social mapping
Identity	<i>Homo oeconomicus</i> , the liberal subject
Episteme	Domains of society, economy, population

relations referred to as governmentality. This power was exercised by apparatuses of security, but this power was also “polyhedral,” self-contradictory, and assemblage-like. One critical position would be to focus on such contradictions and resistances within the creation and governance of such domains. But another is to return to the mundane governmentalities at the level of “concrete analysis.”

Given that Foucault remained committed to such analyses, what should we make of his obsession with the emergence of belief in scalar domains, social naturalness, and processes at levels removed from the multitude? I contend that this shift of attention from practice to thought was intended to show that many taken-for-granted assumptions about the ontological makeup of the world are historically contingent, and thus fragile and malleable. The project is one of de-reification, of examining scalar formations as networks of particular scopes, and which manifest themselves through particular naming effects.

Analyzing power thus involves de-reifying processes which are pro-claimed to operate semiautonomously at particular scales. In the following chapters the natures that will be analyzed include those of society and the city, the supposedly civilizing law and order of the state, and the cleansing and uplifting nature of the British Empire. This scalar approach will be replaced with one which examines the networked relationships between actors over varying distances, and the attempts to name them into being.

Investigating these two alternative approaches to scale will provide us with a methodology for conducting a critical scalar analysis of governmentalities that raises fundamentally geographical questions, such as: Were geographical scalar domains (the international, imperial, national, or urban)

thought to have their own processes? And how might analyzing scales as horizontal networks of distance provide a tool in the attempt to de-reify assumptions about scalar domains?

### *Network: Scale as Distance*

Foucault's inattention to scales (of length) greater than the local or national has been well criticized, but the 1978–79 lectures marked a brief but significant engagement with the world outside of Europe. The potential of a governmentality approach to explore the “global” through micro-political sites and practices, combining an interest in local studies with an analytical focus on the links between micro and macro scales (Merlingen 2006), is one of the most interesting methodological developments to come out of the 1978–79 lecture courses. Hints at these trans-scalar (“domains”) connections across space (distance) had been hinted at in previous works. Biopower was originally defined by its “lines of penetration” which incorporated both abnormal individuals and normal families. The latter were understood not as private domains beyond state sovereignty, but as devices of sexual saturation: “All this made the family, even when brought down to its smallest dimensions, a complicated *network*, saturated with multiple, fragmentary, and mobile sexualities” (Foucault 1979, 46, emphasis added). The *Security* lectures of 1978 had shown how the household was transformed from a model for the sovereign to a networked space to govern *through*, the ideal site to target the multiplicity in the hope of regulating the natural processes of the population. The *Biopolitics* lectures of 1978–79 continued this network approach to the home, by looking at how American neoliberalism extended market logic to all scalar domains. Families could thus be studied in terms of their investment strategies and as a series of interactions based on capital and calculation (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 245). As the basis of the stable laws of economy, society, and population, the individual subject should not just be an introverted one, protecting his or her judicial *rights*, but must be an extroverted one of economic *interests*. The market and the social contract are thus spatially opposed: “In short, the individual's enjoyment is linked to a course of the world that outstrips him and eludes him in every respect” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 277). But if an individual's interests were increasingly networked, so were apparatuses of security; even Bentham's panopticon was returned to (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 67), not as a regional mechanism, but as a general political formula for government. This was, however, an apparatus that detracted from freedom, rather than depended upon it.

The interconnections between governmentalities that networked across scalar domains and debates over freedom are at the center of current attempts to think of governmentalities beyond the scalar domain and territorial boundaries of the nation-state. The colonial governmentality school has made a substantial contribution to this debate, but has often focused on the micro-political application of governmentalities, in translated forms in colonial contexts, rather than on imperial or international governmentalities that circulated, compared, connected, and critiqued. Such injunctions have been made by the new imperial history school, but debates in international relations are also using Foucault's newly translated lectures to move beyond debates about discourse or biosecurity to consider global governmentalities (Kiersey and Weidner 2009), international law (Aalberts and Golder 2012), and the broader applicability of Foucault's theories of power (Kiersey 2009). Just as Foucault's genealogical lectures broke down reified domains through his historical research, Jan Selby (2007) has shown how Foucault has also been used to break down contemporary realist notions of sovereignty, anarchy, and state, exposing them as discursive constructs. Yet, this has usually been done by analyzing treatises rather than examining the procedures through which states were actually constituted, and how they gained the impression of stability and reality. As such, Halvard Leira (2009) has demonstrated the need for historically specific studies of interstate governmentality, recognizing the shifting sense of diplomacy (which Foucault neglected) as the administrative states (of c. 1580–1650) evolved, through the reason of state, into the liberal states of political-economy in the early 1800s. This specificity would also recognize that governmentalities were not just used to govern through freedom, that colonial states had to be made as much as governed through, and that liberalism and theories about it have always been directed beyond the domestic to the international (Hindess 2004).

Foucault recognized this in the 1978–79 lectures, which in some part rectify his previous neglect of both international relations and Europe's exploitative relationship with its constitutive outside (see Legg 2007a). The *Security* lectures positioned Europe itself as a postimperial space, establishing order following the breakdown of the Holy Roman Empire, but also as a state system dependent upon colonial conquest (Legg 2011b). After Spain and Portugal's quasi-monopolistic colonial and maritime empires, European states could re-envision themselves, outside Europe, as operating within an open economic and political field (Foucault 1977–78 [2007], chapter 11; contrast to Schmitt 1950 [2003]). But the emphasis here was on

how the diplomatic-military apparatus provided one of the three antecedents for modern security apparatuses of liberalism, having inward effects on states, their relations, and on the concept of Europe itself: “Europe as a geographical region of multiple states, without unity but with differences between the big and small and having a relationship of utilization, colonization, and domination with the rest of the world. That is what Europe is” (Foucault 1977–78 [2007], 354).

The *Biopolitics* lectures contain some scattered references to the influence of imperialism on British liberalism, and the internal threat of an over-expansive state establishing endogenous imperialism over civil society (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 107, 187). But in terms of scalar networks, the most significant shift is the acknowledgment that the third characteristic of the liberal art of government was “international equilibriums, or Europe and the international space of liberalism” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 51). Whereas mercantilism had a zero-sum conception of national wealth (one state’s wealth would increase only at the expense of another’s), political economics suggested that through effective competition the buyer and seller could profit. Europe could thus progress beyond an imperial unity or a balanced peace to a world-dominating program of collective enrichment, as long as there were permanent and continuous inputs: “It is necessary to summon around Europe, and for Europe, an increasingly extended market and even, if it comes to it, everything in the world that can be put on the market. In other words, we are invited to a globalization of the market when it is laid down as a principle, and an objective, that the enrichment of Europe must be brought about as a collective and unlimited enrichment, and not through the enrichment of some and impoverishment of others” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 55). This marks, however, a critical failure in Foucault’s analysis. As so often in the *Biopolitics* lectures, his refusal to adopt a critical standpoint often leaves his voice undifferentiated from the liberal theory he describes, despite acknowledging that the world becomes the “stake” for European “players.” The zero-sum game remained, but it was the primitive accumulation of colonial resources and labor that supplied it, and the native dispossessed who paid the price. Foucault never mentions the violence inherent to this expansion of the lack of freedom of those encompassed by it (see Cooper 2004). It remains clear, however, in the lectures that the expanded scale of capitalism is a vital component to understanding liberal governmentalities: “I think there are many signs of this appearance of a new form of global rationality, of a new calculation on the scale of the world” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 56). The challenge is to consider these

rationalities and their effects at the scale of the world, through networks of differing lengths within this recalculated world. These networks could function as apparatuses that securitized, regulated, and surveilled, but also as assemblages that fragmented borders, encouraged movements and migrations, and questioned the cartographic narrative of world spaces. In the chapters that follow these networks will be laid out in detail: the enmeshing of state and civil society in Delhi; the piecing together of the government of India out of its provincial governments; and the letters, mobilities, and ideas that Meliscent Shephard pulled together in her imperial campaign to rid India of brothels. This will put to use one critical methodology for challenging the impression that scales have domains and processes of their own. But these networks of different lengths were inseparable from their names. Examining this process of naming provides the second methodology with which to critically appraise scalar practices.

### *Nominalism: Scale as Naming Effect*

According to Geoff Eley, “‘globalization’ as a socio-economic, cultural, and political postulate (as a set of powerful and insistent claims about changes in the really existing world) is just as crucial to the process of globalization as the existence of globalization as a demonstrable social fact (the supposed structural primacy of global integration)” (2007, 158). Eley encourages us to appreciate that globalization affects us as much through ordinary language as through the changes in capitalism and social formation that we can access through scientific analysis; that “intellectual” histories of globalization are as important as “actual” histories; and, most important, that phenomena, events, and trends exist in a dialectical relationship with the language of social understanding. Each historical phase of “globalization” and the terms used to comprehend it require attention, in addition to a horizontal analysis of geographical unevenness and differentiation (Eley 2007, 160).

Foucault presents us with an apposite framework for this project, having long insisted that discourses are as much material, performative, and institutional as they are textual, visual, or ideological. A “semiotics of materiality” in world history would, thus, not just examine texts or inscriptions of reality, but would examine technical realities and the interlinked constitution of these realities (Merlingen 2006). This is what Ian Hacking (2002, 2) refers to as dialectical realism (the interaction of what *is* and our *conceptions* of what is) or dynamic nominalism (the interaction of naming and the named). Drawing on Foucault, Hacking (2002, 40) showed that while natural scientific categories did not actually change the materials they

described, social scientific categories could ontologically create people and actions, who would then alter the categories themselves. This was the new approach to the thinking subject that Collier noted in the *Biopolitics* lectures, and it gives us another tool to de-reify scales as domains and understand their impacts as networks.

Foucault (1978–79 [2008], 4) made the nominalist capacities of governmentalities apparent from the beginning of the 1978–79 lectures by stressing that a state is both an existential given, but also an objective to be constructed: “The state is at once that which exists, but which does not exist enough.” It was the investigation of this dynamic that spanned Foucault’s projects: not to expose a hidden object of knowledge, not to expose illusions, but to show “how a particular regime of truth, and therefore not an error, makes something that does not exist able to become something. It is not an illusion since it is precisely a set of practices, real practices, which established it and thus imperiously marks it out in reality” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 19). It was from this premise that Foucault’s antirealist, antiessentialist approach to the state emerged (also see Harcourt 2011, 48). While without essence, the state does have a reality as the effect and profile of perpetual *statification*: “The state is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 77). While the *Security* lectures had made this clear, the *Biopolitics* lectures extended this methodology to the scalar domains of economy, population, and society; none of these domains existed until they were imagined, but they gained a reality through this imagination. But how much? Civil society, for instance, was not a natural given, not a “primary and immediate reality” but a part of modern, governmental technology. But “to say that it belongs to governmental technology does not mean that it is purely and simply its product or that it has no reality” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 297). Like madness and sexuality, civil society is a “transactional reality,” a transitional figure that is real, although it didn’t always exist, “born precisely from the interplay of relations of power and everything which constantly eludes them, at the interface, so to speak, of governors and governed” (Foucault 1978–79 [2008], 297). While naming and language are subject to apparatuses of grammar, censoring, and discourse, language readily plays upon the assemblage-like potential of the imagination, mischievous word-play, and endless mutability.

While Foucault’s analysis was usually endogenous to the state, such transactional realities also “function not so much to represent as to constitute the world of international politics” (Selby 2007, 326). The state-as-effect

was not just a political technology of government. It was a governmentality imbricating biopower and sovereign power; the performance of the state enacted as much sovereign exclusivity over a bounded territory as it legitimized a bureaucracy or political philosophy. So with the city. Its culture, reputation, economy, and administration were consolidated into not just an intramural or regional persona, but a scale of subordinate but identifiable sovereignty. Engin Isin (2007) has identified how we should de-essentialize such relationships and expose them as the effects of scalar apparatuses of capture. But what of empires, or international leagues? How have they been orchestrated to create the impression of semiautonomous scales? How can we analyze their networks and nominalist effects to undercut this impression, exposing their nodes of violence, fragility, contradiction, and complexity? And what types of reality did they draw upon to continually reterritorialize and rescale their apparatuses in the face of both entropy and willed efforts at de-territorialization and descaling? The empirical material that follows will show how campaigns were launched to protect the name of respectable cities by stigmatizing prostitutes, how national sites of scandal were used to insist upon local interventions, and how the name of the British Empire was used to justify the eradication of the brothel as a way of life.

One of the complaints we can raise against the governmentality methodology is that it is too attentive to apparatuses and neglectful of the assemblages from which they arose. The “polyhedral” appreciation of the sheer diversity of assemblages often gives way to a Eurocentric and state-centric emphasis upon the stabilization of governing techniques into stratifying institutional apparatuses. In the chapters that follow, three scales of analysis will be used to show how apparatuses of ordering were constantly undoing and being undone. The stable impression of natural processes and domains (civil society and the urban, sexuality and the Raj, hygiene and imperialism) will be exposed through attention to the desperate and consuming efforts to create networks (the local, the national, and a British transnationalism) and evoke names (the city, the government of India, and the Empire) that would enable the switch from segregation to suppression as the solution to the problem of prostitution. Some of these features are picked out below: they will be referred to recurrently through the chapters and will be systematically drawn together in the conclusion (see table I.2).

The methodological question this raises, and which I will consistently return to throughout this book, is, why bother with scale? If the aim is to disprove that scalar processes exist in some semiautonomous, natural domain, and to show that they actually only exist in networked and nominal-



**TABLE 1.2 Approach to natures, networks, and nominalism throughout the book chapters**

	Chapter 1: Delhi	Chapter 2: SITA	Chapter 3: AMSH
NATURE (the challenge)	URBAN: expose pro- duction of civil soci- ety and sexuality	RAJ: expose law and ordering as power and governing	IMPERIAL: expose the myth of the cleansing empire
NETWORK (the features)	LOCAL: state and vol- untary association alliances and resis- tance networks	NATIONAL: move- ment of legislation, traffickers, and prostitutes	WORLD: stringing together London, Delhi, and pro- vincial centers
NOMINALISM (the naming)	CITY: stigmatization of women as threaten- ing and mislocated	STATE: scandalous sites and central/ local divisions	EMPIRE: an imperial morality of self-control

ist processes that are produced “on the ground,” why not just describe these sites? This is because scales cannot be wished away; their networked and nominalist effects, though transactional realities, are socially and spatially real. The methodological challenge is to represent this multidimensional reality in writing (which progresses unidirectionally from left to right, line after line). This is an intentionally unresolved tension that courses throughout the chapters that follow. The form of each chapter retains scale as a narrative device and focuses on a scale of a particular name and length. But the overtone of the chapter structure is productively undermined by two further scalar devices. First, each chapter constantly returns to a site, the brothel, and thus shows how this singular space encapsulated scales from the genital to the global. Secondly, the scalar overtone of each chapter is enlivened by perennial undertones of other scales: of national acts, imperial campaigners, and internationalist traveling commissions in Delhi; of local bill campaigns, imperial advocacy, and international surveillance of national legislation; and the domestic offices, national imaginaries, and global networks assembled by Meliscent Shephard. I hope that these natures, networks, and names, as well as these scales, apparatuses, and assemblages, provoke others to consider the scalar politics of the worlds they study and the words they write.

## NOTES

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### INTRODUCTION

1. League of Nations, *Traffic in Women and Children: Summary, Prepared by Secretariat, of Annual Reports for the Year 1930* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1932), 7.
2. The photograph was taken by Bourke-White in c. 1946 and is catalogued under the title “Indian prostitutes peeking out fr. doorways of their brothel” in Lahore. Although she published widely on her experience of working in India (Bourke-White 1951, 1963, chapters 24 and 25), this image goes without comment, just as it does not appear in a collection of Bourke-White’s Indian works (Kapoor 2010). Most attention is drawn to her famous photographs of Gandhi and of the aftermath of partition violence. The women depicted on this book’s cover (and the just visible male in the second room) remain inscrutable.
3. See League of Nations, *Commission of Enquiry into Traffic in Women and Children in the East: Report to the Council* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1932), 344.
4. “Victory in India: The Cantonment System Crumbling,” *Shield*, 3rd ser., 2, no. 2 (1919): 79–85.
5. Delhi State Archives (henceforth DA)/Chief Commissioner’s files (henceforth CC)/Education/1928/6(26)B.
6. DA/CC/Public/1939/8(95).
7. *All India Women’s Conference, Diamond Jubilee, 1927–87* (All India Women’s Conference, New Delhi, 1987), 27.
8. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (henceforth NMML)/Delhi Criminal Investigation Department files/IV/20.

9. "Delhi Women's League: At a Glance, 1927–2004," in *Platinum Jubilee and Women Achievers Awards: 20 April 2004* (All India Women's Conference, New Delhi, 2004).
10. Thanks to Dan Clayton for drawing my attention to the scalar dimensions of subaltern historiography.

#### CHAPTER 1: CIVIL ABANDONMENT

1. Pramatha Banerjee, "The Social and the Political: A History in the Light of Today," a paper presented at a "South Asian Governmentalities" workshop organized by myself and Deana Heath at the Jawaharlal Nehru Institute of Advanced Studies, JNU, New Delhi, 11 November 2011.
2. Delhi State Archives (henceforth DA)/Lock Hospital files (henceforth LH)/1873/74.
3. DA/Chief Commissioner's Files (henceforth CC)/Local Self Government (henceforth LSG)/1940/2(97).
4. DA/CC/LSG/1940/2(97).
5. DA/LH/1870/27.
6. DA/CC/Home/1919/70B.
7. DA/CC/Home/1919/70B.
8. National Archives of India (henceforth NA)/Home/Police/1916/December/64–67A; "Regulated Prostitution within the British Empire," *Shield*, 3rd ser., 2, no. 4 (1919): 152–58.
9. DA/CC/Education/1928/4(16)B.
10. Municipal Corporation of Delhi files (henceforth MCD)/Special meeting/9 January 1929. Thanks to Anish Vanaik.
11. MCD/Special meeting/9 January 1929.
12. DA/CC/Education/1929/6(11)B/Volume II.
13. DA/CC/Education/1930/6(16).
14. DA/CC/LSG/1940/2(97).
15. Editorial, *Delhi Social Service* (Organ of the Central Social Service League) 1, no. 1 (1931).
16. DA/Deputy Commissioner's files (henceforth DC)/1927/64.
17. DA/CC/Education/1931/4(30)B.
18. DA/CC/Education/1931/4(30)B.
19. DA/CC/Education/1931/4(30)B.
20. DA/CC/Education/1931/4(30)B.
21. Memorandum and appendix submitted to Mr. A. P. Hume, 20 June 1936, Delhi Public Library. For contextualization of this report see Legg (2006).
22. Legislative Assembly/27 February 1938/1217.
23. DA/CC/LSG/1938/821.
24. India Office Records and Library file, the British Library (henceforth IORL)/V/8/213.
25. IORL/V/8/209.
26. DA/CC/LSG/1939/2(3)/Volume II and III.
27. *Hindustan Times*, 2 June 1939.