REFUGING CONTINUITY, NARRATING POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY: NEPALI-SPEAKING BHUTANESE REFUGEES' NAVIGATION OF THE BIOPOLITICS OF DISPLACEMENT, CAMP, AND COMMUNITY

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Dedications

To my parents, Prem Chaulagain and Prem Kumari Chaulagain, for their tireless support, love, and encouragement.

Abstract

This dissertation examines the narrated experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees from different religious groups, now residing in Southern Alberta. On average, they spent about two decades in seven refugee camps in Nepal. It examines from a biopolitical perspective their accounts of displacement, transition, and resettlement across three key sites: Bhutan, refugee camps in Nepal, and Canada. Utilizing the work of four social and political theorists—Michel Foucault, Hannah Arendt, Giorgio Agamben, and Achille Mbembe— I bring a contextual discussion into conversation with narratives through which Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees understand the politics of their designation as "refugees," and "homeless," and their experience of homesickness as both a mode of objectification and a form of subject-formation. I privilege their own articulation of political and social agency and of continuity in the complex transition from camp to community. The conduct of this project involved multiple methods, including semi-structured interviews and ethnography, and subsequently discourse and narrative analysis. The accounts discussed are from interviews conducted in 2021. They deal with state violence, displacement, homelessness, statelessness, racism, and discrimination. National and international refugee biopolitics includes efforts to place refugee spaces and subjectivities in a "state of exception" under the banner of "humanitarianism." Such efforts close off claims to political rights and calls for repatriation. They accompany disciplinary regulation and normalization of refugee populations, application of labels supposedly identifying inherent characteristics of "refugees" or "migrants" (here identified collectively as "refugeeness"), and various forms of death that I term "necrobiopolitical" and that involve passive neglect, active death-dealing, or resistant self-harm. However, a key point of this thesis is that the refugees interviewed continued to identify themselves as political subjects and agents. A study of refugee biopolitics must also

account for this persistence of political subjectivity, expressed in assertions of citizenship and a "right to be governed," in descriptions of practical survival and self-organization in the camps, and in responses to discrimination in the resettlement phase. This study contributes to a new approach to the definition, management, policing, and regulation of refugee agency, analyzing concepts and practices that produce "the refugee" as a category of biopolitical management across different geographical locations. However, it refuses to discount persistent assertions of that agency in homesickness and claims to citizenship and civic ability. This study will help policymakers not only to formulate ways to manage future refugee flows to countries promising or refusing refuge or resettlement but also to recognize refugees (who may in future be from any part of the globe and any social sector) as agents with rights to political subjectivity and a say in their destinies.

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One of the most important lessons learned during this journey is that when a problem comes to you, disguising it as a companion becomes a real problem. This dissertation will always remind me of the obstructions and plights I underwent from the beginning to the end of my graduate study in Canada. While reading this dissertation, I can visualize multiple images of roadblocks that came my way in various forms, and the strengths I needed to overcome them. It thus reflects a strong sense of self-guidance, self-motivation, commitment, passion, ability, and resilience necessary to catch a long-awaited dream. I would like to acknowledge all the obstacles I encountered throughout this excursion, because they became part of the foundational stimulus for this success.

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List of Abbreviations

AMDA	Association of Medical Doctors of Asia
CBS	Canadian Bhutanese Society
CDO	Chief District Officer
CEO	Certificate of Origin
CMA	Community Medical Assistant
CMC	Camp Management Committee
EU	European Union
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MJC	Ministerial Joint Committee
RCU	Refugee Control Unit
SALAS	Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WFP	World Food Programme

Introduction: Approaches to Understanding the Politics of "Refugeeness"

What is a "Refugee"?

To be a refugee is to engage in relations with individuals and organizations that are not of one's choice. It is to experience time as something out of one's control: one may wait for long periods of time for some official decision or be forced to make decisions immediately as a consequence of unforeseen developments or the arbitrary actions of others. It is to face fear and uncertainty. But as this thesis argues, it is also to be defined by other people and by organizations, and to be defined in terms of imposed characteristics that one is assumed to have inherently. To be a refugee is to be required to engage with these circumstances and definitions. To be a refugee is also to engage with them in terms of a self-definition and a lived history that may be at odds with them. Finally, to be a refugee is to struggle to maintain some agency in the terms of engagement; some way to provide a refuge for one's own sense of oneself as having a place of origin, a former citizenship, and a culture, and as having a *claim for these to be recognized* based on that sense of self. Thus, to be a refugee is to survive, individually and as a member of a displaced collectivity. But to keep one's culture and civic identity alive, and at times, even to keep one's body alive, in the circumstances of displacement, encampment and resettlement, involves resistance to powers that may wish actively to make those things die, or more passively, to allow them to die. This thesis argues that being designated a refugee is not simply to be rendered unpolitical. Rather, being a refugee is a politically-defined condition of occupying a distinct space in which political activity *continues to occur* despite official attempts to deny it political standing. The camp thus, in short, remains a political society, even when that is denied by neighbouring nation states or international regimes of refugee-management.

However, within the field of refugee studies, scholars in several disciplines have recently disputed various research efforts that have attempted to incorporate factors—such as war, racialization, and institutional violence—that have affected people's social and political lives and pushed them to refugee status. Also, there is an ongoing debate over labelling refugees based on perceptions of them as poor, weak, uneducated, and vulnerable. Arguably, this is an indicator that some scholars still need to recognize and to contend with racial bias that constructs refugees in terms of a Third-World image, as poor and also as stateless (Espiritu, 2014). Other scholars argue that the word "refugee" itself is problematic and that its past construction and misrepresentation needs to be replaced with a phrase that does not allow the creation of ~~a~~ specific individual and collective subjects that are easily reduced to images of the harmed, the poor, the weak, the dependent, stateless and the passive (Espiritu, 2014; Trinh, 2010). "Damage-centred" research in the social sciences, based on such concepts, promotes a single-dimensional perspective for categorizing and evaluating and examining refugee populations as destroyed, helpless, and miserable, to be cared for and managed by others (Espiritu, 2014; Tuck, 2009).

This study attempts to respond to some critical questions that also guide its inquiry, concerning the construction, production, reproduction, and discursive formation of refugees as defined by certain qualities and characteristic treated as to some degree as inherent, that I refer to collectively as "refugeeness". Malkki (1995) argues that refugeeness is a legal, social, and political idea constructed by and within the domain of international refugee regimes. Refugeeness is a political construct that begins with the discursive definition of refugees as objects of humanitarian intervention and gradually moves beyond, concerning itself also with people's subjective experiences relating to the history of their flight from the country of origin (Lacroix, 2004). During the Cold War, a myth of refugeeness was constructed in terms of a

delineation between what was seen as the uncivilized East and the civilized West. Refugeeness thereby came to serve as a 'moral-political tactic' to define displaced persons as refugees in terms of the discursive ideas and practices of this 'civilized/uncivilized binary (Lippert, 1999; Espiritu, 2014). Refugeeness as discussed in this study is politically and socially constructed in the activities and discourses of national and international refugee regimes, and legitimated through the discursive formation and institutionalization of policies and practices that explicitly and implicitly have consequences that remain a burden on refugees, continuing to afflict their lives with a sense of liminality and fear.

"Refugeeness," Power, and Critical Refugee Studies

To examine every dynamics of refugee and forced immigration, a theoretical and methodological framework is needed for establishing a genealogy[1] of the problems. Most social and critical theories are introduced or produced based on case studies, political realities, and practices of Western countries that cannot accurately encompass the distinctive specifics of non-Western political scenarios. In other words, listening carefully to personal narratives concerning the history of cultural, social and political identities, and closely examining the lived experience

[1] In *Discipline and Punish* (1975) Foucault employed genealogy as a sort of historical ethnography to study the development and transformation of particular linkages between the European penal system and political apparatuses, between the mid-eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries. Whereas 'archaeology', which Foucault defined as the study of the articulation of discourse and institutional practices at a given point in or 'layer' of time, genealogy explores specific discursive and institutional transformations that occur over time. Genealogical research is specific, detailed, and empirical, but not positivist because it does not take for granted a 'developmental' significance conventionally supplied from present-day discourse to the particular objects it examines. Genealogy takes the exercise, practice, and employment of power to be multivalent, contingent and polysemic; to study power is a matter of painstaking reconstruction rather than "sifting" through "evidence" to find items of "significance" and discard the rest.

of refugees through field studies —both in camps and beyond—are essential for understanding histories, experiences, and political practices that counter or contrast to existing perspectives on the influences and effects of social and political power. For instance, Foucault developed his theory of power dynamics based on specific political practices within a European context. Agamben discusses refugees and camps in terms of the classical Roman idea of *Homo Sacer*, describing the lives of those cast out of the political. Every day, hundreds of thousands of people become refugees in Asian countries, but they are defined as political or non-political subjects through Western parameters or methodologies. In this thesis, Foucault's approach is found to be useful, but we must also assess how well Foucault's conception of power dynamics functions in clarifying the diverse social and political situations of one specific refugee population among many, and how useful it is to understand their particular experiences of displacement from the Global South and resettlement in the Global North. As McGrath and Young (2019) suggest, to mobilize global knowledge based on refugee and forced migration research, critical theory, and critically reflexive methodological frameworks, as well as genealogical observation are necessary. They provide critical insight into refugees' historical realities and current experiences, allowing the generation of new knowledge that can expose and specify power relations that were/are at the center of modern political practices of displacement and humanitarian intervention.

Espiritu (2014) highlights a new approach (critical refugee studies) to studying refugees that supersedes limited, Western-centric parameters of examining refugees, their histories, and the multifaceted issues they encounter throughout their lifetimes, from being a citizen to becoming a noncitizen to becoming a citizen again. Critical refugee studies illuminate interconnected questions of "colonization", "war", and "global social change". However, even

scholars in critical refugee studies could be more critical, in terms of understanding refugees as internationalized and *political* beings; (Espiritu, 2014; Nguyen & Phu, 2021). Espiritu (2014) connects the production of refugees and forced migration through a genealogical study of global political practices. She suggests rethinking and remapping the whole system of refugee interpretation and its mechanisms of labeling. This means becoming aware of how parameters commonly used to define a refugee as homeless, stateless, and non-national are incomplete and need to be evaluated through an exploration of political subjectivity and the agency of refugees, as does the paradigmatic framework of global liberal political discourse as applied to the rights of refugees. To interpret refugees as helpless subjects to be assisted and resettled fails to comprehend core aspects of global justice and human rights by ignoring the political subjectivity and agency of refugees.

Erasing Refugees: Necropolitics, States of Exception, and Modes of Power

Espiritu's ideas to rethink refugees are also imperative to evaluating the situation of refugees still in camps that block their agency without any consistent and ongoing concern from national governments and international organizations. For instance, while all but 100,000 Bhutanese refugees were admitted into eight countries, including Canada, until 2015, more than 8,000 refugees have been left in refugee camps in Nepal. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) permanently closed its resettlement program for them in December 2018. The situation of these refugees today is awful because no international organizations have continued to take seriously the issue of resettling them—in Nepal or outside of it—let alone repatriating them to Bhutan. The paradox of the actions and inactions of modern nation-states and international humanitarian agencies lies somewhere in this walking-dead

situation of refugees left to live miserably in the refugee camps. No discussion of resolving such problems has gotten space in the Nepalese parliament after about 27 years. Now, how do global politics and international refugee regimes deal with this critical issue? This very tendency of international organizational politics indicates a political assumption of having rights to exclude the already excluded. However, situational realities have led to the emergence of multiple and at times contradictory measures in the political practice of modern nation-states. On one hand, such practices may involve measures to govern refugees as compliant or non-compliant political subjects, or as unpolitical subjects relegated to bare life outside (but also paradoxically still within) the political system. These different realities of the global exclusion of displaced people pose important questions concerning the paradox of humanitarian organizations and neoliberal nation-states also being involved in multi-variational necropolitical practices.

Necropolitics is a concept that is part of a social and political philosophy developed by Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe. He was inspired by Foucault's discussion of biopolitics and biopower to develop the concept of necropolitics as a further extension of the Foucauldian notion of thanatopolitics. Necropolitics concerns the dark side of modern politics that legitimizes not only the governmentalist/biopolitical practices of "letting die" but also redescribes, in terms of modernity, the continuing sovereign "right to kill" as involving the *active exposure* of particular groups of people to death. Mbembe also seems to have been inspired by Giorgio Agamben's ideas concerning biosovereignty, spaces of exception, bare life, and the sovereign right to death. Necropolitics as a social and political theory is a tool to navigate social disparity and discrimination by seeing them as part of the production of marginalized subjects who are pushed out of the political orders of nation states (hence "depoliticized as subjects) and instead treated as eliminable (may be killed or left to die), or as politically useful objects in the

space of exception. Necropolitics has to do with the instrumentalization, not of human *labour,* but of modern human *existence,* including human material decay and death: the exposure of precarious lives and bodily vulnerabilities to death for political purposes. Thus, members of such instrumentalized populations fit Agamben's concept of *homo sacer*. They lie outside the normative sphere of political rights, but they can be treated (often harshly) as "negative" political assets; geopolitical bargaining chips or examples of negative and disposable identities (Mbembe, 2003; Bargu, 2014; Braidotti, 2009; Wallance, 2018). In this thesis I also address such practices and the issues they raise.

Building upon Mbembe's work on necropolitics, I argue that a refugee is not unpolitical, but rather it is the space created by refugee regimes to put refugees that is unpolitical. The unpolitical notion is embedded within political systems which demonstrates a capacity to expel an individual or group of people from the political sphere, rendering them unpolitical in their exclusion from established and globally practiced citizenship discourses. When discussion concerning life beyond politics appears, as in the case of a refugee's life, several questions arise regarding political power and subjectivity. Refugees are defined as unpolitical through predominant and preconceived models of territory and national statehood.

Unpolitical refers to the condition in society produced by a political system which acts to exclude people of a particular group from national identity and political participation, for instance, through denying or revoking citizenship. The unpolitical is a zone in which people are forcibly placed when their political rights to be governed by a state as equals in a national or civic community are outlawed governed. In other words, the 'unpolitical' is a political and social construction in which political power is used, often brutally, to exile people from political participation in and protection by the country of their citizenship, and also to exile people

physically from that country. The unpolitical is a space of exclusion from both politics and political being, a space that is nonetheless created politically. It is created as a space of otherness that today operates to place people in a non-civil status – that of 'refugee' – and to confine them to non-places (that is, non-places from the standpoint of a national civil sphere) – that of camps – or to abandonment in deserts or at sea.

How does the term refugee imply legal and illegal at the same time within the politics and policies of modern nation-states? Is this a form of governance that operates through a practical categorizing and placing/displacing a national population, or is it a way to legitimize sovereign power,[2] or is it both? How do specific power dynamics play a crucial role in making people officially unpolitical under the logic of the state of exception[3] while politicizing them, nonetheless? What are the limitations of sovereignty and sovereign power, in terms of its legitimation of political rights to make citizens and non-citizens? These are complex questions debated by scholars who examine refugee regimes and their discourses today. The concept of the political has a strong association with power, I argue that unpolitical and political interact within the a meta-political domain that designates them as such, but that the unpolitical is not merely an

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[2] Foucault (1978) explains sovereign power is an absolute power exercised, for example, by a monarch or king which is restrictive, legislative, and censoring, but also has a capacity to act beyond the law. Sovereign power constates an ability to be violent to control behaviour through, for example, the application of torture and inflicting of pain (Lilja & Vinthagen, 2014).

[3] State of exception is a political and philosophical idea developed and explained by Italian social and political scientist Giorgio Agamben who was influenced by German philosopher Carl Schmitt's work in political theology and his elaboration of the idea of a *state of emergency*. A state of exception is established by an act of sovereignty, to deal with supposed social and political problems (an 'emergency') by banishing and excluding human subjects, thereby producing the spaces they occupy as non-political zones in which power and violence can permissibly be exercised on them beyond the law (Agamben, 1998; Datta, 2006). In these spaces, political sovereignty acts to condemn people, erasing their political status and political subjectivities, and reducing their existence to disposability.

abstract concept but is constructed by *everyday* political power. The everyday political power of a nation-state involves a political and social contradiction that contributes to producing a state of exception and refugees. If refugees are unpolitical, then it is again a political force to reveal and signify the political contradiction, complexity, and resistance. In other words, if refugees are made refugees within a national, social, and political system, then refugees are logically political in the system of power and governance in modern nation-states. The logic behind examining the refugee figure is that the political is also constructed, emerged, and practiced through historical consciousness. In this sense, a refugee is not unpolitical as Agamben insists based on his definition of the logic of the state of exception and his understanding of biopolitics as exclusion from politics and subjection and condemnation beyond politics, since both political and unpolitical are constructed by power and articulated in discourse.

Chapter 1: Background and Context: Refugee Studies, Biopolitical Subjects, and Bhutanese Refugees

This chapter begins with a critical review of human displacement and the politics of making refugees, and then proceeds to a discussion of the historical context of refugee studies across the globe, and the humanitarian concerns that involve various agencies and countries in protecting refugees. After a critical review of human displacement, I move on to a brief history of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees and the biopolitical power practiced on their bodies to *disqualify* them from the political sphere. In the third section, I summarize scholarly work concerning Bhutanese refugees in various geographies, including Canada and the US. Since this project engages in a discussion of global biopolitics and the power relations involved in the production of subjects or forms of subjectivity ('the refugee', refugeeness, homelessness, and fear), this section briefly contextualizes the significance and importance of biopolitical studies of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. Finally, I include a brief section that identifies the central research questions of the project, its objectives and significance, and the limitations of other similar studies to date, before moving on to a description of methodology adopted for this project, in chapter two.

Refugees, Forced Displacement, and Humanitarian Obligations: An Overview

The politics of making refugees and the complexities of their resettlement process, including in Canada, is essential to study in terms of the disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms, such as social management, regulation, education, health care, and workplace management, surveillance, and policing. The growth of refugee populations and the increase of human displacement have become important global political problems today. These problems are not new, though they

differ fundamentally from the way they were conceived in the enlightenment era. Displacements of human populations have occurred many times in the social and political histories of our various societies. Different historical factors have compelled people to leave their places of birth, including political causation of events such as cultural genocide, environmental causation (famine, flooding), and religious and ethnic issues. Both issues of displacement and the politics of making refugees in modern nation-states have changed over time and are often complex. Thus, debates about the refugee crisis and its management have spread from the political sphere into academia. The refugee crisis has been a practical problem in terms of human rights and humanitarian efforts of resettlement and management. Various national and international organizations have been involved in resettling refugees and forcibly displaced populations. Following from episodes of displacement as a consequence of the First World War, various national and international organizations were established to assist and improve the lives of globally displaced people. The main objective of such organizations was to intervene in refugee crises to resettle people displaced due to various forms of persecution. Today, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is a leading international organization that has intervened in refugee crises throughout the globe since it was established by the Geneva Convention in 1951. Prior to the establishment of UNHCR, hundreds of thousands of refugees had fled from their birth countries (Malkki, 1995). While Europe suffered from refugee crises after the First and the Second World Wars, East Asian political turmoil and US policies that allowed admission of refugees resulted in hundreds of thousands of people seeking asylum in the US (Espiritu, 2014). By the end of 1919, the number of people displaced due to persecution, political crises, environmental catastrophes, human rights violations, conflict and war, and other causes, was 79.5 million, the highest number on record (UNHCR, 2019). Among these displaced

people, 30–40 million (i.e., 40% of 79.5%) were children under 18 years of age (UNHCR, 2019). The statistics on forced displacement nearly doubled between 2010, when the total number of displaced people worldwide was given as 41 million, and 2018, when it had increased to 70.8 million (UNHCR, 2019). UNHCR's 2019 report indicated that the number of displacements would dramatically increase every year due to the same reasons: war and other forms of conflict, persecution, and human rights violations. To extrapolate from this 2019 UNHCR report into the future, the scale of displacement over the coming decade is potentially horrifying, and seemingly there will be a vastly expanded refugee-management crisis if the number of refugees escalates as projected.

However, the increasing scale of human displacement not only raises practical and political questions. It also raises theoretical issues among scholars and researchers. Colson (2003) argues that refugees, to some extent, are considered a burden by receiving countries, given the work and expense involved in managing and integrating them into a new society, and the strain thereby placed on mechanisms of social control. The receiving countries also face the challenge of addressing refugees' social, cultural, religious, and ethnic values as part of their integration into new communities. Colson (2003) focuses mainly on the role the host country's government and international organizations play in settling the refugee population through creation of social boundaries for managing the interchange between their social values and those of other communities within nation-states. Colson's (2003) usage of the term "social boundary" is not meant as a negative term, but rather as a concept to address the refugee population's unique values as also the values of multicultural and globalized societies of today. However, it points to the ways in which national and international management of displaced and resettled

populations raises questions of the redefinition of such populations; redefinitions driven by practical concerns but with implications for the definition of political and civic status.

It is also important to investigate how displaced and resettled peoples negotiate aspects of their identities; how they deal with the barriers they encounter in the countries in which they have been resettled, and how these barriers actually or potentially affect their integration (Malkki, 1995). Scholars in this research area tend to focus on the diverse definitional elements associated with refugees. Malkki (1995, 1996), for example, argues that refugee populations are embedded within diverse categories no matter what specific vulnerabilities, obstacles, and nuances they encounter or acquire along the way of their displacement. Malkki's work indicates the necessity of valuing and respecting refugees' multidimensional experiences, identities and other characteristics, and the need to incorporate such respect into research in refugee studies, and into refugee settlement policies.

Is it possible to illuminate the refugee crisis from the world with any one given substantive measure? This is a tough question to answer because of conflicting definitions of and perspectives on human displacement and its root causes, on the politics of making refugees, and on the politics of humanitarian intervention in various regions of the world. "The refugee" as a social category and "humanitarian intervention" as a response are two interconnected ideas, but conceptions of their political character have developed in the course of paradoxical and complex debates in academic and policy circles. Scholars from various perspectives have debated issues raised by the expansion of refugee populations and forced migration. Scholars within the new subdiscipline of critical refugee studies insist on a new paradigm for refugee studies as a whole, whereas some feminist theorists emphasize a need for an intersectional feminist intervention into and transformation of refugee studies, in order to address the gendered aspects of violence, class,

sexuality, and other power relations involved in the construction of refugee crises (Carastathis et al., 2018). Such intersectional feminist interventions question the ways in which juridical decision-making has distinguished between deserving and non-deserving victims of violence in processes of asylum approval. From an intersectional feminist perspective, the mechanisms of juridical decision-making naturalize a form of violence associated with racial capitalism and heteropatriarchal normativity. These perspectives recognize that the increasing incidence of war and chronic conflict, and of state violence, has shaped today's refugee crisis within the intersecting contexts of the history of colonialism and slavery, global capitalism, and contemporary neo-imperialism (Carastathis et al., 2018). The legitimacy of refugee discourses and of the right to asylum-seeking are controversial; the 1951 UN Convention acknowledged that seeking asylum is a legal right but does not require that signatory countries grant legal entry to asylum seekers arriving at their borders (Carastathis *et al*., 2018). Intersectional feminist theorists, for example, identify how juridical language shifts from the crisis of *human* displacement to the crisis posed by refugees to nation-states when asylum seekers enter their borders. Feminist discussions of such matters also implicate the history of colonization and its impact on human displacement and apply the Global South and Global North dichotomy extensively to studies of the history of refugees and forced migration. Undoubtedly, the international order of things[4] and the politics of the modern nation-state are key factors in making and defining refugees, refugee issues, and global population displacements under which

[4] Liisa Malkki describes the national and international order of things regarding how refugees are made in their country of displacement and how international humanitarian regimes create a discourse to manage the refugees. In other words, the national order of things allows the authority to question people's right to citizenship, whereas the international order of things includes humanitarian regimes and the study of displacements, but both are inseparable (Malkki, 1995).

the politics of nation-states today are subsumed, and in terms of which the grievances of refugee management and settlement processes are handled.

Borders have become an important and controversial element in the definition and politics of the modern nation-state. While they define a national "place" or "home," borders themselves are *liminal* spaces that continuously produce and reproduce refugees through forms of "elasticity," as Gilbert (2019, p. 425) argues. Border crossing in the name of humanitarian support is a political intervention in which donor countries tend to have more powers of entry than do receiving countries to manage such entries (Hyndman, 2000). Regarding the United Nations intervention into northern Iraq for humanitarian assistance, Hyndman (2000) highlighted how such humanitarian assistance for protection of refugees as it has occurred in Iraq since 1991, is a *political* act which raises questions concerning the relationship between donation and the exercise of power to access and cross borders. Hyndman elaborates that borders signify a material component of nation-states that incorporates a particular "history", "culture", and "political meaning" (Hyndman, 2000). In this sense, donor countries develop and reproduce their capacities to intervene in the political, cultural, and historical circumstances and properties of the receiving countries, and create political problems, as such interventions can lead to further displacement crises because of ignorance about the danger of one-sidedly defining the other and creating circumstances which produce more refugees. However, on some points, Hyndman (2000) appreciates the popularity of UNHCR's humanitarian efforts, as they have contributed to saving and improving the lives of millions of people throughout the world. However, during the post-Cold War era, in response to increases in the scale and complexity of refugee issues, the UHNCR has been seeking a permanent solution to the refugee crisis but has failed to do so (Hyndman, 2000). Hyndman's perspective is countered by that of Nyers (2006), who insists that

international humanitarian organizations produce differences and cause more global refugee crises.

Refugees and Refugee Studies: Biopolitical Subjects and Objects

The study of contemporary global refugee issues has given rise to academic research in a wide variety of disciplines, in which the disputes about refugees' political agency have become a central matter of scholarly definition and theorizing as well as of national and international policy. The politics of human displacement and the policies of resettlement are now not only a central modern political problem but also a center of attraction for academic discourse and investigation, challenging aspects of the existing power-knowledge nexus. Tracing the ultimate origin or exact date of the first human displacement is difficult to do, as debate on the definition and nature of displacement and of refugee populations, as well as of the construction of refugeeness as a category in both academic and non-academic discourse, is contested. However, human displacement in a modern sense is reported to have begun around the fifteenth century; this displacement of people within Europe, included the expulsion of Jews from Spain after 1492, the eviction of Moors from Spain in 1609, and of Huguenots from France in 1685 (Elie, 2014). These events were all precursors to the consolidation of "national" territories and their definition in law by the two 1648 treaties referred to as the Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Year's War (Croxton, 1999). Noticeably, increased mass displacement of entire national or subnational populations also occurred from the middle of the First World War. A new nationalist type of political order emerged after the fall of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman empires, and deeply affected the political history of Eastern Europe, when hundreds of thousands of people (including white Russians, Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Hungarians, and

Romanians) left their countries (Agamben, 1995). The distinction between stateless people and refugees was contested after World War I (Agamben, 1995) because many of the people, especially anti-communists from Europe, were reluctant to return home (Espiritu, 2014). However, many European countries legalized processes of denaturalizing and denationalizing[5] their citizens; and such policies have since continuously been used to force people to leave their homes (Agamben, 1995).

These practices of denationalization and denaturalization began in France in 1915 and were followed by the Belgian and Italian passing of laws that made some of their citizens anti-national[6] in 1922 and 1926. Austria and Germany also did so in 1933 and 1935, respectively (Agamben, 1995). At that time, refugee camps became the best examples of a social technology of power employed to control people based on emergency and ad hoc measures characteristic of biopolitical mechanisms in the 1940s (Agamben, 1995; Malkki, 1995; Espiritu, 2014). During the Cold War, the term "refugee" was often used interchangeably with "defector", a requisite mechanism for asylum introduced by Western countries to include European Anti-Communists, who were reluctant to repatriate to their countries of origin in Europe (Espiritu, 2014). The context which defined the relationship of asylum-seeking in Europe to the adoption of the

[5] Denaturalization and denationalization were the processes and practices performed by countries to make their people non-citizens or stateless through executing laws and policies. These were the policies and practices of the European countries starting from the first World War by introducing laws for their citizens permitting them to be non-citizens of their own countries. For example, France in 1915 practiced this policy targeting its citizens of 'enemy origin,' and later, Belgium practiced it in 1922 by denaturalizing those perceived to have been involved in 'anti-national activities' (Agamben, 1995).

[6] Anti-national refers to the political definition and juridical declaration that nation-states make regarding the activities of their people going beyond the laws and policies, which was massively practiced by the European countries during and after World War I. It is also an authoritative juridical proclamation of a state enforcing its power against unlawful activities that are considered a threat to national interest and integrity.

Displaced Persons Act by the United States is both political and important, as the United States used this act to construct the discourse of the failure of communism in European countries. From 1948, through the *Displaced Persons Act*, the US accepted 400,000 European refugees attempting to escape from communist governments, including those of Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Korea, China, and Cuba (in the 1960s), and that was in addition to the 250,000 non-refugee Europeans who immigrated to the US. (Espiritu, 2014; Tempo, 2008). As a result, by the mid-1980s, 90% of those defined as refugees in the US were from the Eastern communist bloc (Tempo, 2008). Under the provision of the *Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act*, 360,000 refugees from Southeast Asia entered into and settled in the US between 1975 and the mid-1980s (Espiritu, 2014).

Many international organizations were established to address refugee problems during and after World War II, but the nature of those organizations was social and humanitarian rather than political (Agamben, 1995). The refugee problem was not defined as a social and political problem until the establishment of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in 1951; it was instead considered to be a military or combat problem (Agamben, 1995; Malkki, 1995). With the emergence of the UNHCR, the definition of the refugee problem shifted from a military context to a social, political, and humanitarian one, and refugee camps then became locales of multiple interventions, including the gradual development of scholarly and research studies of refugees (Malkki, 1995).

Even though human displacement happened before the great wars and even before the modern colonial era, the politics of refugee making cannot be disconnected from the effects of the imposition of colonial power in taking possession and control of others' lands and resources and interpreting others' cultures. Colonial practices of conquest were entirely political: because

of the interest of colonial empires in ruling over other lands and peoples, they intervened in and undermined the integrity of existing political institutions in colonized societies and fragmented those societies into multiple ethnic and religious groups (for instance, consider the history of the India–Pakistan partition and the ensuing conflict that displaced hundreds of thousands of people) (Chimni, 2009). Even after decolonization, this colonial legacy impacted the possibility of forging national integrity (in terms of power-sharing and integrative governance policies) across multiethnic "national" populations in newly-independent countries. This contributed to forms of conflict that produced refugee flows out of new, modernizing nation-states and started the process of constructing "refugeeness." It is thus worth noting that the discourses of modernity and modernization employed by new national states (e.g., Ataturk's Turkish Republic) were marked by the adoption of discourses of national purity employed to standardize expressions of nationality in language-use, dress, education, religious expression, etc. (Cronin, 2021). Thus, massive displacement continued to occur and to increase after official decolonization, legitimating refugee studies (defined as a branch of anthropological knowledge) as a way to address what now appeared to be a *social* as well as a political problem (Appadurai, 1996; Malkki, 1995; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). Various factors (for instance, xenophobia, ethnic conflict, migration politics, violence based on state policies, war, diaspora, travel, religion, and citizenship) have since come to be defined or studied as causes or indicators of the displacement and making of refugees, widening the horizon of refugee studies (Malkki, 1995; Mountz, 2010; Elie, 2014; Ong, 2003). Refugees and forced migration have been very contested issues in academia in the sense of refugee definition and method of refugee studies and the role of historians is crucial in defining the changing meaning and significance of such issues (Elie, 2014).

Elie (2014) elaborates that the fields in terms of which refugees, displaced people, and forced migration are now studied began to emerge in the 1980s. Malkki (1995) argues that "the 1970s and especially the 1980s saw several calls for the systematization of the study of refugees" (p. 507). However, there is now an extensive and essential history of research into refugees and forced displacement across the humanities and social sciences (Elie, 2014). The history of the study of displaced people and refugees is no longer a new one. Generally, the issues affecting or raised by refugees and displaced people were somehow salient globally in terms of their study until the end of the 1980s, as a result of protracted refugee situations in areas that included South-East Asia, Pakistan, Iran, the Horn of Africa, South Africa, Mexico, and Central America and a significant increase in the number of asylum seekers in Europe and North America (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014). However, the problems of forced migration and of refugee populations did not constitute a prominent public issue in Europe and North America during the last decade of the 1900th (Colson, 2003). Colson's statement to this effect begs the question whether the social situation at that time globally was more peaceful than the present or whether the world was so entirely devastated by the two great wars that issues of ethnicity and religion were not the central subjects of social order.

Today, the study of forcibly displaced people and refugee populations has become not only a primary concern to investigate and act upon, but also a vehicle in terms of which to disseminate knowledge from the perspective of the Global South to the Global North and vice versa (McGrath &Young, 2019). The multidisciplinary perspectives in refugee research today not only disseminate global knowledge but also enhance ideas to improve the well-being of refugees across the globe, which involves the dedication of researchers to democratize knowledge production practices (McGrath & Young, 2019). The democratization of knowledge

is understood to mean that the understanding of refugee studies should not be single-dimensional, based on established discourses on refugees and refugeeness. Democratizing knowledge in refugee studies involves scholarly practices in disseminating new ideas introducing the marginal and neglected perspectives of refugees rather than labelling refugees under the domain of which reflects the discourses of Global North. Since the refugee population has significantly increased around the world, international organizations, including the UN and the UNHCR, have played a vital role in third-country settlement and in dealing with the challenges of the integration processes designed or implemented for these populations; however, the political character of the roles played by these organizations is controversial inasmuch as it tends to reflect the perspectives of the dominant countries of the Global North.

Some studies of forced migration have failed to address something categorically unique about the definition of "refugee" and the practical situations of refugees; namely, that refugees are not voluntary migrants (Hathaway, 2007; Chimni, 2009). Hathaway insists that the refugees, by definition often live under the threat of material dispossession and violent death uniquely within the defensive domain of the international community (Hathaway, 2007). Hathaway thus argues that refugees are a distinct category privileged under the protection of international organizations and have international legal status as refugees. Labelling refugees in the era of globalization has become a more complex and also a more dangerous issue (Zetter, 2007). Zetter claims that the governments of the Global North are responsible for the labelling of refugees today. At the same time, right-wing populist movements and organized right-wing voting blocs are also responsible for labelling of refugees.

Governments, governmental organizations, many Global-North-based non-governmental organizations, and intergovernmental organizations play a crucial role in labelling refugees,

positioning themselves under the umbrella of humanitarianism, seemingly in parallel to a shift in academia from refugee studies to forced migration studies (Chimni, 2009; Zetter, 2007). Zetter (2007) and Chimni (2009) do not entirely reject the proposal by such organizations that there is an actual refugee crisis and an increasingly serious situation of displacement of people from their places of birth, but their arguments signify that most refugees are labelled and politicized by the organizations mentioned above in the names of managing and resettling them. A significant shift in the locus and orientation of refugee became apparent in a divergence between the Global North and Global South concerning the distribution of assistance to the refugee population that has been replaced with the primacy of labelling and distributing the refugees as a different immigration category (Zetter, 2007). According to Chimni (2009), those engaged in refugee studies identify themselves in response to the predicaments that can be identified in terms of four temporal phases. The first phase can be dated to occurs between 1914 and 1945 and refers to inter-war and wartime challenges. The second falls between 1945 and 1982, during which, an abundance of literature was produced about refugee camps that were legacies of the two great wars. The third phase was from 1982–2000, during which research and teaching centers were established, such as the Refugee Studies Program at Oxford University, the Refugee Study Program at York University Canada, the Refugee Policy Group in Washington; the US Committee for Refugees, The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and The European Council on Refugees and Exiles. During this period, the *Journal of Refugee Studies* (1988) and the *Journal of International Refugee Law* (1989) were also established, enhancing efforts to conduct refugee studies systematically. The final phase dates from 2000 to the present. In this period, refugee studies have been partially supplanted by forced migration studies under the domination of Western policymakers, producing an emphasis on an asylum-migration nexus.

However, refugee studies have done a valuable service in indicating how people forced from their homelands have also been forced to separate from their relatives, cultures, and traditional values, and how such conditions have shaped their identities and their abilities to survive and thrive. The politics of making refugees and the complexities of their resettlement processes, including in Canada, is essential to study, including the disciplinary and regulatory mechanisms which shape and administer that process, such as social management, regulation, education, health care, and workplace management, surveillance, and policing.

In the early 1980s, those writing on refugee studies and forced migration studies did not consider refugees to constitute a global political problem. However, a turning point in the divergence of refugee and forced migration studies came during the 1980s when they emerged as distinct fields with their own areas of investigation, teaching and research centres, and political orientations (Malkki, 1995; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al., 2014; Chimni, 1998). A massive refugee influx from the Global South to the Global North since the 1980s has continued to increase. In refugee studies, a myth was constructed of the difference between European refugees and refugees from the Third World (Chimni, 1998; Ong, 2003). Rather than acknowledging the refugees' unique relationships, forced migration studies in the 1980s focused on finding ways to cope with the flow of refugees from the Global South to the Global North, and the knowledge produced in such studies imposed Western policies (Chimni, 1998, 2009; Bradley, 2007). Chimni (2009) argues that the relationship of refugee studies with the policy-making power of governments presents complicated issues in the regulation of knowledge in the absence of the prerequisite knowledge of political power.

Bakewell (2008) strongly suggested that research designed beyond respect to "policy relevance" is by far more productive and influential in helping refugee well-being. Social

scientists who are fascinated about studying humanitarian issues often face "a dual imperative" concerning their focus on the research to be academically rigorous and policy-relevant (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003). The researchers doing refugee research are trapped between scholarship and advocacy when they conduct research based on the policy framework called "dual imperative." The scholarship for forced migration becomes problematic in terms of their methodological weakness and ethical problem while collecting data because of unfamiliar contexts of translation and use of local researchers (Jacobsen & Loren, 2003; Bakewell, 2008). What Bakewell has tried to suggest is the research framework, methodologies, and questions employed in policy-driven research focus on labelling and constructing refugeeness. Bakewell challenges the taken-for-granted refugee research paradigm that has constructed an assumption that refugees can or should be managed by previously defined mechanisms. He argues that there is a need to address the diverse aspects of refugee and forcibly displaced people.

The study of forced migration and refugees continued to be Eurocentric[7] during the emergence of its more recent phases since 1980s as shown by the publication of *The Unwanted* (1985) by Michael Marrus critically concerning the mass refugees within Europe (Elie, 2014). By the end of the 1980s, studies on non-European refugees emerged, such as *Calculated Kindness* (1986) by Gil Loescher and John Scanlan, as a thorough survey of US government policies regarding acknowledging refugees, followed by the historiography of Benny Morris, as depicted in *Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (1987). In the post-Cold War era, an abundance of literature was produced on the history of refugee displacement and the

[7]Chimni (1998) discusses a Eurocentric "myth of differences" constructed as a positivist approach to deal with refugee issues and to distinguish between Europe and non-European refugees. European refugees were considered politically persecuted and displaced by internal war, whereas non-European refugees were the output of mass influx and the economic breakdown. The myth of differences, according to Chimni, was overstated.

role of political actors concerning refugee issues; however, the first premises of that literature were to examine the politics of European state policies, especially towards Jewish refugees made by the Nazi brutality of the 1930s and 1940s (Carron, 1999). As more research on refugee studies emerged after the Cold War, the importance of humanitarian efforts in assisting refugees by managing them in the camps, in the repatriation process, and in third-country settlement became central to the literature. From the 1951 Convention to the end of the Cold War, depolarized discourses emerged with the mandate for the UNHCR as a non-political actor (Chimni, 1998). The legitimization of a depolarized discourse during this period coincided with a positivist approach to studying refugees and forced migration that significantly influenced international refugee law (Chimni, 1998). Researchers, such as Skran (1995) and Loescher (2001), examined the history of the UNHCR, in terms of the weaknesses in its assistance in addressing the refugee problem (Peterson, 2012). Researchers have criticized the humanitarian intervention for managing and understanding refugees through traditional discourses and parameters of the UN convention, arguing for implementing non-Eurocentric approaches to study the global refugee and forced migration problem; one that would deal with the historical complexities of the dichotomy between so-called "classical refugees" and "new types" of refugees (Holian & Cohen, 2012; Espiritu, 2014; Elie, 2014).

In contemporary global political practices, due to repeated occurrence of displacement and genocide, human rights agencies especially international human rights agencies have become the front-line disciplinary institutions of modern biopower to manage, control, and regulate the world's refugee populations. International human rights activities, forms of volunteerism, and the social relations of work with refugees who were kept in detention centres helped to construct a new model of the biopolitical management of refugees in Greece (Rozakou, 2012). Humanitarian

advocacy, the practices of social engagement of international organizations, and their active participation in collaborative actions with communities and vulnerable populations after the Second World War have become major factors in management through the resettling and managing of refugees (Piotukh, 2015). But NGOs do this managing and resettling of refugees *within a wider context*. The NGOs deal with the resettlement and management of refugees *as they arrive* in certain places *and as they are placed in camps* there (Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey, etc.), but *national governments* also engage in a somewhat different biopolitics in which they try to "proactively" manage refugee flows *before* refugees arrive. Typically, they do this either through bilateral or multilateral agreements with other states from which refugees come, to try to *restrict* refugee movements – or by using their coast guards or navies to stop boats carrying refugees from entering their territorial waters. These two kinds of biopolitics, or course, involve forms of co-operation between NGOs and state forces (police and military) as well as forms of tension and conflict between them.

Many people are displaced every day by the politics of the state of exception which work to make people refugees and subjects of biopower[8] (i.e., *zoë*[9]) by exercising the sovereign rights of necro power over human bodies (Agamben, 1995; Mbembe, 2003; Owens, 2009; Martin, 2015; Zannettino, 2012). People around the globe have increasingly been displaced since the 1970s due to their resistance to new sovereign exercises of state power that conflict with their

[8] Biopower is a social technology of power that targets a population to improve and make its members productive in the social and economic practices of contemporary nation-states in a globalized context (Foucault, 2008).

[9] *Zoë* is a philosophical term first used in ancient Greek that refers to non-political life, bare life, or naked life resulted from sovereign banishment; inspired by Carl Schmitt, Giorgio Agamben later used it as emblematic of the unpolitical life of modern people in an exceptional space created by sovereign decision (Agamben, 1998; Owens, 2009).

rights as citizens – including *nationalistic* exercises of state power phrased in terms of ethnic "purity." These worked both to consolidate power *within* a nation-state and often also to gain a geopolitical advantage against neighbouring states by targeting ethnic minorities that were suspected of being "agents" of foreign powers, either managing them within the state or displacing them through a political discourse that renders them non-nationals and thus outside national politics. South Asia could not be seen as an exceptional case to these political processes that were producing refugees. As early as the end of the 1980s, ethnic genocide was occurring in Bhutan.

Analyzing and discussing the empirical data driven from interviews with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Lethbridge, Alberta, this research project discusses the controversy of global biopolitics concerning the production of refugees and refugeeness that engages for purpose of management but neglects to address the refugee population's political agency. The national and international refugee regimes verified these people as refugees after the mass displacement caused by the Government of Bhutan starting in the early 1990s. This project examines three different phases in the production of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees—their displacement from Bhutan, their lives in the camps in Nepal, and their lives after settlement in Canada—using a theoretical framework informed by the concepts of biopower and governmentality (power relations, the imposition of power on refugees' bodies, and population management).

Biopower involves not only social security, bordering, healthcare, education, and regulation of the population; it also entails the politics of displacement and the discursive practices of making people into refugees by definition and in action. That is, the discursive population of the category "refugee" and the practices of power related to that category produce

"refugees" and "refugee groups" as objects of acceptance, management, refusal, and containment or exclusion. As part of this production, certain groups are pushed into what Agamben (1998) calls "bare life" in spaces of "exception". An example of such biopolitical practices was the subjection of Khmer people to forced labour for the state in Cambodia during the early 1970s. Later, according to Aihwa Ong (1995), Cambodian refugees in California were 'immunized' and subjected to different biopolitical tactics. Here, I should pause to explain two concepts that I will be using in association with the concept of biopower: "immunization," and "camp." Immunity is central to politics to preserve life (Esposito, 2008). The term "camp" as used by Agamben is directly associated with the refugee, in that borders, discipline, and laws are created to manage control and surveil refugees. Refugee camps thus are the spaces created—politicizing the unpolitical (i.e., bare life or *zoë*)—and therefore is the paradox of modern biopolitics (but for Agamben, space of exceptions is outside of laws), I argue. The political practices (these political practices refer to Agamben's idea of politics and are different from the Foucauldian notion of biopolitical, which I discuss in the chapter three) of the European Christian bourgeoise, and the Nazis' brutality brought *homo sacer* in a new form to Europe, in which refugees and humans were classified as human beings (or 'subhuman') in new ways (Diken, 2004; Mbembe, 2003).

Moving on to focus on this research, Bhutanese refugees were both subjects and objects of the biopolitics of displacement when the issues of distinguishing between nationals and non-nationals first started appearing in political discourse during the late 1950s under the exercise of the sovereign power of the monarchy in Bhutan. The sovereign ban on ethnic Nepali Bhutanese, the state of exception that the government of Bhutan declared, and subsequently, the violent power exercised by the Nepali state against the bodies of ethnic Nepalis arriving as refugees from Bhutan pushed hundreds of thousands of people from political into non-political life (from

Bios to *zoë*). We must, therefore, study and investigate how the legitimization of the sovereign power of the right to kill exercised by the Bhutan government contributed to a process in which ethnic Nepali Bhutanese were made "unpolitical" through the exercising of a depoliticizing necropolitics. In this light, the necropolitical practice of the government of India is also significant to study, as they dumped tens of thousands of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees at the eastern border of Nepal when they sought assistance and humanitarian protection.

The policing and self-policing of non-nationals in the camps in Nepal for nearly 20 years is another dimension of the biopolitical situation of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. Camps are controversially non-political spaces outside of—though constituted by—the state or also by the UN or through multi-state agreements. Despite their positioning outside the realm of the political, refugee camps still had to be governed, controlled, and regularized. Cases of suicide were common in camps; deaths due to malnutrition were not uncommon also. I examine which mechanisms of discipline and biopower the Nepali and Bhutanese governments, in concert with international human rights and aid organizations, used to regulate and administer not only the *lives* but also the *deaths* of non-nationals (i.e., refugees). Especially, what mechanisms did the Nepali and Bhutanese governments, along with international organizations, use to manage Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the seven camps in eastern Nepal? These questions inform my description of South Asian governmentality[10] and biopolitics, which might present a contrast to practices of western governmentality.

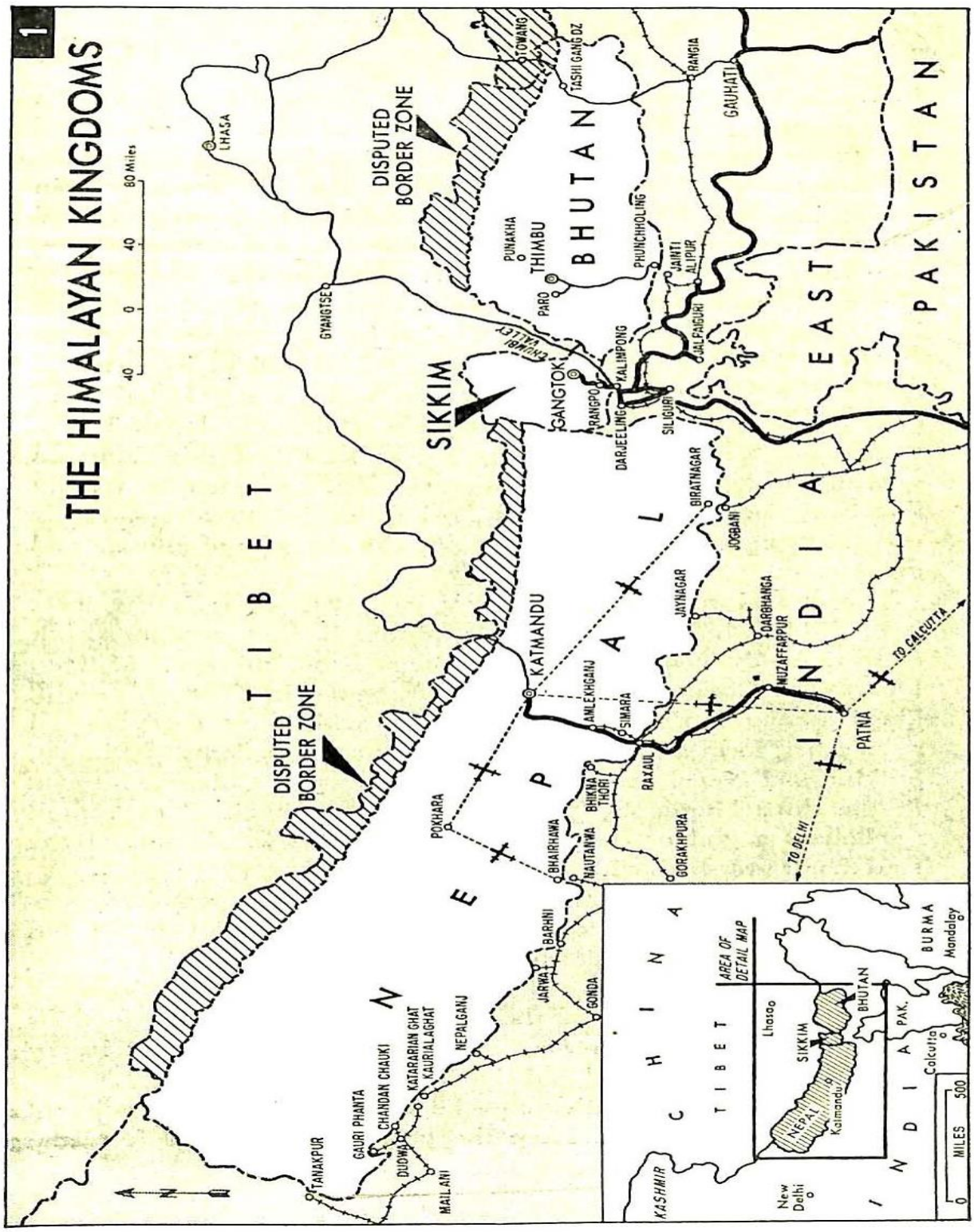
[10] Governmentality is a system of political policy and its application described by Michel Foucault as concerned with the biopolitical management and regulation of the population in modern political, policy and associated public health and other practices. It is a mechanism of power that a state or nation regularizes in which people are governed and self-governed. Governmentality is a term combined of government and its rationality employed by a state to regulate, manage, and normalize its population through individual conduct of self-governance (Burchell at el., 1991; Ramp, 1999; Datta, 2011).

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees are one population that Canadian neoliberal biopolitics[11] targets to improve, manage, regulate, and control, as well as to return (eventually) to the political sphere as appropriately self-governing and governable subjects through the process of gaining citizenship. We must, therefore, understand how Nepali-speaking Bhutanese narrate their biopolitical experiences as they transition between two settings: 1) the biopolitics of refugee camps in South Asia, and 2) the biopolitics of advanced capitalism in terms of policing, workplace governance, healthcare, education, and neoliberal responsibilization. Their experiences of being biopolitical objects in the different phases of their lives intersect with or parallel the experiences of refugee populations in general, and also complicate the processes by

[11] Neoliberalism can be thought of as a kind of necropower creating multiple opportunities for exclusion, labelling and precarity. Kotsko (2018) characterizes it as "a totalizing world order; an integral self-reinforcing system of political theology, [which] has progressively transformed our world into a living hell" (p. 95). More specifically, neoliberalism can be defined as a political rationality that prioritizes free markets, minimal government, and individual self-responsibility, However, as Brown (2019) notes, neoliberalism as a form of political *practice* brings "new forces, contradiction and crisis" into play, and is concerned more with biopolitics than with ideology and economic theory. It provides a framework in terms of which crimes can be defined and controlled, blame can be assigned for individual and social failures, and populations can be regulated at both a national and a global level (Nieto, 2012). Neoliberal biopolitics articulates political mechanisms of social control by creating systems of "fitness" taken to be applicable to all populations, including refugees. As a system of control, it operates through a kind of 'stealth' mode, disguising reinforcement of social and systemic hierarchies behind a propaganda of individualism. Neoliberal biopolitics promotes an individualistic notion of political and economic self-control in the management of different populations through divergent strategies of punitive and promotional biopower that operate through various institutional apparatuses. It mixes individualized blame for economic and social failure with the promotion of "market solutions" to social issues. It is thus a form of politics and a justification of power that fits a financialized advanced capitalist society. It combines a sort of Foucauldian biopolitics in promoting self-reliance and promising success, with a necropolitical willingness to abandon the material human lives of the disadvantaged to fate. Thus, neoliberal biopolitics has two faces: a biopolitics of care for the success of a population, and a necropolitics of producing the living dead. It defines citizenship in terms of the right to govern *oneself*, rather than to *be* governed fairly. Neoliberalism defines fairness not as equity and the correction of disadvantage, but as the freedom to engage in competitive market activity in free markets under a regime of private property.

which they are administratively re-subjectified eventually as citizens in the destinations to which (if they are lucky) they are transferred and "settled".

Bhutanese Refugees: A Brief History of Migration and Displacement



Map 1.1 The geographical location of Bhutan, Source: Karan, P. P., & Jenkins, W. M. (1963)

The story of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees informs one of the biggest refugee problems in South Asia. International organizations tried but failed in implementing a repatriation process, and thus a third country settlement process took place. Over three decades ago, the Bhutanese government of the day displaced ethnic Nepali from Bhutan, and they took shelter in the eastern part of Nepal, with the assistance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (Pulla, 2016; Benson, at el., 2012; Hutt, 2003; Banki, 2008). During the early 1990s, the government of Bhutan evicted about 108,000 Lhotsampa people, and they settled in seven different camps in the eastern part of Nepal. These Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees are descendants of Nepalese ethnic groups said to have migrated to Bhutan between 1890 and 1920 (Hutt, 2003; Morris, 1935). The British colonial representatives first gave the Nepali immigrants permission at the borderland between India and Bhutan, which was not a cultivated land then (Evans, 2010). The 1980s Gorkhaland movement in India urged the government of Bhutan to push for national identity by promoting the ideas of 'one nation one people,' which resulted in a huge displacement of an ethnic group from the country (Evans, 2010).

Bhutan has one of the smallest and least-developed economies within the Himalayan region of South Asia, as 90% of people make their livelihood through agriculture and forestry (Giri, 2004). The Bhutanese population is composed of multiple ethnic groups, but Ngalung[12] is

[12] Ngalung is the dominant cultural and linguistic group in Bhutan. It entails monarchy and elite groups who migrated from Tibet after Buddhism separated into several sections. One of the fleeing monks, Ngawang Namgyal, played a crucial role in assimilating all the native groups in Bhutan into Ngalung by imposing the religious conversion. This group of people occupied a central position in national politics and power, and they committed ethnic genocide by displacing ethnic Nepali, the Lhotshampas, starting in 1989 (Giri, 2004; Ramble, 1997; Smith, 1996)

the dominant ethnic group (Giri, 2004; Ramble, 1997; Smith, 1996). Lhotsampa refers to one of the largest communities in the southern part of Bhutan, composed of the people who are of Nepalese descent and who speak the Nepali language. They are/were best known for agriculture in Southern Bhutan. The Government of Bhutan evicted a large number of people belonging to this population, and they are now called "Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees" in the resettlement process that has moved them to eight different countries (Hutt, 2005; see also Halsouet, 2013, and Schultz, 2016).

During the 1950s, the Bhutanese government initiated some programs to settle Nepali-speaking Bhutanese in the southern part of Bhutan, which was a barren area (Giri, 2004). The Bhutanese government at that time wanted to develop agriculture for economic growth by settling those migrants from Nepal in this area, to cultivate it (Hutt, 2005; Giri, 2004). These people, once resettled in the southern part of Bhutan did actually contribute to Bhutanese economic growth (Hutt, 2003). As a result, the 1960s became a decade of fast growth in the Bhutanese economy, coincident with a rapid expansion of education, agriculture, and social services. The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese were hard-working and loyal to Bhutan, and the Bhutanese government passed a citizenship law in 1956 granting them equal rights (Hutt, 1996; Evans, 2010). However, a second citizenship act came into effect in 1985, which denied ethnic Nepali acceptance as nationals. Pulla (2016) argues:

> When this act was implemented, thousands of Lhotsampa who qualified as bonafide citizens under the provisions of the Bhutanese Citizenship Act of 1958 and Citizenship Act of 1985 were turned into illegal immigrants overnight. The new act was soon followed by implementation of the king's policy of One Nation, One People" (p. 140-15)

By 1980, the government of Bhutan had created a discourse that the people living in the south (i.e., the Lhotsampa) were a threat to the political order (Pulla & Dahal 2016; Hutt, 2005; Giri, 2004). This view was quite discriminatory because Nepali-speaking Bhutanese had no political

affiliation (I mean party politics), nor did they resist before the government became merciless and initiated mayhem and terror, which finally led to the displacement of the ethnic Nepali people (Pulla, 2016; Giri, 2004). Gradually, the regime restricted the rights of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese by closing their schools, banning the Nepali language, and imposing the Dzongkha[13] language (Pulla & Dahal, 2016; Giri, 2004).

With a culturally discriminatory governing strategy, the government of Bhutan forcefully implemented a new citizenship act in 1985 (Hutt, 2005). This new citizenship act was driven by a political aim to exclude Nepali-speaking Bhutanese from official nationality and to displace them from the country of their birth. After passing the new citizenship act, the Bhutanese government questioned the residential status of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. Every Nepali-speaking Bhutanese person had to possess a legal document for residence; if they failed to do so, they would be declared non-nationals (Hutt, 2005). Eventually, the government of Bhutan removed the natural rights of the ethnic Nepali Bhutanese to reside in and to be citizens of the country of their birth.

Ultimately, the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese were subjected to fines and imprisonment if they continued traditional practices, such as celebrating their festivals, speaking their language, and wearing traditional clothes. As a result, the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese were compelled by lack of other political options to participate in public demonstrations to fight for their basic rights. However, their protests were not successful in resolving the problem. The government of

[13] Dzongkha is the language based on native literary tradition in Bhutan, originating from the Tibetan route. Even though there are other languages used as native languages by most people, such as Nepali, they are not supposed to play a dominant role in carrying the literary tradition. Dzongkha was deemed the only national language in Bhutan and a compulsory language in Nepali-speaking schools. The government phased out the Nepali language from the curriculum before the eviction happened in Bhutan (Pulla, 2016; Giri, 2004; Van Driem, 1994)

Bhutan declared ethnic Nepali to be non-national and anti-nationals. More than 2,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese were imprisoned and killed; some of them are still in jail in Bhutan (Pulla, 2016).

Close to 100,000 ethnic Nepali Bhutanese were forced to leave their birthplace of Bhutan starting in 1988. They tried fleeing to the neighbouring country, India, to settle in camps there, but the Indian government refused to permit them to do so (Shrestha et al., 1998). Ultimately, they were compelled to move to the eastern part of Nepal. By the end of 1993, almost 100,000 Bhutanese had arrived in the eastern part of Nepal (Hutt, 2005). The government of Nepal allowed them to settle in a certain land area temporarily. With the help of the UNHCR, seven refugee camps were established in certain districts (i.e., Jhapa and Morang).

From 1993 to 2007, the governments of Nepal and Bhutan organized multiple meetings to settle the problem of Bhutanese refugees, but those meetings did not resolve the issue. The government of Bhutan rejected many calls from the government of Nepal to have a dialogue with international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). It was difficult to arrive at a solution because the proposed conditions of the Bhutan government were problematic. Beginning with the 1988 annual census, they "had begun to sort the Lhotsampa population [including Bhutanese refugees residing in the camps] into different categories and to classify some as non-nationals (Hutt 2003, 13). Pulla (2016) adds that the purpose of the categorization was to label them as *anti*-nationals. In order to deflect international pressure, the government of Bhutan pretended to show that it had attended to the issues of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese people (Pulla, 2016), but their intentionality was quite different. Instead of showing flexibility in resettling these people in their homeland, the government of Bhutan created four conditions which made it difficult for refugees to return home. At the

Ministerial Joint Committee (MJC) held in 1993 in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, officials representing Bhutan proposed four different categories of Bhutanese refugees to which these different conditions were to be attached: i) bonafide Bhutanese who had been evicted forcibly; (ii) Bhutanese who emigrated; (iii) non-Bhutanese people; and (iv) Bhutanese who had committed criminal acts (Hutt, 2005).The different conditions for return attached to these categories were challenging for almost all Bhutanese refugees to comply with because the government of Bhutan had additionally labelled most of them as non-nationals (Giri, 2005). The Bhutanese government was unwilling to repatriate and instead used the categories of non-nationality and anti-nationality as justifications for an entire displacement of the Lhotsampa, with the histories, culture, language, customs, traditions, and rituals they had practiced for a century in Bhutan (Pulla, 2016). It attacked Nepali-speaking Bhutanese culture and moral values by banning their language, traditional customs, and cultural festivals (Pulla, 2016; Evans, 2010). The government of Bhutan tried to destroy the conventional faith, spiritual beliefs, and cultural solidarities of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees residing in the camps in Nepal wanted to resolve their situation by returning to their homeland. Their identities in transition, confronted by the impossibility of return resulting from the Bhutanese government's policies, significantly affected their psychological health and social well-being, leading some of them to suicide (Hutt, 2005). They wished that the governments of Nepal and Bhutan could have engaged in fruitful dialogue to settle the problem, but the government of Nepal was also intransigent in that it was reluctant to resettle the Bhutanese refugees permanently in Nepal. However, according to Hutt (2005), "these governments were willing to allow the problem to fester indefinitely until a solution could be found that was fully consonant with the uncompromising [but conflicting] rhetoric [of the governments of Nepal and Bhutan] on

the need for democracy and human rights in Bhutan" (p. 52). Ongoing political instability in Nepal and Bhutan played a role in this inability to arrive at a compromise. That instability had begun soon after the departure of the British government from India, but India did not play a vital role in solving the problems of Bhutanese refugees. Instead, India argued that the refugee problem was a bilateral issue between Nepal and Bhutan (Hutt, 2005). After the dialogue between the governments of Nepal and Bhutan failed to repatriate refugees to their homes, the UNHCR finalized the documentation for third-country resettlement in 2007 (Pula, 2016). Finally, eight countries—United States, Canada, UK, Norway, Netherlands, New Zealand, Denmark, and Australia—agreed to resettle these refugees in 2007. Canada had admitted 6,600 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees by 2015. To improve the life and health of Bhutanese refugees in camps, UNHCR operated educational and motivational programs before these refugees were granted third-county settlements in Western countries (Brown, 2001).

Bhutanese Refugees as Subjects of Scholarly Investigation

Thus, the Bhutanese refugees experienced exile from their country of birth, as well as rape, violence, and genocide (Shrestha et al., 1998). Shrestha's study indicates that witnessing atrocities, destruction of houses, loss of property, and murder of relatives created stressors on all the refugees in the camps. The impact of torture also caused mental illness and psychological trauma among the Bhutanese refugees in camps. Van Ommeren et al. (2002) interviewed 418 tortured and 392 non-tortured Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the camps in Nepal asking about psychiatric disorders related to the death of their relatives, torture, rape, anxieties, and displacement. Their study concluded that most of the tortured participants had trauma and mental disorders. The mortality rate of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the camps was very high. A survey of diseases investigated the patterns of various forms of disease transmission

among the population due to poor drinking water and lack of food hygiene (Martin et al., 1994). People died at an early age due to a lack of timely treatment, and the mortality rate was up to 1.15 deaths per 10,000 persons per day. The foremost causes of death were measles, diarrhea, and acute respiratory infections (Martin et al., 1994).

Nepali-speaking Bhutanese exhibit diverse characteristics in terms of ethnicity, culture, caste system, and religion. Muggah (2005) noted that Nepali-speaking "Bhutanese refugees are drawn from a relatively hierarchical culture with elaborate systems of social organization" (p.158). Because of the unique and diverse cultural realities of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, the monitoring system in the camps gave special attention to respect all the refugees such as gender and seniors (Muggah, 2005).

These UNHCR programs in the camps were not always followed by similar programs in the destination countries. Also, due to post-traumatic stress disorder, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees faced many challenges during their third-country settlement. Memories of torture, loss of cultural solidarity, and disintegration of families made this population more prone to suicide (Cochran et al., 2013). Between February 2009 and February 2012, the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the US Department of Health and Human Services reported 16 suicides among the approximately 57,000 Bhutanese refugees who had resettled in the United States since 2008 (Cochran et al., 2013).

Shifting from one socio-cultural and sociopolitical environment to another is a big change and sometimes creates potential or actual problems. Lamsal (2014) found that Bhutanese refugees contribute to shifting population identities in the US based on cultural diversity of the US and their lived experiences of political and cultural conflicts. People's lived experience matters greatly in shaping their ethnic identity. Shrestha (2011) emphasizes the anthropological

analysis of resettlement in the US, which "opens up a space to examine bureaucratic management of resettled refugees by different institutions and reveals social inequalities and politics of power in humanitarian work" (2011, p. 2). Following the consequences of the impact of trauma, Vonnahme et al. (2015) investigated the anxieties, depression, and mental disorders that affected the resettlement process undergone by Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees within the United States. They randomly selected 579 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to interview in seven US cities, including Atlanta, Buffalo, Phoenix, and Dallas. This study investigated their post-migration social support and coping mechanisms. They found that symptoms of depression were significantly correlated with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and suicidal tendencies.

Yun et al. (2016) explored the help-seeking behaviour and health concerns of the Bhutanese refugees in the United States. They used participant observation to investigate their lived experiences, including behavioural changes, barriers to settlement, literacy rate, and social cohesion. Yun et al. (2016) concluded that "sustained and repeated social modeling" which includes the mechanism of biopower, "is required to promote self-efficacy, particularly for community members with minimal literacy or cognitive challenges caused by age or illness" (p. 533). Gerber et.al. (2017) argues that identity crisis, a significant level of illiteracy, and detachment from family members led to domestic violence among Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the United States.

Some studies also proposed that it is equally important to understand the positive impact of community gathering while working through the legacy of stress that the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees experienced for decades during and after their displacement from Bhutan (Gerber et al., 2017). Community gathering helps these vulnerable populations get relief from the

stress and helps extend their social network into the larger community of the US (Gerber et al., 2017).

Im and Rosenberg (2016) interviewed 27 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to investigate the mental health conditions of this population in the United States. They identified that social capital includes the development of networks for employment and supportive relationships between refugees and the host society, and concluded these refugees needed health promotion and social networking, community gatherings, community capacity training, and social support systems. In Australia, the resettlement process of Bhutanese refugees (Pula, 2016) has led to depression, anxiety, and acculturative stress. Bhutanese refugees in Australia are happy to receive support from other communities. She also mentions that the language barrier is one of the most severe challenges faced by Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees trying to integrate into Australian society. Pulla (2016) notes in her findings that many participants articulated a sense of loneliness, displacement, stress, and a sense of loss of social prestige.

Accounting for different social practices, Murray et al. (2018) examined the barriers to health services, critical health literacy, and other potential solutions for the problems facing Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Australia, using a quasi-experimental cross-sectional design to sample 148 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Australia. They found that these refugees "frequently witness or experience profound violence, abuse, separation and loss, and threat to life before and after leaving their homes and communities" (Murray et al., 2018, p. 1269.) They also found that "resettlement and acculturation within a host country involve a complex array of social and psychological challenges for refugees" (p. 1280).

Canada admitted many refugee populations from around the world. However, in North America, scholars have raised some concerns about refugee settlement, arguing that the most

vulnerable segments of the refugee population must be better taken into account (Pressé & Thomson, 2008). "Historically, Canada, among other resettlement countries, had been criticized for selecting the "best and the brightest" refugees and thereby exacerbating the situation in the refugee camps where these individuals were selected" (Pressé & Thomson, 2008).

A master's-level research project (Bingley, 2016) was previously conducted on the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community in Lethbridge. The issues this research project tried to examine had not previously been explored in Alberta. Bingley (2016) examined how Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees came to Canada and current effects of acculturation in their new home. While he used the term "cohesion" in his title, he did not investigate how the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees were constituted as biopolitical objects from their displacement to the resettlement.

Subedi (2016) used a small group of participants to investigate the psychological well-being of Bhutanese refugees residing in Ottawa, finding that "marital status and employment status did not contribute to the prediction of psychological well-being" (p. 64). This study used a quantitative methodology to conduct a mental health survey among Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Ottawa. Subedi (2016) concluded that those resettled refugees with less than a college-level education had a lower level of psychological well-being and had cultural and religious perceptions that impacted their coping strategies, feelings, suffering, and health-seeking behaviour. Davey (2013), on the other hand, researched the psychological well-being of Bhutanese refugee women in Edmonton through interviews, examining Nepali-speaking Bhutanese women's experiences of and responses to the postpartum period and noted the role of cultural constructions of self, wellness, illness, and depression in their coping strategies. Davey also found that due to Bhutanese women's concerns about their children, there were no negative

postpartum responses in the study. Davey argues that the Bhutanese women have a strong sense of resilience because they have adopted suffering as their normal part of life. As she explains, Bhutanese refugee women survived through significant adversity in terms of both cultural and state levels of discrimination and exclusion in Nepal and Bhutan.

Research Questions

This research project attempts to answer multiple questions concerning the biopolitical experience to date of a group of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Canada. I gathered data for it by setting up semi-structured and open-ended interviews with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese about their experiences during the time of their displacement, their lives in the transition in Nepal, and now in Canada. This project also answers sub-questions focused on how Bhutanese biopolitical practices of governmentality operate differently from sovereignty in terms of controlling and managing the population through not only laws and punishment, but also the organization of healthcare, education, policing, and other disciplinary institutional practices. The following three questions have shaped the overarching research questions of this project:

1. How have Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees articulated biopolitical experiences during their displacement from Bhutan, at camps in Nepal, and after resettlement in Canada?
2. In what ways have Bhutanese refugees (1) responded to or modified the terms of refugeeness, (2) articulated a sense of homesickness, and (3) negotiated political or unpolitical subjectivities within different regimes of power? And how do resistance and complicity take different forms in the different sociopolitical contexts of displacement, encampment, and resettlement?

3. How do biopolitics and necropolitics overlap within the political system of producing refugeeness in dealing with possibilities of assertion or re-assertion of forms of political subjectivity in camp and community?

Objectives of the Study

This project has three fundamental objectives. First, to identify how power dynamics function in a different sociopolitical context. Second, to investigate the working of South Asian governmentality and biopolitics based on the experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. Third, to explore how necropolitics operate to manage, regulate, and control a given refugee population within a system of disciplinary mechanisms governing the movement and settlement of refugee populations and the management of their re-subjectification as (eventual) citizens in advanced states such as Canada.

Significance of the Research

This research project contributes both to social theories concerning biopolitical knowledge and also to experience applicable to refugee studies, in terms of a comparative analysis of governmentality in various geographies: political and unpolitical. It will also contribute to new knowledge convening on the popularity of certain biopolitical discourses and social practices and the making of refugee subjects in the neoliberal politics of refugee management, control, and regulation. Most importantly, this study will provide ideas to foster a new critical discourse about refugees, their definition and management, policing, and regulation by analyzing the concepts and practices of governmentality in different geographical locations (i.e., from South Asia to Canada). At the same time, this study could help policymakers to think through critically their criteria for settlement, as they formulate ways to manage future refugee

flows in countries that promise or refuse to promise (as we see more recently) to accept additional refugees.

Scope and Limitation

This research project is limited to Southern Alberta in that it will investigate the biopolitical experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in this region of the province, although I will discuss the wider historical context of their arrival. The size of Lethbridge, and also the fact that it became a destination chosen for a significant proportion of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee population in Canada, allowed me to examine the experiences of a significant Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee population as a result of disciplinary institutions of population management. In this respect, this research does not extend to include Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees throughout Canada but treats the Lethbridge group as a sample population. Even though this project includes a general and contextual literature review on refugees and Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Canada and the US, it focuses on the biopolitical experiences of a sample of these populations in Bhutan and Nepal (camps), and in Canada, due to time and funding constraints. Thus, this project focused on interviews and participant observation with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees residing in Southern Alberta.

Chapter 2: Methodological Approach and Significance

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological design that helped me concretely explore the biopolitical experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, including ethnic genocide, fractured identities in refugee camps, and lives in the neoliberal political terrain in Canada. I employed a qualitative research methodology that included multiple methods to collect and analyze data. This chapter covers my positionality as a researcher, research design, field site rationale, core methods, including ethnography, participant observation, in-depth interviews, narrative and discourse analysis, and data management.

Research Design

For this research project, I used a qualitative research methodology to generate meaning with descriptive and explanatory texts based on the subjective experiences of people (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). I employed the methods described below to investigate and explore people's daily experiences, feelings, thoughts, and understandings (Leavy, 2017). Posing 'how questions' is imperative for the data drawn out from qualitative research, these help scaffold deeper levels of inquiry (Northey et al., 2012) based on the politics of human displacement. The qualitative research method assisted me in unpacking the issues for further debate within academia that extends knowledge and contributes to resolutions of existing problems to study human conditions.

Ethnography research methodology allowed me to do the biopolitical investigation by captivating, examining, and interpreting the refugees' lived experiences through observation,

participation, and interviewing. This research method helped me emphasize the different dynamics and directions of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees so I could identify their social, political, and geographical locations, as well as their experiences in being governed, gazed upon, and displaced during the different phases of their lives (Crang, 2002). Crucially, qualitative methodology helped capture experiences from Bhutan to Canada in terms of social system of governance, such as workplace politics, displacement, policing, education, and healthcare. Using ethnography as a qualitative research method enabled me to scrutinize the biopolitical experiences (such as the brutality of sovereign power in Bhutan) in terms of the power dynamics based on the more profound understanding that the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees had of their lived experiences and resistance, including their ethnic genocide, historical transition, and final settlement in Canada.

Positionality as a Researcher

While discussing positionality as a social researcher, awareness of reflexivity is always important in analyzing the data and generating knowledge driven by the researchers' involvement with the community and participants (Callaway, 1992). This is because research is not something that is produced at once, rather it is a process of producing knowledge through many efforts (England, 1994; Bourke, 2014). From an ethnographic perspective, research is a shared platform and process for generating new knowledge in which the identities of both researcher and participants can impact the knowledge being produced (England, 1994). Therefore, my position as a researcher must be considered as part of the context of this thesis and understanding the stories presented here.

I am a racialized Canadian male scholar born in South Asia who framed a research project to conduct research about a refugee community, possessing multiple identities that intersect with the participants. As a scholar having diverse academic, sociopolitical, and geographic locationalities, I have pursued this research to add new knowledge to refugee studies, arguing with established discourses on refugees, refugee definition, and management. I was a schoolboy when I first heard about Bhutanese refugees in 1994. As a young boy, I could not understand what refugees were or how they were displaced, even though the news about Bhutanese refugees was controversial during that time. The news about Bhutanese refugees and their temporary settlement process was frequently broadcasted in the media over the next decade, but I did not know that they were ethnic Nepali who migrated to Bhutan from Nepal long ago. Even though I understood a little information about the history of Bhutanese refugees later in my university life in Nepal, I did not have a chance to communicate in-depth with or study this population. Unfortunately, I could not make an opportunity to meet any of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees before I landed in Canada because of the discipline of the studies I belonged to on the one hand and the geographical location of the refugee camps and my residence on the other. Since arriving in Canada, my interest in studying Bhutanese refugees intensified after meeting with some people from this community in Canada and having casual conversations with them. These experiences pushed me toward conducting my Ph.D. research in Lethbridge.

My role as a researcher for this study is to excavate the narratives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees residing in Lethbridge, focusing not so much on the damage-centred areas but on how they were and are managed and regulated and how they have been involved in constructing refugeeness. I positioned myself as a researcher standing in a neutral space to problematize the existing knowledge and generate new knowledge that examines issues of

biopolitical management of these refugee populations in terms of the nation-state's ideas of producing border, citizen, and refugee. Broadly, I engaged in the issues of constructing human borders, citizens, and non-citizens—whether they are geographical givens, or the ideas regulated and practiced by law, order, and power. Positioning myself as a researcher, I consciously tried to avoid intentional bias in collecting and analyzing data and in producing knowledge that contributes to theoretical, methodological, and policy sectors. However, I acknowledge that the neutral space I sought to stand in was at times complicated to maintain. This space could also be called "liminal", as I stood "between" the local Bhutanese community and the wider community, and also between them and the academy. I was both insider and outsider in different ways and to different degrees, and my positionality was sometimes subject to pushes and pulls because of this.

Initially, I almost changed my mind regarding framing research design after encountering difficulties in accessing the Bhutanese community in Lethbridge. I could perceive a huge gap between the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees and the Nepali-originated people because of the construction and practice of camp VS community politics. The experiences that the refugee population gained throughout their lives in the refugee camps and the level of their integration and relationship with the local community people outside of the camps might be the reasons that prohibited me from becoming involved in the Canadian Bhutanese Society in Lethbridge during the beginning of my research exploration. However, gradually through effort, I created a bridge for communication with people in the community, which eventually allowed me to establish a good relationship for communication to proceed for my research.

Field Site Rationale

Situated in the southern part of Alberta within the territory of Blackfoot Confederacy, Lethbridge is a super sunny city with multiple tourist attractions such as urban park systems and the tallest and the longest steel trestle railway bridge in the world, straddling the Old Man River and built in 1909. Lethbridge became a city in 1906; although it was named Lethbridge in 1884 after Northwestern Coal and Navigation Company's first president, William Lethbridge. Lethbridge is one of the beautiful cities in Alberta with a unique landscape and a two-and-half-hour drive south from Calgary and an hour-and-half drive north of the Montana border (Bonifacio & Drolet, 2017). Every year, almost 15,000 people come to Lethbridge College and the University of Lethbridge from across the province, the rest of Canada, and the globe to go to school (Bonifacio & Drolet, 2017). Lethbridge has bragged about placing as the third largest city in Alberta by snatching the title from the city of Red Deer by almost 500 people (Census, City of Lethbridge, 2019). As Census 2019 demonstrates, Lethbridge is a growing city in Alberta with a population of 98,198, 99,769, and 101,482 in the years 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively. According to Statistics Canada (2017), of the total population, there were 11,070 visible minorities, including 5,030 Aboriginal people, 11,665 immigrants, and 1,360 non-permanent residents in Lethbridge. The number of immigrants attracted to Lethbridge has been growing gradually every year. Lethbridge has been one of the destinations for refugees, with refugees from countries such as Kosovo, Sudan, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Bhutan having settled here (Agrawal & Sangapala, 2021).

Lethbridge has been the home and capital for the Bhutanese refugees, where they have been successfully growing their community and integrating with the host community (Chaulagain, 2022; Bingley, 2016; Klingbeil, 2016; Tams, 2014). Canada admitted 5,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees prior to 2012, and later an additional 16,00 (CIC, 2013). Nepali-

speaking Bhutanese refugees resettled in various cities, including Edmonton, Charlottetown, Fredericton, St. John's, Saint-Jérôme, Quebec City, Laval, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Windsor, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Lethbridge, and Vancouver (CIC, 2013). Lethbridge attracted a significant proportion of this group for resettlement and is now considered the capital city of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees (Klingbeil, 2016). According to the CBS president, more than 2,000 Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees have resettled well in Lethbridge, which is a significant demographic both within the Lethbridge population and among the total number of these refugees that the Government of Canada admitted.

Ethnography as Research Methodology

Ethnography is a qualitative research approach which incorporates individual and community activities, behaviours, and cultural practices. It is primarily used by scholars across disciplines for understanding the production of new knowledge by debunking the established discourses as well as exploring the values and essence of cultures (King, 1997; Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007). Ethnographic research method helps researchers produce the original voices and experiences of people while using fieldwork and interview processes (Reason & Bradbury, 2001), and its fieldwork approach helps answer intellectual questions in order to produce new knowledge (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007; Reason & Bradbury, 2001; King, 1977).

Ethnographic research is based primarily on three methods of data collection: participant observation, interviews, and fieldnotes. Using these methods, ethnographers delve into conversation with people about their lived experiences and perspectives while engaging in everyday life of their communities. Employing this method, I engaged in participant observation and interviews, helping me iteratively clarify obscurities and misunderstandings found in field

notes as suggested by Skinner (2012) and Robben & Sluka (2012). Interviews are commonly employed by sociologists and anthropologists and a wide variety of cross-disciplinary practices to produce and reproduce knowledge in social sciences and beyond. The ethnographic research delved into the everyday narratives of the participants to frame a set of questions to challenge national and international and western and non-western discourses on ethos, pathos, and logos by exploring the marginal elements of the refugee population. Exploring refugees' own accounts of the marginal elements of refugee life and the day-today marginalization of the refugee population enhanced my understanding of how existing knowledge and discourse must be problematized to generate new knowledge.

My approach to ethnography is influenced by Fabian (2001), who explains that whatever a researcher experiences in fieldwork is subjective, yet it is central to knowledge production. He connects subjectivity and objectivity in transferring researchers' subjective knowledge into objective knowledge based on a broader range of interpretations. Ethnographic research is a blend of subjectivity and objectivity; within it, "subjectivity is the condition for objectivity" for knowledge production based on the communicative approach of intersubjectivity (Fabian, 2001). Fabian focuses mainly on the subjectivity of the ethnographic research method that seems to have entertained and influenced Durkheimian social anthropology regarding social scientific knowledge and, simultaneously, naturalizing the positivist tendencies in terms of the condition of knowledge production. Fabian also does not consider relativism as the opposite to objectivism. His ideas of knowing are based on the ways of knowing through communication activities, as he further highlights: "In ethnography, to formulate another thesis, the knowledge process must be initiated by confrontation that becomes productive through communication" (Fabian, 2001, p. 25). Fabian's ideas are relevant to the study of refugee and displaced populations and for

understanding marginal subjects more generally. In-depth communication with people offers an opportunity to reach the core level of participant's narratives, challenging the established discourses and the policies based on those discourses, as well as providing new knowledge in transforming and forming subjectivities. In terms of questioning established norms, Fabian also indicates the problematic notion of ethnographic research, texts, and documents based on the influence of power. For instance, he agrees that Western ethnographic discourses cannot be read unproblematically; that signifies that his ideas of knowing others and producing knowledge are conditional (Fabian, 2001, p. 68).

Historically, the ethnographic method was first conceived mainly by armchair researchers assuming a myth of others without first-hand experience. Rather than delving into the crux of fieldwork to accumulate the lived experiences of people and their culture, armchair ethnographers produced knowledge based on existing travel reports. Cerroni-Long (1995) has argued this early tendency signified the complicity of outsider appropriation in examining native people and their cultures. Even after fieldwork became a norm for ethnographic research, early ethnographic investigation, like many methods, was influenced by colonial prejudices used in defining others and their cultures within the paradigm of a certain stereotype.

This research investigated how power and politics were practiced, how were refugees governed, and what were/are their experiences dwelling in such structure. For example, I asked questions such as: when did they leave Bhutan? How did they cross Bhutan-India and India-Nepal borders? How did they get refugee verification cards? How was the food distribution mechanism implemented and regulated in the camp? Were the health care and immunization services provided in the refugee camps, etc.? Through ethnographic practice, I attempted to dig out the unheard and unwritten components of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees that were

being overshadowed by the power and politics involved inside and outside the refugee camps. In other words, this methodology informed the genealogy of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees aiming to explore the marginal components of these refugees' experiences from their displacement, camps, and in Canada.

Participant Observation: Process and Challenges

I prefer to volunteer and work with people in different communities, and I did have an opportunity to volunteer for the Canadian Bhutanese Society in Lethbridge. A researcher can accumulate rich data by avoiding misinformation through the means of language meditation Aydin and Ceci (2013). The volunteer opportunity such as sports, multicultural functions, and cultural ceremonies benefitted my research project, where I could explore the ideas, actions, thoughts, and symbolic and non-symbolic expressions of the people, as well as their lived experiences from Bhutan to Canada. Becoming part of the local community allowed me to participate in fieldwork. Volunteering with this community enabled me to better understand their lived experiences and stories in Canada and beyond, particularly the problems and difficulties associated with being refugees. Most importantly, I could listen and note the stories and experiences they narrated from the time of their displacement from Bhutan to the long transition they had before arriving in Canada. Working together with people in the community, having informal communication with them, and participating in cultural functions and rituals helped me understand their daily lives more closely.

The COVID-19 crisis obstructed my plan to conduct ethnographic research as it came to be a threat to our global community. However, this research project has used abundant ethnographic input regarding the questions that were informed and framed by participant observation and community involvement. Overall, I spent almost a year in the field for

observation besides my informal communication and conversations with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Lethbridge. I interviewed 15 people of various age groups, gender, and religious affiliation, in addition to numerous informal interactions. I participated in community functions and volunteerism—such as cultural programs, funereal services, marriage ceremonies, rituals, and sports—to understand their past and present experiences. I took field notes during my community engagement and volunteerism and festivals organized by Southern Ethnic Association. I utilized those opportunities to make casual conversations with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees asking questions about their past and present experiences. The detailed fieldwork and interview process I conducted have been elaborated on and explained below.

This research focuses more on in-depth interviews based on the queries I had and achieved through my participation in various community activities by scrupulously following the public health measures during this pandemic situation. I focused on the essential components of ethnographic research in studying people's culture, experiences, and language. My work delved into participants' narratives regarding their experiences of being refugees and becoming citizens. In doing so, I did not observe refugee camps in my field visits; instead, I visited the images of their past and experiences of the exile-refugee-citizen nexus that shapes their distinct identity.

My sharing the same language as the participants was beneficial to understanding the cultural nuances of their lives in transnational geographies. In my fieldwork, self-preparedness, organizing locations for the interviews, communicating with participants, dressing up, and many other activities entail the individual disciplinary mechanism I controlled and regulated. Ethics, as I would agree with the Foucauldian disciplinary mechanism of self-control, restricted me from violating academic and non-academic rules, in general, to avoid harming participants in terms of confidentiality, trauma, and cultural solidarities. I jotted down every aspect of the activities I

attended and the conversations I had with participants to get in-depth information on their biopolitical experiences, from their displacement to their resettlement. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees' emotional expressions in terms of their cultural and ethnic practices were meaningful and prominent in studying their biopolitical experiences. It helped me explore the knowledge and experiences of these refugee populations through interaction, engagement, communication, and silences.

Musante and DeWalt (2010) defines participant observation "as a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions, and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning both the explicit and tacit aspects of their lived routines and culture" (p. 1). As Malkki (1995) suggests, it is crucial to investigate various identities and subjects constructed by national and international refugee regimes from people's displacement to the third-county settlement and their historical realities. Their narratives of the camps in terms of camp management include health, education, food, camp control mechanisms, policing, self-policing of their lives, and influences (positive and negative) in their third-country settlement in Canada. My ethnographic research concentrated on the refugee camps regarding the technology of control, which produces knowledge and subjectivities in the social economy through micro-practices of power. While observing, I focused on disciplinary activities and mechanisms of control in refugee camps in Canada rather than concentrating on cultural aspects. For this plan, interviewing as a data collection method helped me keep concise notes from participants' observations.

These participant observations helped me extensively use intensive personal involvement to relate the theoretical and methodological knowledge in expanding my research. Agar (1986) states that the ethnographic exploration is a tool for framing research projects that provides

methodological application and communicative engagement with the people and communities. The participant observations I made helped me understand the complexities, obscurities, and objections of the human condition. The ethnographic method helped me frame biopolitical questions by communicating and engaging with the participants to observe their feelings and experiences during displacement from Bhutan, in refugee camps, and in Canada, concerning how authority legalized the sovereign right to punish, displace, and kill.

Semi-structured Interviews, Process, and Data Collection

With all awareness regarding ethical pitfalls in mind, the interview process started after I got a full ethics application protocol from the office of Research Services at the University of Lethbridge. I focus primarily on semi-structured interviews with guiding questions prepared from the observations and fieldwork. On an observation basis, I focused on the narratives of the participants and their tendency to remember and relate their past stories; their fear resulted from persecution in everyday life. The semi-structured interviews were conducted between January and March 2021, set up as preferred by the participants and in a way that would ensure safety for them and me. In a semi-structured interview, questions tend to be flexible, acknowledging the direction in which the interview evolves, and any emergent issues arise (Bryman, 2016; Rabionet, 2011). This allows for a deeper and personal conversation than structured interviews because it explores questions and enriches the data (Whiting, 2008). This method allowed Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees I interviewed to express their thoughts as well as the experiences they had encountered throughout their life, in both Bhutan and Canada. As stated by Malbon (2002), (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) and Olson (2016), I found that the semi-structured interview method helps establish an open-ended communication process for participants to share

their emotions and their lived experiences of how different phases of their lives perceive biopolitical power of their management and resistance to it.

Instead of delving into the damaged-centred research of this refugee population, the questions were framed to ask participants how power was exercised to manage refugees in the camps and later in Canada. This meant questions related to the participants' experiences with different regimes of power exercised by government institutions, from Bhutan to Canada, and questions meant to explore how the method of surveillance was involved in the camps and is involved in Canada now. This included how surveillance of disciplinary mechanism functions differently in rural camps and the refugee management practices in the neoliberal mechanism in developed counties such as Canada. As Nyers (2006) discusses regarding the fear-sovereignty-humanitarian action nexus, this methodological underpinning helped me understand how fear was created as a subject within refugee populations through their activities and responses to the questions I prepared based on my activities and involvements with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Lethbridge.

To find participants, I requested the help of the Canadian Bhutanese Society. The president of the Canadian Bhutanese Community circulated the consent form, along with a note mentioning the project. Since many of the people in the community do not use email, the president physically visited people. After receiving the email or letter sent by their community president, many community members were directly contacted by telephone and during my volunteer work in the community, showing their willingness to participate in the interview. Some community members communicated with the president concerning their interest in participating in an interview, others directly contacted me. Participants belonged to various affiliations, identities, and experiences. For instance, the gender, religious affiliations, and ethnic background

differed between participants. The participants were between the age of twenty-five and eighty-eight. As demonstrated in the table below, the participants were diverse in terms of the refugee camps they belonged to. They represented five refugee camps among a possible seven. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees characterize multiethnic groups within their community. As demonstrated in the table, the participants in this research project have various ethnic and religious affiliations, such as Christan, Hindu, Manab Dharma, Kirat, and Nijanandi. Thirteen participants were Canadian citizens, and two were in the process of becoming citizens. Twelve participants worked in different workplaces in Lethbridge (general labour), two were not working, and one had a small business of their own. The fifteen participants included three generations of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees.

The first category (category A) included five senior participants between sixty to ninety who are not in the Canadian workforce and live in retirement. They are one of the most vulnerable groups of people within this community who survived the brutality of the Bhutanese government starting from the early 1980s. This group helped me understand the people's experiences from Bhutan to their transition through Nepal and into Canada. The second category (category B) includes four participants of the age between forty to sixty and is composed of people who were school children at the time of their displacement from Bhutan and when they lived in refugee camps in Nepal. Now, they are significant workforce in Southern Alberta's economy. The final category (category C) consists of six participants, including youth between the age group of twenty-five and forty who were born in the camps in Nepal and came to Canada with their parents. Their experiences, thoughts, and lived experiences from camps to Canada were also substantive sources in studying the biopolitical experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. It was an in-depth interview, so participants were free to express their

feelings, experiences, trauma, and anxieties during the interview. Because of the various location of the birthplace and different age groups, the narrative data for nine of the total were examined and analyzed in the first substantive chapter because among the other six participants, two were toddler during the time of displacement and four were born in the refugee camps in Nepal.

Challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic shaped the number and setting of the interviews. I did not consider doing telephone interviews or any virtual conversations for multiple reasons: Some participants were not virtual-conversation friendly; I also could not confirm that I would have rich data from a virtual conversation, and was conscious about the privacy of my participants, which could not be protected for those needing help from others to set up any electronic devices. I followed public health measures enacted by the Government of Alberta. I held phone conversations with my participants to confirm whether they had any COVID-19 symptoms or had close contact with someone who had recently tested positive for COVID-19. As clearly mentioned in the consent form, no participant with any symptoms for COVID-19 could participate in the interview. I conducted the interviews in various locations, such the CBS office or the participant's home. As I mentioned to them about their privacy, every participant helped me set up a place where no one could access our conversation. I asked every participant to sign the consent form to allow me to record our conversations, with the promise that I would destroy these records after five years.

No one refused to respond to any questions. I perceived participants to be open and expressive in sharing everything they encountered, as if they were waiting a very long time for someone to tell their stories to. I recorded every conversation, jotting down any vital information they narrated. While I lost one of the recorded data due to a technological error, I could still access the data from the participant since they had written answers based on the guiding

questions, I had already provided to them. I also used my notes to make up for the lost recording. Most participants wanted to speak in Nepali language as they either had no English language skills or could articulate their experiences more efficiently and effectively in a Nepali language. I conducted two interviews entirely in English, and two had a mixture of both English and Nepali. The rest were conducted entirely in Nepali. The shortest interview was 43 minutes, while the longest was 1 hour and 50 minutes. Using the Nepali language helped me more deeply explore their narratives since I could understand many slang words and some symbolic expressions, regardless of some of the challenges I encountered in the transcription and translation process. All the participant's original names are anonymized.

Participants' Profiles

Name	Place of Birth	Date of Eviction	Refugee Camp Number	Date Arrived in Canada	First Place of Arrival	Religious Affiliation	Gender	Citizenship	Work Status
Sam	Nepal	Born in Camp	Beldanki 1	2009	Lethbridge	Hindu	Male	Canadian	Working
Mike	Bhutan	1991	Beldanki 1	2010	Lethbridge	Hindu	Male	Canadian	Working
Sean	Nepal	Born in Camp	Beldanki 1	2011	Lethbridge	Kirat	Male	Canadian	Working
Babi	Bhutan	1991	Beldanki 1	2010	Lethbridge	Hindu	Female	Canadian	Not Working
Harry	Bhutan	1993	Khudunabari	2012	Lethbridge	Hindu	Male	Canadian	Not Working
Dev	Bhutan	1992	Beldanki 2	2010	Lethbridge	Hindu	Male	Canadian	Not Working
Grant	Bhutan	1992	Beldanki 1	2011	Lethbridge	Buddhist	Male	Non-citizen	Working
Kevin	Bhutan	1992	Goldhap	2009	Regina	Buddhist	Male	Canadian	Small Business
Marley	Bhutan	1992	Beldanki 1	2010	Lethbridge	Nijanandi	Female	Canadian	Working
Paul	Bhutan	1992	Pathri	2009	Lethbridge	Hindu	Male	Canadian	Working
Robin	Bhutan	1989	Beldanki 1	2010	Lethbridge	Christian	Male	Canadian	Working
Rita	Nepal	Born in Camp	Beldanki 3	2010	St, Jones	Manawadharma	Female	Canadian	Working
Siman	Bhutan	1992	Beldanki 1	2015	Lethbridge	Christian	Male	Non-citizen	Working
Sila	Nepal	Born in Camp	Beldanki 1	2011	Lethbridge	Buddhist	Female	Canadian	Working
Gina	Bhutan	1992	Beldanki 1	2009	Quebec City	Manawadharma	Female	Canadian	Working

Discourse and Narrative Analysis

This research project employs discourse and narrative analysis since it explores Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees' experiences during their displacement from Bhutan in the 1980s to Canada. Foucault (2002) defines “discourse as a group of verbal statements, a series of sentences and propositions, and perhaps most importantly, that which is produced by a series of signs with particular modalities of existence” (p. 121). Practices of statement-making and resultant organized clusters of statements called discursive formations through which subjects and objects, forms of knowledge and power, and truth-values, are produced as effects (Carroll, 2004). These kinds of modalities of discourse produce varieties of discursive formations, such as political discourse, economic discourse, cultural discourse, clinical discourse, and the discourse of natural history (van Dijk, 2001; Wodak 2001; Hodes, 2018). Critical discourse analysis “may be defined as fundamentally concerned with analyzing opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power, and control as manifested in language” (Wodak p. 2; Hodes; p. 74). Critical discourse analysis examines socially-embedded discursive practices productive not only of particular truth-statements but also of narratives and narrative forms that articulate social priorities and divisions, the deployment of techniques of power, etc. (Deleuze, 1988; Wodak, 2001; Souto-Manning, 2014; Hodes, 2018).

Attention to discourse and the tools of discourse analysis allowed me to rigorously employ the biopolitical theoretical ideas of scholars such as Foucault, Agamben, Mbembe and Arendt, in relation to theoretical assumptions and political practices concerning human displacement. This approach enabled discussions about power and politics under the spectrum of global biopolitics and its various ways of making refugees and dealing with the political agency of those refugees. To reiterate, discourse analysis provided a way to develop new insight into the

discursive production of people as political or non-political or as politicized or depoliticized subjects, as this occurred in the various phases in which the lives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees were shaped and directed in refugee-making and refugee-processing or governing strategies.

Narrative analysis is concerned with the production of meaning and identity through forms of story; the relation of events in a way that also produces meaningful forms of chronology or chronological causality. Narrative is central to human communication, and no age of any history or society is possible without narrative; it, therefore, is "transcultural", "transnational", and "international" (Barthes, 1966; Franzosi, 1998). Souto-Manning (2014) argues that "narrative analysis focuses on how people make sense of their experiences in society through language; CDA is concerned with power and language in society" (p. 161). The most important aspect of narrative analysis in conducting research is that it consists of various approaches drawing together the popular critical theories (Mumby, 1993). Critical discourse and narrative analysis prominently share concerns to explore the construction of social reality and of subjectivity and identity, through discursive practices and in association with modalities and forms of power and its association with power and discourse relationship (Heracleous, 2006; Carroll, 2004; Mumby, 1993).

Narrative analysis is a powerful tool in investigating the social issues associated with refugee populations in terms of social reality and of subjectivity and identity. This method allowed me to explore the narratives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees more deeply, as well as enabling a different perspective on the social and political structures that reinforce or challenge social and political structures challenging the systems of knowledge and power in the broader context of contemporary societies in which refugees and refugeeness are produced. I

have used narrative analysis to analyze and discuss narratives of violence, policing, and the politics of creating exceptional spaces for humans as refugees.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns are a prominent component in human-involved research and critical to maintaining high standards and respecting values associated with participants. Non-observance of ethics is serious and sometimes might be dangerous if the researcher fails to pay special attention to participants' social and cultural values and norms (Leavy, 2017). One critical and prominent issue an ethnographer should be aware of is the ethics related to interviewing and asking questions (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001, p. 341). Lee-Treweek and Linkogle (2000) argues:

> Social research involves us entering other people's workplaces, homes and communities and we are often unaware of the threats of the field until we have been there for some time. Moreover, the traditional view of research as an individual vocation and craft has meant that the occupational risk of doing research have not been recognized (p. 10).

Unknowingly, an ethical issue might occur while exploring research in terms of asking questions about trauma. Some ethical questions are central to ethical considerations, such as "Have participants been harmed in some way, or, if they have been harmed, have the researcher's benefits outweighed this?" (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001, p. 341). I recognise that a social researcher should be watchful and knowledgeable about the values—such as culture, language, and ethnicity—associated with the participants. I understand ethics in social research practices to foremost consider morality, integrity, fairness, and truthfulness (Leavy, 2017). Morality involves identifying right and wrong, while integrity functions in acting on our knowledge (Leavy, 2017). Ethics, in this sense, acknowledges and maintains relationships among human beings.

Overall, respecting the participants, their culture, and their language was my primary concern during interviews and in how I presented data. To this end I took a number of steps: I

was aware of the potential pitfalls of losing the data and the commitments I demonstrated in the ethics application, so I stored the data in a password protected separate folder. I was aware of participants' possible harm and injury in terms of cultural interference and to this end was watchful and sincere, asking about their traumatic past. As suggested by Northey, Tepperman, & Albanese (2012), I was sensitive to the research questions regarding cultural differences with distinctive characteristics based on the limitations of ability, experiences, and training. Since I was aware of the culture and language of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, I feel I possessed enough capacity to avoid possibilities of certain ethical pitfalls and shortcomings that were likely to occur during the research process due to linguistic miscommunication. Confidentiality is another primary ethical concern an ethnographic researcher should be attentive to and mindful of in terms of participant privacy. In this respect, I was more flexible in creating pseudonyms to ensure the confidentiality of the respondents. Similarly, I solicited the participants' will in choosing a better place for the interview that would protect both their privacy and the safety.

Data Transcription, Translation, and Validation

One challenge I faced in my research was data transcription. I tried to search for software for transcribing the interview data, but I did not find any reliable ones that could transcribe interviews conducted in the Nepali language. Due to the problem with transcription software, the only thing I could do was slow down the speed of the audio and transcribe them manually. I typed both English interviews manually, but the rest were another challenge. I had to transcribe verbatim all the interviews conducted in the Nepali language, and I had to transcribe them by hand since I did not have proper typing skills in Nepali language. I revisited the interview multiple times to check for errors and missing content. I then gradually translated the Nepali

transcriptions into English. I took special care while translating the data into English because it was a pretty challenging, and it could quickly lose meaning. As I wanted to protect my participants' privacy, I did not hire people to translate or transcribe. As a result, it took me a long time to complete the translations and transcriptions and this effort took a major portion of my research time.

After completing the translations, I went into the data validation phase. Data validation was also one of the challenging parts for me since most of my participants did not use email services. I emailed the transcribed and translated data to three participants who use email. I asked them to go through all the transcribed and translated data to see whether there were any errors or inaccuracies in their narratives, and they corrected some minor errors. For the twelve other transcriptions and translations, I met the participants individually and explained everything I did to avoid errors and inaccuracies. In some cases, this involved repeated meetings. Besides some minor errors, participants indicated that the data was perfectly accurate based on their narratives. I have managed all the data in the central locking system with a password.

Data Analysis, Discussion, and Writing

Qualitative data analysis is another challenging task of researchers in social science. Data analysis is a fundamental part of research projects that include various strategies. Reflexivity and transferring knowledge are two fundamental elements I paid attention to. This process of reflexivity and transferring knowledge consists of making sense of and visualizing the data collected (Creswell, 2009). Data analysis involves incorporating several sensitive tasks since it's a process of organizing the data by breaking it into numerous manageable units. is process also includes finetuning findings by carefully addressing and relating the data to the literature in a

broader conceptual idea (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, Tracy, 2012). I categorized the transcribed data into various groups and sub-groups through the coding and analytical process. I analyzed the categorized data step by step with the help of key theoretical framing that this research projects broadly discussed in the chapter three. As narrative and discourse analysis were my primary frames in developing questions, I aimed to ensure that participant narratives were kept intact in my analysis, focusing on broad trends emerging from stories as an overall unit, rather than breaking down stories into small codable units.

If I were to use software for data analysis, I could have chosen between two options: NVivo and Atlas TI. Initially, I chose NVivo based on the reviews of other researchers. My university IT department helped me set up NVivo, and I tried it to analyze my data. What I realized after using it, however, was that manual analysis would be more effective and more accurate. It allowed me to play more effectively with the data for its thematic coding. In doing so, I gather all the data set that has common theme for the reflexivity and interpretative analysis. I fundamentally engaged in two activities: listening to the interviews and reading the transcriptions as many times as I could. The interview process helped me organize the data into three categories relevant to the displacement of the participants: their original life in Bhutan or becoming refugees initially, their lived experiences of the refugee camps, and their lives in Canada. This strategy helped me code the data based on thematic categories before I started discussing the data. My analysis process is a blend of thematic and narrative analysis. I examined and analyzed narratives of all participants regarding their lives in camp and community concerning the common patterns of narratives and experiences. I have brought together similar narratives of the participants based on their thematic categories and discussed them with the theoretical lens (global biopolitical), which has been thoroughly done in chapter three. After

collecting the data, I transcribed them thoroughly and analyzed them using the biopolitical theory. A biopolitical lens provides ample ways to go from center to margin and vice versa to address and power relations associated with the lived and embodied experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees.

Chapter 3: Biopolitics: Theoretical Underpinnings and Controversies

. . . sovereignty's old right—to take life or let live—was replaced, but it came to be complemented by a new right which does not erase the old right but which does penetrate it, permeate it. (Foucault, 2003, p. 241)

A constant interplay between techniques of power and their objects gradually curves out in reality, as a field of reality, population and its specific phenomena. A whole series of objects were made visible for possible forms of knowledge on the basis of the constitution of the population as the correlate of techniques of power. In turn, because these forms of knowledge constantly carve out new objects, the population could be formed, continue, and remain as the privileged correlate of modern mechanisms of power. (Foucault, 2007, p. 79)

It can even be said that the production of biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power. In this sense, biopolitics is at least as old as the sovereign exception. (Agamben, 1998, p. 6)
. . . the notion of biopower is insufficient to account for contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death. (Mbembe, 2003, p. 39-40)

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss biopolitical theoretical controversy, including my perspectives on the different theoretical perspectives involved. First, the chapter demonstrates the emergence of the biopolitical concept ranging from 1950 to today. The most exciting element of Foucault's theoretical understanding of the control of populations lies in the distinction and linkage he made between biopower and biopolitics, which engages his work with other philosophers who disagree with his use of this distinction, namely Giorgio Agamben, an Italian philosopher, whom I discuss in section three. Section four of the chapter includes a discussion of relevant aspects of a theoretical difference between Foucault and Agamben, including Agamben's controversial notion of the "*zoë*" (unpolitical) and "Bios[14]" (political) dichotomy and the life and death of

[14] Bios is a philosophical term first used in ancient Greek that refers to political life, improved life, or quality life, later used by Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben referring to political life

political subjectivity of refugees, followed in section five by attention to the Foucauldian concept of *dispositif* and an elaboration on the importance of the distinction between biopower and biopolitics. Finally, this chapter deals with the genealogical research developed by Foucault and his followers and its efficacy in social science research for digging out the marginal components of political practices and historical discourses in an empirical but non-positivist manner. In the concluding section, I briefly introduce and explain genealogy as a methodology in epistemological considerations linked to the Foucauldian notions of 'power,' 'discourses,' and 'knowledge' before discussing the meaning and significance of the terms 'biopolitics' and 'biopower'.

Emergence of Biopolitical Concepts

Biopolitics is the term Foucault used to refer to an organized set of discursive and social practices aimed at the governance of populations and individuals in terms of a promotion of "life." In the rise of advanced capitalism, biopolitical forms of power emerged in which forms of power, control, management, normalization, and regulation interplay in terms of the relationship between a state and its population (Lemke, 2011). Critics like Lemke consider biopolitics to be an oxymoron for creating a nexus for the human body and politics (Lemke, 2011). It is, thus, imperative to discuss the emergence of the concept of biopolitics before engaging in the Foucauldian power dynamics that biopolitics contains.

The Swedish political scientist and professor at the University of Uppsala until he died in 1922, Rudolf Kjellen was among some thinkers who initially employed the term biopolitics to

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of modern people (Agamben, 1998; Owens, 2009). Bios is a quality life regulated in the city with proper "economy of family" and political mechanism of a state (Douglas, 2009)

impart the organicist[15] concept of the state and its form of life (Lemke, 2011). Kjellen contributed to academic programs focusing on research and investigation geared towards biopolitical powers based on state organism (Marklund, 2015). The idea of biopolitics became famous later in the 1980s when French philosopher Michel Foucault first used this term in *The History of Sexuality* vol I, observing the changing social organization of power in Europe between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries focusing on a shift in the powers and role of the state with respect to sovereignty, and in relation to the development of new, more dispersed yet systematic forms of governance, new modes of punishment and discipline, and a new attention to the management of populations, their productivity, and happiness of population control and punishment. Introducing multi-faceted power dynamics, Foucault defines biopolitics concerning a new articulation of the social body as having "multiple heads":

> It is a new body, a multiple body, a body with so many heads that, while they might not be infinite in number, cannot necessarily be counted. Biopolitics deals with the population, with the population as a political problem, as a problem that is at once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as power's problem. And I think biopolitics emerges at that time (Foucault, 2003, p. 245).

Foucault situates his discussion of biopolitics in terms of a change in the practical deployment of power in the early modern era. He notes that the sovereignty of the state had previously been focused on the right to rule: the right to *kill* or let *live*. But from the late eighteenth century, new forms of power developed that shifted the focus of the state toward governance (the power to make *live* or let *die*) as well as sovereignty. These forms of governance also expanded beyond

[15] Before Foucault brought biopolitical concepts into light relating human bodies to politics, the notion of biopolitics used by political scientists and thinkers focused on an interpretation of the nature of a state as an organic whole. The Swedish political scientist and philosopher Rudolf Kjellen is among the thinkers to discuss biopolitics in the 20th century as emphasizing a state as a living entity or a form of life that consists of groups and classes. A state has biopolitical management and intervention to govern and rule its own parts, body, and spirit, i.e., broadly, a state's population (Lemke, 2011).

the state proper, forming networks of techniques, practices, and forms of knowledge aimed at the positive management of populations and of individuals in terms of economic productivity, but also longevity, health, happiness, and order. Foucault studied these developments not as a political scientist seeking effective solutions to social problems, but historically and philosophically, sketching the emergence of the sociopolitical structures of contemporary society, though he did draw on ideas from the history of political practices. Explaining biopolitics and biopower as relating to questions of the management of life and death, Foucault stated that society is governed through social and discursive formations best understood through a conceptual and practical genealogy of governmental power. This new power, he said, did not amount to an absolute change in the role of the state but added to sovereignty a quite different modality in which power became a way of producing effects on or in a population rather than of limiting or forbidding (ultimately by force) the actions of those subject to the state.

In *The Birth of Biopolitics* (2008), Foucault elaborated and theorized liberalism as a system of government associated with a biopolitical technology of power that shifted in practice from an emphasis on sovereign power to biopower. Foucault distinguishes the previous conceptions of the sovereign, who possessed the "right of the life and death over his subjects," from the contemporary power relations that encourage practices of 'health" and social "functionality". This very "right of life" was effectively a "right of death", known as sovereignty (Foucault, 2008). The notion of power was ultimately a matter of deciding whether someone would be killed or not. While sovereign power in earlier times used to exercise power as a form of deduction affecting and mandating life-or-death, today, governmental power does not operate deductively through a right to kill but through a promotion and administration of the means of life – e.g., taxes, property, privilege (Foucault, 2003). The fundamental interest of power today is

in how to secure, improve, and extend life. As Foucault stated, “one of the basic phenomena of the nineteenth century was what might be called power’s hold over life” (Foucault, 2003, p. 239). It is, therefore, imperative to look at shifts in the forms and exercise of power and the nature of their functioning, not simply in terms of philosophical categories but also of their practical development.

Recently, biopolitics has become fashionable, if not controversial, jargon used in social and critical theories in terms of a variety of conflicting perspectives among scholars of the topics of population management, regulation, and control. However, it is as a concept of the political mechanism of state and also wider para-state and non-state forms of control that the concept of biopower is significant for developing both a methodological and a theoretical framework for understanding how the practical production of knowledge intersects with those practices that constitute forms of power and politics in terms of practical concern for managing populations within the domain of the governmentality within nation-states. As a methodological focus and a social-theoretical concept, it has not only been important for scholars in the social sciences but also has attracted those in other disciplines. In the 1970s and early 1980s, Foucault developed and articulated an approach to governmentality from a general examination of shifts in European systems of capital punishment and penal incarceration, to which he subsequently added a discussion of a specific governmental phenomenon and its specific techniques of application that he termed biopolitics and biopower. He was concerned to develop an understanding of how modern power dynamics work and how they shift in emphasis from the sovereign (dedicative) right to kill, to biopower as the art of making live (productively) or letting die in the neoliberal world.

Biopolitics and Biopower: Distinction and Functions

Although there has been an abundance of discussions, research, and other responses to Foucault's discussion of biopolitics and biopower in academic scholarship, the distinction between them has not been consistently presented. Biopolitics is no longer a new theoretical concept in academic discussions; it has become popular among scholars of various disciplines since Foucault elaborated on it, changing its meaning from its former application to the state as an organic whole. After Foucault reintroduced the concept of biopolitics to describe the multifaceted governance of populations and individual bodies arising out of new disciplinary practices and forms of economic discourse in the 19th century, and giving rise to a wide variety of ameliorative and corrective practices, it has become prevalent. It has been prevalent among and attractive to many scholars and philosophers in the social sciences, such as Giorgio Agamben, Roberto Esposito, Antonio Negri, Michael Hardt, Paul Rabinow, and Nikolas Rose. Scholars in biology, medicine, geography, and history have also become fascinated with it and have employed it in their own biopolitical research. It seems as if the controversy of biopolitical theory results from its splendour in attracting many scholars to investigate and apply it to diverse fields of study. Biopolitics in academia today has become a buzzword. While the theoretical debates will be discussed in later sections, this section briefly examines the idea of the sovereign right to kill and the distinction that Foucault makes between sovereignty and biopolitics, and between biopolitics and biopower.

Foucault was fascinated with investigating how the exercise of power changed in the capital punishment and penal system in France during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This investigation later became important to his theorization of biopolitics. Before distinguishing between biopower and biopolitics, it is crucial to understand how Foucault defines

sovereign power and how it functions relative to law, politics, and practices. Sovereign power prohibits, restricts, and limits people's behaviour, as it possesses absolute rights to punish and kill (Foucault, 1978). Foucault draws the ideas of sovereign power after his close observation of European political practices, methods of punishment, control of population, and practices of medical treatment and also his reading of the political theory of Carl Schmitt. To remain sovereign, a sovereign authority exercises force in different forms to control situations and people (Foucault, 1978). Sovereign power in seventeenth and eighteenth-century France entailed violent punishment, torture, and extreme pain, as well as the death penalty, as a system of control based on the ultimate authority of the sovereign and legitimized rules and laws (Foucault, 1978). Foucault explains:

> The sovereign exercised his right of life only by exercising his right to kill, or by refraining from killing; he evidenced his power over life only through the death he was capable of requiring. The right which was formulated as the "power of life and death" was in reality the right to *take* life or *let* live. (Foucault, 1978, p. 136).

Foucault first introduced the idea of sovereign power and biopolitics in the last section of *History of Sexuality* Vol I. (Foucault, 1978). He argues that "power in this instance was essentially a right of seizure: of things, time, bodies, and ultimately life itself; it culminated in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to surpass it" (Foucault, 1978, p. 136). The sovereign could exercise power as much over life (by limiting it and enforcing its obedience and subjection) as through death (Foucault, 1978). The sovereign power is framed and perceived within the institutional principle of the perpetuity of limitation and obligatory norms. It creates a boundary for the people in a certain space by applying the control-through-space mechanism (Foucault, 2003). However, Foucault claims that the ancient form of sovereign power that possessed and exercised 'right to kill' and 'let live' shifted to biopower, meaning that biopower didn't replace sovereign power, but rather that sovereign power accommodates new forms of governmental power which

have tended to displace the centrality of sovereignty since the 19th century, which Foucault calls the technology of power in the political scenario of contemporary nation-states (Foucault, 2003). Foucault expounds:

> …that sovereignty's old right—to take life or let live—was not replaced, but it came to be complemented by a new right which does not erase the old but which does penetrate it, permeate it. This is the right, or rather precisely the opposite right. It is the power to "make" live and "let" die. The right of sovereignty was the right to take life or let live. And then this new right is established: the right to make live and to let die (Foucault, 2003, p. 241).

Foucault acknowledges that biopower did not completely supersede the sovereign form of power. It is not that the right to kill has become extinct, but the mechanism of right to kill has been replaced by the practices of making live and letting die in which functions the disciplinary mechanisms of power to normalize human bodies and population. While the final chapter of the *History of Sexuality* Vol 1 (1978) introduces Foucault's ideas about biopolitics for the first time, he elaborates and explains the shift in emphasis from sovereign power to biopolitics and state racism[16] in *Society Must Be Defended* (2003).

Biopower and biopolitics are two different but interconnected terms used by Foucault to describe state and social mechanisms of bodily and population management. Biopower is the

[16] In his book, *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault discusses modern racism, explaining how state racism functions. Referring to the Nazis' brutality as an example of state racism, Foucault indicates a theory of domination in which an asymmetrical mode of power involves and thus produces subordinated subjects with limited power who are nonetheless implicated in power as subordinate or resistive agents. Given that, according to Foucault, the sovereign right to kill was gradually displaced by an emphasis on "governmental" management, modern state racism can be said to be a disposition of administrative power selective of its own "productive" elements to eliminate destruction or waste. State racism, for Foucault, is part of the modern national society's political practice that is directed against those of its own components and products that are defined as destructive or subversive (Foucault, 2003). From the Foucauldian concept of state racism, it can be understood that even the "positive" power of governmentality can target specific groups (for example, reducing races to "the" race within a national population), to destroy them under the guise of a biopolitical logic of "national purity," or "national hygiene;" saving "the race" from others demonized as agents of chaos.

technology of self-deployed as a disciplinary mechanism of government that aims at protecting life even in danger and difficulty. Biopolitics is an overall "political rationality" or a "governmentalist form of politics" (Foucault, 2007; Lemke, 2011) which focuses on the administration or management of life as embodied in living individual human bodies and in human populations. Its overall objective is to sustain and enhance life, health and embodied functionality of individuals and populations; to "put this life in [productive] order" (Foucault, 2003). Biopower refers to how this is done in practice: the way that biopolitics is applied in a society, through new mechanisms or techniques of power. Biopower transforms human bodies into an economy of power and productivity under the data-collection and analysis, border controls and professionalized forms of administration and therapeutics supported by and pervasive within modern biopolitically-oriented nation-states. Biopolitics is concerned with the relationship between biological life and politics to improve, regulate, and manage the population through governmentality ---a productive method of a disciplinary society in modern political and administrative practices. In order to clarify this discussion of biopolitics and biopower, it is imperative to take into account the Foucauldian conception of the practical exercise of this modality of power, based on Foucault's studies of changing European political, policy, and health or care-management practices between the late eighteenth and late twentieth centuries. Biopower refers to techniques for the control and management of the body and its capacities, as Muller (2004) elaborates: "The move from sovereign power over death to sovereign power over life involves the increased regulatory and corrective mechanisms of the state that exert forms of "disciplinary power" in order to maintain power over life—bio-power" (p. 52). While biopolitics as a system of political thought takes population as a political subject to control, manage, and regulate, biopower is the practical technology of power employed to normalize the population,

based on disciplinary institutions formed and regulated by a state, but including also para-state and non-state agencies. As Foucault notes, disciplinary power normalizes human bodies, whereas biopower normalizes and controls not only individuals but populations through micromanagement strategies involving surveillance, policing, education, therapeutic intervention, the provision of services, and the encouragement of self-policing. (Foucault, 2007). Foucault elaborates that the exercise of biopower is an essential connection between populations, control of their activities, and space and time. Moreover, "power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of the population" (Foucault, 2003, p. 137). Such power is manifest in practices of managing human activities, in its relationship to "society" rather than the sovereign, and in its concern for regulating and regularizing political and geographical territories as practical accomplishments. Foucault argued in his lectures during the 1970s that since the eighteenth century, sovereign power ("the right to kill or let live") has moved to the background whereas biopower (the power to "make live or let die") has become central to and pervasive in the ordering of societies.

Thus, according to Foucault, biopower entails a biopolitical development at the level of the state: a new politics of life, health, functionality, and productivity. In terms of this biopolitics, the state (and also para-state and non-state academic, professional and service organizations) develops regulatory and other practical mechanisms to enhance productivity and function. To govern a state will therefore mean to apply economy, to set up an economy at the level of the entire state, which means exercising towards its inhabitants, and the wealth and behaviour of each and all, a form of surveillance and control as attentive as that of the head of a family over his households and goods (Burchell at el., 1991, p. 92).

Foucault notes a popular analogy between the regulative role of the state and that of the head of a family; both are involved in the functional organization of members (of "society" or of families). He means to say that in biopolitical discourse, the state, like the family, should organize its members with different responsibilities and distributions of work, with certain norms of economic regulation and individual disciplinary obligations. Likewise, biopolitics is an art and tactic of government to manage, control, regulate, and make people more useful to the national society based on ways of dealing with national and subnational populations on the basis of knowledge derived from statistical records and classifications; for example, through micromanagement of averages recast as "normalcy" in relation to defined population distributions in cities, towns, and rural areas (Burchell at el., 1991 and Foucault, 2007). Biopolitics functions to relate the living, productive body to politics. It "is a specifically modern form of politics where the biological existence of humanity is politicized, and the veil between the public and private is pushed aside" (Muller, 2004, p. 52). According to Foucault, biopolitics tracks every record of the population in order to establish and refine statistical averages as the basis for a micromanagement of the normal. The discipline of the body as a machine, the system of productivity and economy, and the 'species body' that emphasizes the mechanisms of life, mortality, health, and longevity, are controlled and supervised by the whole series and mechanism of biopolitics (Foucault, 2007). This concept of the biopolitical as developed by Foucault, signifies the connection of the human body to politics in a new way that does ***not*** replace or discontinue sovereign power but that ***does*** become the most commonly-encountered and omnipresent face of power. This is the central point of which is the central disagreement between the biopolitical conception of Foucault and Agamben, which I will elaborate in a later section. Biopolitics aims at the functioning of a government's various administrations at the

"level of the population," emphasizing living beings rather than "legal objects," focusing on people's collective activities, which has political effects (Foucault, 1978, 2003, 2007; Lemke, 2011; Genel, 2006; and Muller, 2004). Thomas Lemke elaborates on Foucauldian concepts of biopolitics:

> Foucault's concept of biopolitics assumes the dissociation and abstraction of life from its concrete physical bearers. The objects of biopolitics are not singular human beings but their biological features measured and aggregated on the level of populations (Lemke, 2011, p. 5).

Foucault's concept of biopolitics delves more into the political concerns related to human bodies rather than to the biological itself. This does not mean that Foucault was not concerned at all with biological aspects of population; he discusses human sexuality, fertility, and mortality but explicitly directs them to the political and social relationship in terms of productivity, regulation, and normalization. Foucault's description of biopolitical philosophy remains a point of departure for subsequent theories that consider the human body an object of politics. Biopolitics emphasizes the life and death of subjects in terms of health, birth, families, and lifestyle at the level of the population. This perspective is, at its core, "historico-epistemological" (Foucault, 2007; Dean, 2013; and Dillon, 2005). Biopolitics is understood as focal nexus bringing into view, producing a new correlation between ontology and politics (Lazzarato, 2002). The biopolitical idea that Foucault emphasizes is neither of the traditional notion of "classical economists" nor that of Marxist ideas associated with the explanation of labour, but it is, nonetheless, descriptive of an economy of forces (Lazzarato, 2002). Nonetheless, Lazzarato (2002) argues that the Foucauldian biopolitical ideas are close to Marxist ideas of political economy in the ways in which they can be related to contemporary neoliberal political practices. The relationship between debtor, creditor and the credit system, and also that between worker and the system of production and accumulation, as discussed by Lazzarato seems to be a

continuation of Marxist thought, but differently, because "the worker is no longer considered solely as a mere factor of production; he is no longer, properly speaking, a labour force, but a skill-capital, a skilled machine" (Lazzarato, 2012, p. 91). In Lazzarato's sense, wage depression and state budget cuts underlie a necropolitical process in neoliberalism. However, the Foucauldian concept of biopolitics initially emphasized its affirmative and productive aspects; the regulation of the labour force in terms of biopower was aimed at making people more productive. It is in his discussion of state racism in his 1976 lectures later published as *Society Must Be Defended* (2003) that Foucault turns to a discussion of biopower as a mode of power aimed at the protection of "society" rather than only of the Sovereign. There, Foucault argued that racism became entwined with biopolitics not only in defining the normative and the normal, but also in shaping a politics of "permanent purification" in which normalization entails a war against parts of the national population that come to be defined as unhealthy, pathological, impure, and dangerous. This is a war that involves not only categorization, surveillance, and regulation, but ultimately expulsion or genocide, or both.

Biopolitics, in a broader sense, is a political system of a modern government under which various forms of administration are established to implement laws and to define and legitimate exercises of power designed to manage, police, and reshape populations. Biopower refers to the tools developed by a state or state-related agencies to actually carry out this managerial power through diverse mechanisms of operation. However, biopower also encompasses the promotion of *self*-governance by members of national populations in ways that accord with biopolitical aims. This notion of self-governance anticipates the development of neoliberalism as a social/moral technology of responsibilization: a process that seeks to form members of a society

as subjects who will *accept responsibility* for their own self-governance, their social tasks, and their economic or social fates.

Biopower fundamentally functions in two major forms: one is discipline employed in relation to individual bodies based on the emergence of social institutions (including medicine, "corrective" forms of punishment, public health, and education) that regularize "care", and the other is control at the level of population concerning mortality, longevity, and productivity regulated and normalized by biopolitical management on the part of the state or state-sponsored agencies, and on behalf of "society." Security plays a crucial role in the biopolitical management of populations in the politics of modern nation-states, either in the definition and policing of geographical territories or in the social control of cities. The biopolitical security mechanism anticipates danger, does let people go hungry or let scarcity prevail (Foucault, 2007). In this sense, biopolitics *generates problems* in a disciplinary society, while biopower generates *solutions* to prevent them. However, as will be explained further, biopower exercised in the name of "society" may also take what Mbembe calls necropolitical forms, especially when "security" is defined in terms of state racism as a war against a segment of the population identified and classified as a "threat." In such instances, the solution offered by biopower may move beyond actively "making live" and passively "letting die" to practices which cross the line from "letting die" to *deliberately* placing people in situations in which they *will* die, and from there to practices of active killing. That is, biopower as a mechanism for "defending society" in terms of a biopolitics of state racism can become a control mechanism that employs lethality.

Theoretical Departures and Disputes: Agamben and Foucault

Giorgio Agamben has earned an abundance of reverence from scholars in the political and social sciences, not only because of his scholarly contributions to philosophy and critical theory but also for introducing the concept of *Homo sacer*[17] to the contemporary political arena. His book *HOMO SACER: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, published in 1998, is a response to Michel Foucault's discussion of biopolitics. Agamben, unlike Foucault, dates the origin of biopolitics to well before the modern era, and before even the development of the sovereign exception. Agamben disputes elements of Foucault's discussions of biopolitics and the nature of sovereign power; however, Agamben was also influenced by the Foucauldian concepts of biopower and biopolitics.

Biopolitics and biopower are different if related concepts for Foucault as discussed earlier, but for Agamben, they are linked to and defined by the concept of sovereignty much more directly than they are in Foucault. For Agamben, biopolitics can only function because of the existence of sovereign power, the right to kill. The Foucauldian notion of sovereign power addresses the evidence of torture, killing, and massacre in the history of politics, especially in the European context, but Foucault does not treat sovereign power as biopolitical, though he does acknowledge that it still depends on sovereignty to the extent that it is exercised by a state. However, for Agamben, the biopolitical body is produced at the origin of the exercise of sovereign power (Agamben, 1998). Agamben argues, like Carl Schmitt, that the sovereign the

[17] Giorgio Agamben borrows the idea of *Homo sacer* from ancient Roman law to describe the modern condition of bare life (*Zoë*). Bare life is unpolitical life; that is, life exiled from the political system. To describe bare life, Agamben describes the condition of refugees who, expelled not only from a territory but from participation in a legitimated political system, can be killed by a sovereign authority that acts beyond law. *Homo sacer* was the term used for a banned man in Roman law; a man set apart from the civic realm and the rule of law by sovereign decision, who could then be killed by anyone encountering him. But such a killing would not count as a religious sacrifice; one could say it would constitute a "bare death" (Agamben, 1998; Owens, 2009, Lemke, 2011; Lilja, 2014).

law, and also the space of the legitimately political, but.is not subject to them: “what is at issue in the sovereign exception is not so much the control or neutralization of an excess as the creation and definition of the very space in which the juridico-political order can have validity” (Agamben, 1998, p. 19). In this sense, a sovereign has no limitation on categorizing an unpolitical situation in their favour to exercise the right to kill because the juridico-political structure derives from the pure autonomy of the sovereign act to *institute* the law *in the first place*, and the law *subsequently* grants the state, in the name of the sovereign, the right to the means of official violence, including capital punishment. However, Foucault identifies a shift in the dominant mode of power from the regime of punishment (*i.e.*, sovereign power) to biopower in the development of modern political practices, and also treats biopower as life-promoting, referring to the modern "power to make live or let die" rather than to the sovereign right to kill.

Genel (2006) argues that Agamben’s understanding of Foucauldian biopolitics is diverted by the idea that “sovereign power establishes itself and perpetuates itself by producing a “biopolitical body” on which it is exercised” (Genel, 2006, p. 44). Agamben insists that sovereign power is the original and still fundamental form of power that produces biopolitics in the sense that sovereign power has always been exercised on bodies as well as making subjects. On the other hand, while Foucault categorized disciplinary technologies of power as functioning in different levels (as disciplinary mechanisms on an individual level and as biopower in massifying populations), he saw both as distinctively *modern*, as *different* from sovereign power, and *not* as deriving directly from sovereign power (Foucault, 1977; Genel, 2006). Arguing with Agamben, Genel (2006) insists that Foucault’s distinctions between sovereign power, disciplinary power, and biopower refer to what he sees as the constitution of a new form of power that sovereign power does not exploit. While Agamben argues that Foucault lacks a

"unitary theory of power", there are two possible ways to analyze Agamben's reading of Foucault: either it is an extension of the Foucauldian conception of biopolitics or a key moment in a critique of it (Genel, 2006). Agamben claims with respect to the two strands in Foucault's discussion of modern power (disciplinarity and biopower) that one refers to political technique and the other is an interwoven discussion of the technology of the self.

Agamben's concepts of bare life and sovereign authority beyond law have been criticized by a number of scholars. Agamben developed the concept of 'bare life' from Walter Benjamin's early essays "*Critique of Violence*" and "*Goethe's Elective Affinities"* (which themselves reflect Benjamin's reading of Schmitt) and he regards his discussion of it as the continuation of Benjamin's political philosophy (Vatter, 2008; Grumley, 2015). In response, Vatter (2008) argues that the "power over life is what determines bare life as guilty even before having committed any trespass. The question that motivates Benjamin's theoretical production concerns the redemption and emancipation of bare life from this mythical power" (Vatter, 2008, p. 45). Agamben's argument with Benjamin concerning sovereign violence and states of exception, which he believes are beyond the law and embody mythical or divine forms of violence that are the indicators of "power over life", which is biopolitical law (Agamben, 1998).

However, Agamben's understanding of juridical sovereignty and contemporary political practices have been criticized by various scholars. Juridical sovereignty, as Agamben defines it, is a form of power that acts originally to institute law and politics, and subsequently to suspend law or enact a state of exception from law and legitimate politics; it is a capacity of power that reduces a political life to an unpolitical state (for instance, from a citizen to a refugee). The existence and significance of monarchy in contemporary political practices—in Agamben's understanding—constitute a political-theological dilemma, and what matters most for Agamben

in terms of political theology is to define juridical sovereignty as an exercise of power *over* the law rather than within the law; a; a political *act* that institutionalizes the sovereign will as the origin of a political order. That is, while the sovereign *institutes* a legal-political *order*, the sovereign *act* of institution manifests as 'absolute', 'arbitrary', and 'exceptional' (Ramp, 2014). Revisiting and revising the Foucauldian discussion of biopolitics, Agamben claimed that the modern equivalent of the ancient Roman notion of *Homo sacer* is a human being who forfeits subjectivity in becoming an object under the authority of sovereign power. The biopolitical notion that Agamben extends from this is that it is *biopolitical sovereignty itself* that produces *zoë*; that is, bare life configured in Western politics as under a "ban" (Datta, 2006). That is, the sovereign ban establishes the space to which lives and bodies are banished and "made sacred" in relation to civic life (*bios*) in the *negative* sense of sacredness – the banished are *separated* from the law and from politics as *impurities*; foreign elements. But killing those designated as *homo sacer* has no sacrificial significance. As bare life, the bodies of those under the ban survive rather than live, and only as foreign matter that has been *removed* and may now be exterminated in acts of, say, "national hygiene" (Ramp, 2014; also Datta, 2006; Thobani, 2007).

Thobani critiques Agamben's use of the Schmittian notions of sovereign authority and sovereign exception as exhibiting a "Eurocentric" bias, which,

> Agamben's Eurocentric focus, like that of many other theorists, does not allow him to recognize that colonialism (which predated his analysis of the concentration camp as the paramount site of exception) has been central to the development of western forms of sovereignty as racialized forms of power through the institution of the law within modernity (Thobani, 2007, p. 37)

That is, Thobani (2007) argues that Agamben's emphasis on the exceptional aspect of sovereign authority neglects the ways in which colonialism did not simply place enslaved and dispossessed Indigenous peoples under exception through a sovereign *fiat* that was *above* the law, but also

through the adaptation of existing law to accommodate and facilitate colonialism, both in the colonizing centre and in the legal codes imposed in the colonized territories. In this latter sense, racialization was admitted *into* the law, giving it a formal status. Thus, racialization was not only a form of violence permitted in states of exception *outside* the law (though it did also operate in this fashion); it was also a form of violence permitted and governed *by and within* forms of law that were themselves *racialized*. Thobani is arguing that colonialism was accommodated and facilitated through *legalized* racialism. It is crucial to understand how Agamben's transhistorical account of the relation of the human subject to sovereignty fails to take into account the interpenetration of sovereignty and law; fails to consider that sovereignty itself does not arise in a legal or social vacuum, and fails to note the historically-specific way in which both sovereignty and law adapt and transmute in response to historical events, lacking "a concern for the transformations and displacements in which what counts as sovereignty becomes possible, actualised and deployed" (Datta, 2006, p. 172). In contrast to Agamben's synchronic discussion of biopolitics and sovereign power, the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics and biopolitical modernity suggests a 'genealogy of historicity[18]' and a diachronic (genealogical) model of investigation, incorporating a sensitivity to *emergence* in historical events and societal development (Datta, 2006). The political issue that this raises is not with Agamben's definition of the state of exception as designating those within it as *homo sacer* and their lives as , but with

[18] Foucault's genealogical method and his historically-nuanced account of governmentality, and of the emergence of biopower as a specific form of governmentality, are essential to an examination of *the specific emergence* of "post-politics," and they provide a needed nuance to debates over what counts today as politics and what does not. Foucault's diachronic and detail-sensitive genealogical approach contrasts with Agamben's more philosophical discussion and provides a useful corrective to its generalizing use. Foucault has developed a methodological and theoretical approach that does not seek to establish philosophical constants but to provide methodological and theoretical tools to deconstruct abstract claims about the temporal origin or fixity of the sacred (Datta, 2006) and thus of sovereignty, law and politics.

his generalizing of all contemporary politics as tending toward an "exceptional state[19]" and his assertion that the camp is becoming the central figure of that politics. This denies the fact that the biopolitics of life-affirmation, optimism, and production (Foucault, 2007; Datta, 2006) are still operative, even if, increasingly, they are offered *differentially* to citizens and non-citizens, and to citizens of different classes. Agamben's philosophical approach to the concepts of sovereignty and biopolitics arguably distorts the ideas of Foucault and Arendt (Blencowe, 2010) and certainly contradicts Foucault's approach to their study. Foucault's approach to the study of modern biopolitics and biopower as emergent, dynamic, and complex is nearly reversed in Agamben's interpretation of them in *Homo sacer* (Blencowe, 2010). Foucault's account of biopolitics emphasizes its institution of practical techniques of promoting life (biopower), but also recognizes its historical role in the emergence of state racism and its historically-specific (and thus, contingent) contribution to thanatopolitics[20]. However, in Agamben, thanatopolitics is

[19] Datta has identified Agamben's political-philosophical treatment of political violence as reliant on a negative and state/sovereignty-centred conception of the sacred. Datta provides a neo-Durkheimian alternative to this state-centred account of exception and violence, suggestive of a political shift from a focus on *the* state of exception (Agamben's conception) to a plurality of exceptional states (Datta, 2006).

[20] Biopolitics is concerned with the promotion of human functionality, productivity, and longevity through the gathering of data with which to develop knowledge of the normal functioning of individuals and the normal states of populations. This knowledge is empirically-based and oriented to *practical or professional application* in the provision of healthcare, and other means of proper management of the population. This provision takes place in terms of social mechanisms and techniques that Foucault collectively labelled as *biopower* because they are focused on the health of individual and collective *bodies*. However, biopower *also* works through techniques of *subjectification* through which individuals (for example as "clients" or "patients") are recruited into their own *self*-management in striving to live useful, happy and "well-adjusted" lives (for example, through the practice of "healthy lifestyles," mental-health techniques, self-monitoring, *etc*.). This is done both through individual consultation and public messaging. In short, Foucault's notion of biopolitics refers to a practical *politics of life* applied through forms of governmentality (techniques of statistical analysis, diagnosis, administration, amelioration and management) which collectively constitute forms of *biopower* exercised in and over the lives of individuals and populations. By contrast to the life-promoting aspect of

interpreted as a death-dealing apparatus of unity and order that emerges according to an iron law of political-philosophical necessity. What differentiates Arendt from Foucault is the assessment both thinkers have made of individuation and normalization. Arendt considers the force of modern society as divergent to individuality and convergent with totalitarianism. Agamben's perception of biopolitics is concerned only with the dynamics of the opposition of *zoë* and *bios* and with the powers that divide them; that is, with the division of improved or political life from bare or *un*political life. Foucault's discussion of the role of biopolitics in human biological modernity, is—according to Agamben's reading—an account of the entry of *zoë* into the concerns of the *polis* and its subjection there to the political *techne* of *sovereign* power (Blencowe, 2010, p. 115). Agamben neglects to include in this formulation an attention to the concept of neoliberalism that Foucault had begun to discuss; instead, he focuses on the *totalitarian* dimension of the state of exception, which is possible only in terms of the existence of a human group or population that can be designated, in a *sovereign* act, as condemned *beyond* rather than *through* the law to expulsion from citizenship, the political, and the *bios*, thereby becoming "bare life" (*zoë*).

I believe Agamben's pessimism in contemporary politics regarding the expansion of violent and autocratic rule derived from his reading of the ancient history of European political

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biopolitics, *thanatopolitics* is concerned not with "making live" but with death: with the politics of "letting die" or, more actively, of *promoting* death in the case of those defined as "suffering too much," or as "too costly to support" or as "threats to society." In other words, thanatopolitics is a practical politics of death which may be exercised through passive or active neglect or more direct measures. It is the converse of biopolitical life-affirmation but is structurally *similar* to it and often its *historical counterpart*. Thanatopower is the practical application of techniques of death in accord with a given, *specific* thantopolitical regime. By contrast to Foucault, Agamben collapses biopolitics into an expanded but more philosophical concept of thanatopolitics as based on and expressive of a *political imperative* of unity and order—a politics *of* and *over* death that is administrative but that *also* engages the *sovereign* power of states *by definition* rather than in specific circumstances (Foucault, 2003; Blencowe, 2010; Datta, 2006).

practices, and this in itself does not make him autocratic. His biopolitical philosophy is pessimistic and misanthropic at points primarily because of his assertion of an unchanging and static notion of sovereign power. His ideas of bare life claim that political society (*bios*) is possible only in terms of a philosophical assertion of the exception (*zoë*), yet a genealogical analysis can demonstrate that states of exception are embedded in specific historical instances of political reaction. These are better identified beyond the terms of a conventional, mainly Eurocentric mode of geopolitical investigation. Foucault was also concerned mainly with European evidence; however, he did unpack the theoretical and methodological issues identified with Eurocentrism, and admitted the possibility that new theoretical knowledge could result from identifying these issues in the course of new social as well as theoretical developments.

Humanitarian assistance in the contemporary international context works to manage refugee bodies in un-political spaces set aside as exceptions from national jurisdiction and to work in de-politicizing ways on refugees' and asylum seekers' subjectivities in order to render them manageable in those spaces. The idea of *Homo sacer* that Agamben brought into his account of the development of modern politics and political practices from the Middle Ages to the Nazi era fits the de-politicizing element of modern international humanitarianism but it fails to account for the way in which the siting and supply of refugee camps, the production of populations of displaced persons, and the eclipse of repatriation by resettlement all are shaped by the *national politics* of countries of origin (and countries that share borders with them), countries that host camps, and countries that agree to resettle refugees. Further, as we shall see, refugees find ways to resist being rendered un-political and to maintain political subjectivity, which means that while the spaces of the camps are officially un-political, they do in fact become political spaces in the course of the interplay of refugees' political tactics of resistance or co-

operation and camp administration. The same is true of borders as spaces of exception. Agamben's attempt to trace the contemporary conditions faced by refugees and the future of politics alike back to the concentration camp as "the hidden matrix and the *nomos* of the political space in which we still live" (Agamben, 1998, p. 166) turns the traumatic narratives of the sovereign cruelty of the Nazi state into a theoretical generalization. For Agamben, there are, ultimately, no distinctions to be made amongst the variety of modern political histories and practices, nor between autocratic and democratic political systems.

Lemke (2011) claims that Agamben materialized the state of exception. Materializing the state of expectation involves the logic Agamben uses to connect sovereign power and biopolitics. The state of exception, for Agamben, is entrenched in the biopolitical functioning of a government, while I argue that it is a biopolitical exception but involves a biopolitical manifold. Nevertheless, I also argue that Agamben did not materialize the state of exception, rather he spiritualized it. Without acknowledging the changing global political scenario produced by the ongoing transmutation of different sociopolitical and geopolitical realities and practices, Agamben dramatically makes *Homo sacer* a definitive analogy of the modern human condition. Agamben's notion of biopolitics thus has two errors: a theoretical error in not taking seriously how variations in modern political practices may affect both forms of sovereignty and power dynamics, and a methodological error in generalizing a Eurocentric philosophical perspective based on a study that privileges classical European political practices, documents, and discursivity. Agamben's discussion of biopolitics neglects the specific elements of modern political practices, power distributions, and the social and scientific technologies of government (such as border controls and electronic surveillance, for example) that produce, reproduce, and modify contemporary social forms and forms of statehood: the practices and strategies that were

and are the focus of a Foucauldian examination of biopolitics. Using the admittedly powerful if complex metaphor of *Homo sacer,* Agamben mystified contemporary political actualities and technologies of power that produce and shape different forms of territorialization, migration, and racism across the globe. Crucially, he also discounted the specific and located (in time and space) experiences and subjectivities of those he saw as forced out of politics. For example, if in the present time we agree with Agamben's negative conception of biopolitics as only possible under the foundation of sovereign power, does sovereign power as Agamben defines it function in the same way and to the same degree on all bare lives across the world? Does it work identically on people in European jails and the people in refugee camps in South Asia and Africa? The answer has to be "no" both because research from a Eurocentric focus cannot provide a universal method to investigate different sociopolitical contexts across the world, and because a developing body of research on the practices and politics of making refugees in Asia and Africa as well as Europe shows that they are shaped by a variety of political contexts and power relations.

To sum up, while Foucault still accepts the function of sovereign power, he does not take it to be universally the same nor as universally operative beyond the law. Agamben blurs the Foucauldian distinction between biopower and biopolitics in a way that allows him to bring classical Greek and Roman sovereignty into focus as the singular template for the creation and expansion of bare life everywhere in modernity. That is how he can claim that we are all in the camp, but such a claim contradicts his distinction between bare life (*zoë*) and political life (*bios*) by effectively erasing political life; for example, by arguing that "in our age all citizens can be said, in a specific but extremely real sense, to appear virtually as *homines sacri*" (Agamben, 1998, p. 111).

Agamben thus lacks a way to identify and distinguish between those who are governed and those who are subject to political authority or to political administration; between those who become refugees due to different causes and in terms of different narratives; between refugees and detainees; between women in villages and in urban centres in developing countries; between members of different castes, or between refugees who claim a citizenship stolen from them and refugees becoming "new" citizens elsewhere. The diversity and intersectionality of these conditions must, at the very least, mean that manifestations of *Homo sacer* must vary in both degree and quality. Agamben seems to believe in a fatalistic and predestined notion of bare life that can connect and explain all forms of modern politics and governance. Lemke identifies three problems with Agamben's discussion of biopolitics, centred on "the judicial," "the state-centric," and on his "quasi-ontological framing of biopolitics" (Lemke, 2005). The theoretical gulf between Foucault and Agamben does, however, identify pressing debates over how to understand the co-existence of a production of normalization and regulation of populations that serves a politics and administration of *life*, with the establishment of death-dealing powers that operate in the name of a purification of the "nation" or of "society" producing different kinds of abyss.

Dispositif: Significance of Biopower and Biopolitics Distinction

I want now to return to the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics and to show the importance of linking it to his use of the term dispositif[21], especially in *Security, Territory, Population*.

[21] In Foucault's writing, *dispositif* stands for the disposition or distribution of tools and mechanisms of governance applied to the definition and governance of ***objects*** of governance (individuals and groups, economic and social relations, social, political and economic forces, resources, *etc*.) characteristic of a particular example or apparatus or regime of governmentality.

Dispositif refers to the mechanism of governance as Foucault defines it, but in a broad sense. A governmental apparatus on, say, a national scale, deals with multiple administrative forces to control, regulate, and govern a population. Foucault linked the concept of *dispositif* (apparatus) to the eighteenth-century physiocratic economists in France who developed theories of the circulation of wealth in terms of scarcity, security, and order, but who also sought to establish economics as a systematic science of the promotion and distribution of "happiness." (Foucault, 2007). Foucault saw in physiocratic economics the birth of a new form of power/knowledge distinct from sovereignty, and elaborated on the concept of *dispositif* to signify the elements of a governance focused on an orderly disposition of things, people, flows, and forces in a way that accords with the development of modern disciplinary techniques and security apparatuses. Discipline for Foucault is centripetal in the sense that it "concentrates, focuses, and encloses" its techniques and that which it acts on, whereas security is centrifugal in the broader sense of ordering large-scale and expansive phenomena such as national and international markets, the generalized forms and operations of "production," and the *distribution* of "buyers," "consumers," and "producers," and of their various "psychologies" and "behaviours," across economies and populations (Foucault, 2007). Foucault elaborates:

> What I'm trying to pick out with this term [*dispositif*] is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements. Secondly, what I am trying to identify in this apparatus is precisely the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements. Thus, a particular discourse can figure at one time as the programme of an institution, and at another it can function as a means of justifying or masking a practice which itself remains silent, or as a secondary re-interpretation of this practice, opening out for it a new field of rationality. In short, between these elements, whether discursive or non-discursive, there is a sort of interplay of shifts of position and modifications of function which can also vary very widely. Thirdly, I understand by the term "apparatus" a sort of—shall we say—formation which has as its major function at a

> given historical moment that of responding to an *urgent need*. The apparatus thus has a dominant strategic function. (Foucault, 1980, p. 194-95).

An "apparatus" signifies the relationship of heterogeneous elements—e.g., discourses, social institutions, laws, forms of practice, and scientific and non-scientific statements—in a state or state-related mechanism. An apparatus for Foucault is an assembly of elements such as those mentioned above, that may function differently in different times and situations and in different relations to each other. The interesting thing is that Foucault defines apparatus as constitutive of a program or rule for an institution, while at the same time "masking" certain of its practices. Foucault highlights the manner in which such apparatuses operate in terms of practical security or risk-reduction measures to control, mobilize, or normalize situations and people through social mechanisms such as police, hospitals, schools, prisons and other such institutions.

The security apparatus of the state, in terms of which the state not only protects its sovereignty but also *defines its scope of governance* by defining in practice a national "society" and "territory," creates a space in which security apparatuses are positioned to produce the "conduct of conduct;" a space with the potential to be populated by the "othered" produced by police and security work (Datta, 2011). *Dispositif* has to do with networks and practices of power that transform humans into subjects and objects of a power that does not manifest itself in terms of the classical (European) understanding of sovereignty (Frost, 2019). Addressing the political effects on social life and the "exceptional potential of politics" of this new configuration of sovereignty with governmental power, Datta (2008) finds a certain parallel between the Durkheimian term "totem'" and the Foucauldian term *dispositif,* in that both concepts refer to the historical and social structuring of human existence in terms of the intersection of power, bodies, and social institutions (Datta, 2008). As Ramp notes,

> Durkheim's discussion of the 'totemic' function in *Les forms elementaires* focused on ways in which particular concrete entities—a plant or animal type, a stone or feature of the landscape, a flag—come to serve as emblems representing a social group and embodying its force. The rules which surround the human encounter with totemic objects do not drain the totem of its power but in fact (and in seeming paradox) enhance that power (Ramp, 2014, p. 233).

The similarity here between *dispositif* and "totem" is that both involve an assemblage of practices, rules, and entities from which emerges a cohesive whole or symbolic body that addresses the formation of a social body. My approach to dealing with and discussing biopolitics and biopower in this thesis is informed by the notion of an assemblage as the ways in which a biopolitical manifold is put together or assembled from many disparate discursive and institutional elements and practices, which are often re-purposed in the process. Such assemblages may have no meta-philosophical centre; they are put together in response to particular social situations, movements, opportunities or challenges: for example, the particular challenges involved in defining and managing "camp" and "community' and organizing transitions between them. Different biopolitical manifolds operate on Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees from displacement to assignment to the camps, and even in the transition to the neoliberal political apparatus of advanced capitalism in Canadian society, impacting their lives in one way or other, producing and reproducing variations of refugeeness.

Foucault seems to have been influenced by the Durkheimian concept of totem to develop a sense of the dispositif as a biopolitical association of the notion of a population with that of "society" as a normative body. Foucault's distinction between biopolitics and biopower is significant to this in terms of seeing biopower as the practical production of the visible and invisible poles of the *dispositif* through interdependent discursive and institutional practices of administration. The particular arrangement of tangible and intangible qualities at work in a governmental apparatus both reflect and produce its biopolitics. Thus, it is important to examine

such apparatuses not as mere reflections of a biopolitical template nor as simply "applying" such a template to the exercise of biopower. Rather, they are themselves shaped by the practical techniques and strategies – the ways of doing, knowing, and speaking – that make up biopower. For this, Foucault recommended a close and detailed genealogy of the historical formation and transmutation of power dynamics, both in the political dimension and in the *arts* of power. These historical elements typically tend to have been unheard and marginalized in accounts of the development of security and management apparatuses of neoliberal governments today. They are important because they point to contradictions between neoliberal concepts of sovereignty (sovereignty of the individual and a minimalist role for the state) and the actuality of its practice (imposing austerity using state mechanisms as disciplinary tools; identifying and policing non-compliant, "unproductive" or "parasitical" populations; enacting security and border-control measures; facilitating the movement of capital across borders while restricting the movement of people). The practical mechanisms and techniques of biopower have contributed to the creation of refugee subjects, to the definition, imposition, or negotiation of "refugeeness" labels, to the control and normalization of refugees, and to attempts to reinforce the definition of camps as *un*political spaces of (paradoxically) *politicized* containment.

Governmentality is centrifugal; it spreads power from the centrality of authority to the distributed arrangement of the population, acting not only through objectification but also through subjectification for self-governance and self-regulation, which is essential to the apparatus of neoliberal biopolitical government (Foucault, 2007; Ramp, 1999; Datta, 2011; Muller, 2004; Lippert, 1999; Legg, 2016). It brings into being, as Durkheim anticipated, a political system that an individual may be led to "buy into" or strive for, not simply as a guarantor of rights but as a provider of forms of security and risk-reduction, standards of

normalcy, and of "services" such as health and education (Ramp, 1999). The discourses of governmentality are thus produced both through social agencies and through individual agency. In techniques of biopolitical governance, both are recruited into a politics of productive, functional and self-normalizing life: a politics of "making live and letting die" (Ramp, 1999). Datta explains:

> Governmentality is a system of political thought concerned with knowing what can be developed in the life of a population, attending to its individualized and totalized elements, within a secured territory, crucially, secured both internally from rebellion and immorality, and externally from other potentially bellicose states (Datta, 2011, p. 8).

Biopolitics takes the imperative of maximizing individual lives and the population as its subject; biopower teaches, monitors, and polices the practice of individual self-government and normalization, and encourages biopolitical subjects to seek appropriate services for their needs: health care, education, and security, but also entertainment and leisure, because happiness has come to be treated as a measure of productivity and order, and vice versa. I argue further that the government of the living and the practices of dying (or of letting die) in modern biopolitics occur simultaneously through a double movement of politicizing and de-politicizing. This double movement designates supposedly unpolitical spaces of othering while defining and securing the spaces of the political. This securing, I argue, occurs not only through the positive promotion of life, happiness, and productivity, but through the variable designation and production of *risks and threats* to biopolitical space through practices of surveillance, policing, detainment, imprisonment, and various other ways of separating off those seen as sources of risk, subversion, or disorder. Here, we seem to return to Agamben, but to add that the unpolitical is now typically *defined politically*. This definition occurs less through the act of a sovereign who floats above society, politics, and the law, than through *politicized forms of administration* that sort through groups of people, legitimating some and de-legitimating others in the name of a national *society*,

or a *people*. It is this *modern* form of expulsion that defines and impacts the precarious lives and forms of death for which Achille Mbembe developed the concept of necropolitics.

Genealogy, Biopolitics, and Forced Displacement: Epistemological Consideration

The genealogical approach is noteworthy for focusing on the emergence of specific occurrences, practices, things or issues that have been ignored, marginalized, or made invisible in conventional histories. Arguably, there are many questions to be raised concerning what has been displaced from view in the emergence into visibility of contemporary definitions of refugees and forcibly displaced people and of the issues they face. Genealogy studies the *particular* discursive construction over time of different forms of narrative coherence from which emerge new formations of social, political, and cultural issues, new ways of defining centers and margins, new ways of designating uniformities and differences, new ways of being subjects and objects, new distinctions between the coherence and incoherence of events and explanations. Genealogy explores the fragmentation of previously-coherent ideas and practices and the cohering of formerly disparate ones through a lens that does not privilege the present as the *destination* of the past. As a method, genealogy dynamically applies a sensitivity to heterogeneity in examining the constitution of discourses that make biopolitical intervention in managing and regularizing the population something "evident" or "obvious."

Research for Foucault was experimental, focused on the *local* and *practical* construction of coherence that allowed for particular discourses about sociopolitical or socioeconomic "reality" to take form. The reason Foucault took the practices and architectures of the prison and the penitentiary as objects of study in *Discipline and Punish* was to find a way of reviving the Nietzschean program of the "genealogy of morals" to understand punishment not in terms of

questions about what was punished and why, but in terms of *how* punishment was exercised and how the transformation of how punishment was practiced produced new subjects, new objects, and a new landscape in which they were deployed; one in the image of "society" and the "self" rather than of sovereignty and subjection (Burchell et al., 1991).

Foucault's objective in the investigation of the prison was not a standard discussion of 'institutions,' 'theories,' and 'ideology', but of 'practices'— 'the regimes of practices'—the place or situatedness of specific kinds of practices through which new rules were formulated and imposed, new procedures were enacted, and new institutional and discursive regimes were constituted in a very specific time window (Burchell et al., 1991). In this sense, the Foucauldian genealogical approach is a substantive method for approaching and deconstructing complex questions rather than "answering" them. Thus, applying a genealogical approach to subjects such as human displacement, refugees, migration, and power relations in humanitarian regimes necessitates a willingness to suspend conventional definitions, the conventional narrative structures of histories of human rights and human displacement, conventional ways of framing the "truths" of refugee lives, and conventional ways of framing agendas concerning refugees, whether "progressive" or "reactionary." This makes genealogy useful not only to "make the familiar strange" in the context of Western historiography but also for understanding the specific development of non-Western political apparatuses, non-Western forms state and governance, non-Western practices of inclusion and exclusion, and non-Western forms of power and discipline. Here, I must add that it would also be wrong simply to imagine we can replace a "Western" with a completely distinct "non-Western" point of view. In the development of imperialism and globalization, they have intersected and interact with and interpenetrated each

other in many different ways and at different times and no longer exist (if they ever did) as pure and distinct conceptual entities or realities. Genealogy is the enemy of historical purism.

However, scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu have questioned whether the Foucauldian method was truly empirical (Callewaert, 2006). Foucault responded concerning the method he employed for his research on prisons by saying that he had taken the prison as an object of investigation because the specificity of the organization of the prison had been neglected in previous research due to investigators' priorities being either "the judicial problem of the penal system" or the "sociological problem of the criminal population" (Burchell at el., 1991); in other words, because previous research had relied on stereotypically-defined discourses of crime and punishment that articulated particular agendas or issues of principle whose emergence was left unexamined, and that neglected actual practices, locations, and techniques of punishment, treating them either as immaterial or as signifiers of a generalized "progress" from barbarity to civilization.

Genealogy strengthens discourse analysis, and Foucault himself provided ways to analyze discourse genealogically to approach historical analysis more critically (Hook, 2005). Foucauldian genealogy provides less of a "structured methodology," but does offer a sharp interruption of philosophical and methodological debates over the definition of the object of knowledge and the nature and direction of our relationship with it situating both in the contingency of discursive formations and practices (Hook, 2005). That is why Foucault claims that knowledge is not made for understanding but for cutting (Foucault, 1977). Foucault means that genealogy should problematize the metaphysics, continuities, and origin stories asserted or assumed in conventional history. In contrast to Agamben's archaeological method, genealogy suspends and critiques these by gathering vast quantities of source materials without preselection

according to established criteria of relevance, and by recognizing the jolts of items within the material gathered that indicate other ways of making sense of it (Foucault, 1977; Hook, 2005).

In relation to this methodological orientation, Foucault also addressed the metatheoretical claims of Marxism and psychoanalysis, which were marginalized in the formal systematization of mainstream academic discourse. However, what Foucault termed an 'insurrection of subjugated knowledge' (Hook, 2005) also extends, in his hands, to a critique of both Marxism and psychoanalysis. Like Walter Benjamin, Foucault saw Marxism (and also psychoanalysis) as opening up a critique of history but also as a replacement of one historical metaphysics with another. More broadly, in his studies of psychiatric discourse, Foucault sought to privilege the voices of the psychiatrized and those diagnosed as "ill," preserved but filtered and reinterpreted in diagnostic and other records (Hook, 2005; Foucault, 2003). Foucault refers to these voices as expressions of disqualified, nonconceptual, or naïve (popular, subjected, psychiatrized) knowledge, treated in conventional psychiatric histories as hierarchically inferior and as symptomatic of something *else* that only trained professionals can discern (Hook, 2005; Foucault, 2003). In agreement with Foucault**,** Hook (2005) argues that "it is only through the contexts of exclusion or disqualification—contexts marked by struggle, conflict and the violence of marginalization—that we can properly grasp the political force of knowledge" (Hook, 2005, p. 5).

Thus, a genealogical approach analyzes a range of discursive and social practices that have been marginalized and deprioritized since the seventeenth-century advent of modern historical, scientific, and political discourse and the new forms of knowledge associated with them. Genealogy, as a methodological tool for investigating historical occurrences, does not oppose scientific methods of investigation, but it problematizes the uncritical use of these to

identify “discoveries” productive of “definitive” forms of knowledge (Hook, 2005; Mahan, 1992). Thus, the Foucauldian genealogical approach is productive to a study of displacement, the making of “non-citizens,” and the making of refugees in the contemporary political practices of nation-states in the particular context of the Global South. The voices and subjectivities of displaced people and refugees have been ignored and deprioritized in modern regimes of truth, modern practices of knowledge-production, and modern practices of displacement and encampment carried out in relation to them. These constitute a production and imposition of specific forms of power and knowledge generated through surveillance, policing, and military force, border controls, camp management, and the particular priorities of nation-states that expel and criminalize populations, manage expelled populations at borders, allow such populations to be housed on their territories, or allow and facilitate their eventual resettlement. These take place in particular ways in south Asian political contexts that may resemble or differ from their occurrence elsewhere. The point is to keep returning to that specificity, recognizing both divergences and convergences between global North and global South without essentializing either.

Thus, genealogy is not oriented to the framing of knowledge and the innovation of truth, but the generation of critique (Hook, 2005). Genealogy is not a static research methodology that cultivates and produces the same product over and over; it is, instead, a tactical strategy for engendering a potential plurality of new knowledges, questioning both its own production of these and existing methods of research and modes of constructing truths. It focuses on a specific examination of how power is not only exercised but produced, and how discourses take shape in particular historical moments. In the work of genealogy, knowledge is epistemological, critical, and political in its specific formation and modes of operation; it does not seek to produce a

dichotomy of truth and falsity; nor an account of "motives," good or bad. Genealogy, different from other research methods, produces knowledge for generativity; a knowledge which is 'operative'; which identifies the production of truth-effects in both existing knowledge and in resistances to it (Hook, 2005; Sembou, 2015; Foucault, 1994). Genealogy takes a non-positivist and tactical relation to questions of truth, seeking to establish not *what* is *the* truth and *why*, but *how* the *particular* emergence of truths occurs and how such truths do or do not become discursively and practically hegemonic (Hook, 2005).

Agamben argues, addressing Foucault, that genealogists "go to war" intellectually because they neglect to search the origin or prehistory of the things they address; instead, they find the already-historical beginning of the things (Agamben, 2009; Watkin, 2014). Agamben correctly notes that Foucault's concept of genealogy can be traced to Nietzsche's notion of an "effective" or "working" history; one which does not seek an original identity and queries metahistorical beginnings. Foucault's understanding of genealogy does not set out to destroy history, but to give voice to that which a given historical account occludes and to open up space for counter-historical narratives.

Foucault argues that power is situational but present everywhere in a multitude of specific practices, tactics, and strategies, functioning horizontally in every sphere of human life. Foucault highlights an inseparable but contingent relationship between power and discourse in which our activities and subjectivities are formed, identified, claimed, enacted, reflected, controlled, or regulated through practical techniques and social or communicative strategies of the identification, surveillance, and regulation of individuals and populations. These are not only imposed on but can also produce and recruit their subjects (Foucault, 2003). Different mechanisms of power—such as sovereign power, disciplinary power, and biopower—function

differently and not in a linear fashion, yet they also interact in specific and changing ways. One power (*e.g*., biopower) does not replace another (*e.g*., sovereignty) (Foucault, 2007). The Foucauldian methodological approach to the study of power relations deconstructs the centre not by proposing its historical replacement by another centre, but by re-addressing the "meta"-components of history and politics as *produced* through changed historical and political *practices.*

The genealogical study of political practices and discursive formations allows for history writing focused on power-discourse relationships that produce or shape subjugating and subjugated knowledges (Foucault 1980, 2002). In the term "subjugated knowledges," Foucault includes "a whole series of knowledges that have been disqualified as nonconceptual knowledges, as insufficiently elaborated knowledges: naive knowledges, hierarchically inferior knowledges, knowledges that are below the required level of erudition or scientificity" (Foucault, 2003, p. 7). Foucault focuses on the importance of digging out specific occurrences or statements written by power, which are often embedded within hegemonic discourses, but which can be re-framed by patient analysis of their contexts and sources. A genealogical approach to historical investigation combines both scholarly knowledge and local memory[22] (Foucault, 2003). Foucault

[22] In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault emphasizes that local memory can be placed into the margins due to a politics of exclusion. Who hears the local memories of the excluded, and why should it be essential to hear them? These are important questions, for example, for a genealogical approach to refugee research. Refugees' local memory, which is socially, culturally, and politically grounded and guided, is essential to discuss in terms of their history and present condition of living in a new social context. Local memory is knowledge grounded in indignity, but it can be overshadowed along with subjugated knowledge by dominant forms of power-knowledge. This notion of local memory as a prominent component of genealogical research is useful to my research. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees possess a significant repository of local memories, e.g., their local memories of Bhutan, the camps, and of their arrival in Lethbridge. The interconnections and intersections of their individual memories produce shared local memories embedded in their narratives of violence, persecution, and displacement, as well as in their accounts of subsequent experience of neoliberal biopolitics.

argues that ‘we can give the name ‘genealogy’ to this coupling together of scholarly erudition and the identification and contextual examination of local memories as discursive and narrative occurrences that allow us to constitute a different historical account of struggles and “to make use of that knowledge in contemporary tactics” (Foucault, 2003, p. 8).

Foucault emphasizes a critical and situated examination that shifts its ground away from a direct focus on or confrontation with the philosophical validity or truth-value of the representative “centre” of social apparatuses and discourses that operate to hold power, govern society, and create knowledge. Rather, he asks how such centres are *produced* and how they *operate to produce* “truth effects” and regimes of power in *specific* contexts and in *specific* times. In this way, he deconstructs the constructed edifices of historical truth by exploring the political practices by which they were established. He does so not to advocate an alternative account of origins or of truth *vs*. falsity, nor to propose a new meta-solution to a philosophical problem or a set of problematic principles. When he states, “why not go on with such a theory of discontinuity, when it is so pretty and probably so hard to verify’ (Foucault, 2003, p. 11), he is *not* advocating a return to a focus on the established regime of ideas in itself. He is warning his readers away from an obsession with developing a philosophical theory of discontinuity. Instead, he advocates a careful, detailed, and methodologically-open examination of power dynamics—whether sovereign power, disciplinary power, or biopower—as they have operated within given social settings and occurrences and in terms of specific and different biopolitical mechanisms. This approach has been significantly important to all of the substantive chapters below for exploring Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees’ multifaced identities concerning their migration histories, experiences of being citizen and non-citizen, and displacements.

Chapter 4: Politics of Making Non-national and the Start of a Bare Life: Narratives of Violence, Policing, and Displacement

> …the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die (Mbembe, 2003, p. 11)

Introduction

In this chapter, I explore and examine the narratives of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees I spoke with shared about their lived experiences during the time of their displacement from Bhutan. I emphasize the narratives about state power imposed on refugee bodies during the time of their displacement, which I have analyzed and discussed concerning how power and politics were implicated in legitimizing the violence that created both as unpolitical space and refugee.

After the 1985 census in Bhutan, several categories of ethnic Nepali people were compelled to leave their country, as authorities had forced them to flee. People resisted this authority and demonstrated for their citizenship rights. This escalated the crisis, and the Bhutan government became more brutal, using force to arrest, punish, and kill people. According to the participants' narratives, the ethnic Nepali were granted citizenship in the 1950s, a long time after their migration from Nepal. The former king in Bhutan, Gigme Singye Wangchuck, decided this right for these people, but the crisis worsened after the new king came into power. Exploring and analyzing the participants' narratives, this chapter thus discusses the practices of state power and the methods the government employed to displace people and make refugees.

Policing Bodies and Producing Displacement: Participants' Narratives

> My grandfather migrated to Bhutan [from Nepal], and at that time Bhutan government had given permission to stay there. The proof of the citizen that time was the land tax receipt. Everyone had each tax receipt from 1958, but the government was demanding the tax receipt before 1958. People had paid the tax before 1958 as well, but they did not save the receipts. The 1985 census differentiated national and non-national categories. The strongest census was in 1988, which implemented ethnic cleansing by displacing hundreds and thousands of families. (Roben, personal interview).

As Roben's narrative above reveals, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refuges were forced to leave the country of their birth one way or another. Participant stories outline how the government of Bhutan used the census as one of their fundamental strategies to categorize people into several national and non-national categories, which then allowed them to enact new laws.

Affecting completely the political lives of one ethnic group, the census was not conducted as a means of biopolitical calculation and statistical records of the population (Foucault, 2007; Lemke, 2011); instead, I argue it was the state capacity and bio sovereignty to deliberately produce violence (Mbembe, 2003; Davies et al., 2017). Participants reported that the regime implemented punitive policies, which were legitimized through the 1985 census. Hundreds of thousands of people become vulnerable and were threatened to be made non-national because of state sanctions under the guise of ultra-nationalistic ideology. The ultra-nationalistic regime of Bhutan denied the rights of an ethnic group (ethnic Nepali) who contributed to half of the country's demography (Roben, personal interview). Roben, one of my participants, said that they fought for their rights to citizenship by pressuring the government through demonstration. According to him, after the 1985 census, the demonstration was not the first; there was a "people's movement in 1952 for citizenship rights in which one of the leaders of our community, Mahasur Basnet, was killed by the Bhutan regime". Policing of ethnic Nepali bodies in Bhutan was one effective method the Bhutan government used to evict these people. Policing not only exercised the carceral practices but also terrorized these people in various

ways. Psychological and physical torture and sexual exploitation and harassment were common practices of the government of Bhutan, exposing manifestation of deaths and extreme form of racial hierarchy.

Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees had unique experiences while leaving their homes. For example, one study participant Babi, was born in southern Bhutan and left the country in 1991 with her family. She and her neighbours continuously saw those ethnic Nepali people leaving Bhutan and fleeing to Nepal via India because of state violence and policing. As she narrates, "police arrested many innocent people and they killed them; I heard that many died in jail." Babi and her family decided to leave their home in Bhutan by simply packing some essential clothes to survive. Their hope to live and to have rights to survive as citizens were central themes of the narratives in the interviews. However, the time and the situation were not in their favour; the terror that the Bhutan state created to evict one of its ethnic populations was everywhere. Babi and her family left home at 2:00 a.m. and started fleeing from the country; they did not know where they would be going and whether they would be safe on their way. Throughout the interview, Babi expressed her traumatic past of torture and violence; she seemed as if she still was frightened talking about police—the terror of being arrested. She continued narrating her story of leaving the house, describing the situation as she articulated, "It was such a ferocious moment for us while fleeing", to leave the house where they were born and grew up. Babi's story underscores the hope of escaping the violence and surviving, but these refugees could not predict what their future lives would be like. State violence creates uncertainty and precarity of living (Arendt, 1943), even if refugees have free will, hope, and the right to survive.

> On the way to border [Bhutan-India], we found a den, and we took shelter there; I cry now while remembering this horrible situation. We had some rice and some lemons; also had a small pot to cook the rice. They [Bhutanese authority] could come, find, and kill all of us at once there because it was actually on the walking trail. The next day, we woke

> early in the morning. We reached a village and told the fact and requested people there to have a shelter for sleep. They helped us find a place to sleep that night. Another day, we reached the Bhutan-India border; nobody was there to stop us, the border was open. When we crossed the border, we heard of firing continuously. We stayed in India for three days. There were people from our community who had already left the country helped us cross the India-Nepal border. (Babi, personal interview).

Babi's narrative of displacement indicates a strong sense of surviving by choosing from the options given by the Bhutan state. Her narrative signifies that the Bhutan state power put a double bind to choose between two unwanted choices: death or exile. One dangerous situation that the sovereign power creates under its capacity of rights to kill (Mbembe, 2003; Wallace, 2018) is that the forcibly displaced people could not know where they were fleeing nor the process of asylum filing for becoming a member of the new community to which they migrate. These narratives also reveal the sovereign forms of power that the government of Bhutan practiced exposing the various forms of death of ethnic Nepali people as necropolitical. It is imperative to explore and examine the narratives of all participants regarding the various forms of death they encountered during their displacement characterized by necropolitical imposition.

Gina was 13 years old when she left Bhutan in 1992. As a school student, she could not decide whether to leave the country, but she had to follow what the head of the family decided. The police violently terrorized Gina's whole village before she and her family left the country at midnight. As she expresses, "My father and two brothers were informed and given a deadline to be arrested by local government." Fifteen members of Gina's family had to leave the country together, which was also challenging for them to hide from the authorities.

> We were a big family started our journey around midnight to cross the Bhutan border. We walked through the jungle, and it took us one day and one whole night to reach Assam, one of the states in India. We did not have food to eat—only light snacks. In India, we were fed by kind Nepalese Indians for a week. The reason we had to stay there for a week was to wait for our turns for our trip to Nepal (Gina, personal interview).

Violence, hunger, and death are indicators of a brutal state through which the national and non-national subjects are constructed and can be examined by the participant's narrative above. Gina's story of walking through the jungle day and night can be understood through Foucault's concept (2003) of state racism, exiling the people from their social and national belonging and identities, resulting in a walking death (Mbembe, 2019; Mayblin et al., 2020). Most evicted people chose nighttime to flee their homes because night became safer for them than the state mayhem that occurred during the day. The exiled bodies in the Indian state have also been condemned; they had to wait to be relegated to the India–Nepal border. The Bhutan authority targeted these people to uproot them, by threatening the head of the family and community leaders.

In another example, Dev worked for the government as Mandal[23] and had also left his home in 1991, after receiving several threats to leave the country. He left his wife and a son in Bhutan and fled to Nepal with two other sons. After a long pause in the interview, Dev said that "I tried to go back to Bhutan to meet the family many times but could not cross the border." Sadly, he could not meet his beloved wife again after he left the country and, as a result, had to lose her in Bhutan. One of the tragic situations that the evicted ethnic Nepali encountered was their disconnection from relatives. Many of them could not even flee with their family, which indicates an extreme form of violence. Dev wanted to go to the USA in the third-country

[23] Mandal was a person and community leader (Mukhya, in Nepali) appointed by the villagers (ethnic Nepali) in Bhutan and recognized by the Bhutan government. This person was not paid any official stipend from the government; nor was he obliged to pay tax (Morris, 1935). According to participants, most ethnic Nepali in Southern Bhutan had no proper education, and Mandal was appointed by the people with little education and was known to have leadership skills for settling minor problems and disputes in villages. As stated by Morris (1935), however, every household was required either pay a rupee per year or six days of labour to the Mandal; most of the people in the community would provide their labour instead of cash.

settlement program because his son and family were approved for their resettlement there, but the US was reluctant to give him a settlement permit. Dev become a refusal subject as he was not accepted to go and settle with his family in the USA; this pain of family separation troubled Dev even in his third-country settlement. Now, he lives in Canada with his daughter and her family. The politics of the settlement process—who gets to settle where—pushed him into a space where reunification with his family exists only in memory.

Grant worked for the Bhutan government defence service but in the mechanical department. He had been working in his department when the movement broke out; he knew little about the situation of the outer world because he was in his army camp department. However, he narrates that "violence prevailed from both sides, from the government side and from our community side, too." This can be analyzed as violence creating violence, resulting in destruction and devastation. He replied that he was never sent to the operation in the village at the time of crises when asked whether he had experience providing a defence service in the field. One day, Grant received a letter from his wife that said, "Come home", and it was his letter for leaving the country. He was surprised as his wife was illiterate, how could she write that letter? It was apparent to him that his family were also threatened to leave the country. As a result, his department's authority forced him to quit his job and leave the country as soon as possible. Grant had no choice but to obey what he was commanded to do; then he went home and left the country with his family. This is another method of the Bhutan government's maltreating for creating state violence every day.

Harry was a peasant in Bhutan. He remembered his past and cried when he started narrating his story about the time of displacement. Harry's narration fully expressed the violence and punishment that the Bhutanese authority imposed on ethnic-Nepali people; he narrated the

forms of violence and retribution they experienced. For example, “They punished us in various ways. We had to carry a heavy load of approximately 50 kg three times a month for them that would take at least three days to reach the destination passing through rivers and jungles.” (Harry, personal interview). Harry’s narrative informs that the government of Bhutan used as many methods as they could impose to displace people, all of which were grounded in violence, torture, and death. As Espiritu (2014) and Malkki (1995) elaborate on forms of exclusion and production of refugeeness, mental and physical torture were crucial to the government of Bhutan for solving its problem through making nonnationals, homeless, and refugees. Labour exploitation is another form of state racism for pushing others into outer geography and identity, in which sovereign forms of power would act to produce violation beyond the law and politics.

Kevin was 18 years old when he left Bhutan in 1992. He was a college student in India when the conflict emerged in his country, but he was present during the census of 1988. His parents left Bhutan before he did because of the continuous threats and harassment, as he expressed, “My father got the order, ‘you must leave Bhutan within 30 days.’ We left Bhutan without a destination. We did know nothing where we were heading, but we knew that we were leaving Bhutan.” (Kevin, personal interview). A common method the Bhutan authority applied to evict these refugees was to terrorize them by giving them a timeline to leave the country. Timeline stigmatizes them and hinders their well-being—even today—reminding them of past threats and police violence. It seems that they were restricted from asking for a valid reason to leave the country because the government of Bhutan had already categorized them into several groups by legitimizing the right to create a space of displacement. The documentations of stratification legitimized a legal method that the state could exercise under the guise of national and political identity. Kevin reveals:

> The government of Bhutan was looking for a Certificate of Origin (CEO). My father did not have the CEO of Bhutan. They classified our people into seven categories (F1 to F7). Categorizations to make people leave or stay was the method of the government of Bhutan to evict us, I realized later. I would say the reason we were evicted was the ethnic cleansing the government of Bhutan did. I was too little to understand the politics at that time. In southern Bhutan, the land was fertile, and most of our people lived in this part. People living in the southern part were hardworking and wealthy, and the government decided to evict us from there; this is my personal view. (Kevin, personal interview).

Kevin states that their displacement was ethnic cleansing of one ethnic group of the country, which created a risk to the lives of thousands of people. However, ethnic cleansing has been linked with the political issues concerning citizen and non-citizen status. So, making people citizen and non-citizen is state politics imposing violent methods of practicing multiple deaths of its unwanted people through necropolitical (Mbembe, 2019) imposition. The unwanted is thus the foundational component for the state to create a space of exception (Agamben, 1998) in which the state acts with exceptional power (Datta, 2006), exercised beyond the law.

Roben was 23 years only when he left Bhutan in November 1988 due to the categorization of people as national and non-national through the 1988 census. Meaning that the national was granted citizenship in Bhutan, whereas non-national was deprived of citizenship and had to leave the country. Robin claims that the "national" and "non-national" were considered cut off in 1958, and the 1985 census expanded this very dichotomy, which was enlarged to categories one through seven. The authority just pretended to save its political reputation before international and refugee regimes. However, the role of the Indian government towards the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees indicates stealth entry to support the displacement or neutral positionality. According to Roben, those who were issued citizenship papers until 1958 by the government of Bhutan were eligible to be a national, but most of those granted papers were seized by Bhutan authorities while they policed the villages. Roben's narratives suggest that the 1985 census to

categorize national and non-national was Bhutan authority's political interest of evicting those groups of people.

> I left the country because of the extreme brutality, such as torture given by army and police coming to our homes. I was in the last semester of National Institute of Education primary teacher training program. when the eviction started happening in Bhutan. The only reason I left the country was that the government accused me of donating to the organization fighting for citizenship rights. It started arresting local leaders and did not let the families know their whereabouts. They also made people forcefully sign the voluntary migration form and started kicking them out (Roben, personal interview).

Roben noted that if the government of Bhutan had arrested him, "they would kill" him. Another method the government of Bhutan used to quickly evict ethnic Nepali was to arrest local leaders who could lead demonstrations for citizenship rights. The dilemma of whether to support the movement also pushed some people to choose to leave the country.

Siman was among the 16 families from the same village who left Bhutan in 1992 at the same time from the same village, leaving all their "properties". Those who left the country took the "jungle route" because they found it safer, helping them to survive and cross the border. They had to walk a long way on foot, even after crossing the Bhutan–India border; as Siman narrates, "We walked through 32 km trail in jungle while leaving the country. We would get India border in 5 km walking distance." Siman remembered the scene of leaving his village and noticing that it was "completely empty". This indicates that one of the characteristics of ethnic cleansing through state policing is to collapse the community and create a new space. It also signals that the emptiness of the whole community demonstrates resistance to the necropower at some point. According to the participant, all these families were not threatened by the Bhutanese authority to leave the country at once; they could surrender before the authority to live in Bhutan at least for some time but decided to convert the community without population. This collective action of

people signals their conformity for surviving together to assist each other but resisting the autocratic regimes.

When Paul narrated his stories, he pointed out the "atrocious government policy" to evict them from Bhutan by "foiling pro-democracy" movements and activities that had been raising the voices for their citizenship rights. He left the country in 1992 with his family. On the way to Nepal, they encountered various hurdles and fears. They had a small amount of food they carried with them, which would last only seven days; they almost died of hunger by the time they had reached the India–Nepal border.

> They asked [Bhutanese authority] families to leave the country because if they filled out the [voluntary migration] form to leave the country, their family members would be released from the prison. Any family member involved in the pro-democracy movement or signed the petition to the king concerning providing some rights to the southern Bhutanese, the government threatened them to go to the court to fill up voluntary migration forms and sign on it in front of the army personnel, who had always been directing the guns at the people. So, it was at gunpoint that people had to sign those documents and leave the country. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul's story brings a picture of how the authorities compelled people to leave the country. This is how and at what level the state can become dishonest to its people. Authorities were looking for an easier way to make people illegal by making them sign the voluntary migration form, which obliged people to inform the authority that they would be leaving the country. That they were forced to sign under threat and at gunpoint is telling. The strategy of making people sign the voluntary migration form was a way of convincing international political powers that the government was acting in accordance with the law. This condition is an example of what Agamben (1998) claims that the sovereign acts beyond the law, but this sovereign action of disposing of people indicates that to make someone illegal, the state power must function illegally (Arendt, 1943; Owens, 2009). It thus clear that while state power functioned illegally, it found it important to simulate the forms of legality. As Paul narrated above, policing on those

vulnerable bodies was more than "killing"—it was necropolitical violence and terror that would kill people at every moment (Braidotti, 2009). The refusal subjects (the situation of making refugees by imposing power and creation of various forms of violence) were produced in one way or another in various forms, such as forbidding rights to citizenship and then the right to refuge. The only option for them after displacement and rejection for humanitarian assistance from Bhutan and India is to move, but where? The porous border draws them to move to and cross into Nepal or India. By the time Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees reached the India–Nepal border, a "booth" was established to verify their "category" as a refugee. The relationship between the desire to survive state terror and the "verification of refugees" produces a compromise space by compelling the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to accept various forms of death. It means that they were looking for a refugee space (a refugee camp) which was an ultimate choice for them in which they could compromise anything, being a subject of precarity and liminality.

Sanctioning Values: Language, Culture, and Tradition

> We wanted our culture, dress, and language. Police operations became offensive gradually and started sexual violence against women. They produced violence every day and elsewhere from village to school by arresting, punishing, and killing people of our community. We tried many times to hide from the police brutality, but we had to flee from the country (Babi, personal interview).

The narrative above shows Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees' notion of their understanding about crucial identities they would live by: their lives in Bhutan embedded with values were the key to their ethnic community to be identified with and make a broader society of a state, and these were violated by threats to culture, language, and tradition. Bhutan authorities created the opposite subjects, shifting from the regulation of the population, their productivity, and

longevity; it exercised power to create an exceptional space of stateless and non-citizen. The government of Bhutan attacked ethnic Nepalis' language and culture, as Roben, one of the participants who narrated various and extreme forms of violence earlier this chapter, articulates: "one nation, one people was the theme of the government of Bhutan, and eviction happened through the state sanction condemning our language and culture". Bhutan authorities ultimately restricted people from wearing their cultural uniform, undermining cultural moral and traditional dignity. The necropolitical approach of "one nation and one people" collapsed all cultural values of ethnic Nepali in Bhutan, which contributed to ethnic cleansing. It is because the "one nation and one people" method employed by the Bhutan authorities promoted death by denying people's differences as to their cultural and historical values to include in the national politics. This sort of precarity of living, the instrumentalization of bodies, and the production of subjects to punishment were necropolitical interventions. Bhutan state power attacked cultural, historical, and traditional values by dissociating the ethnic people from the national identity they constructed (for example, the "mandatory learning of Dzongkha" and "Bhutan dress"). You kill people by killing their culture and their shared values. Mbembe's necropolitical concepts are strong enough to map how a new form of death is palpable in modern political practices through various methods of killing.

Media and school curriculum were other components the state used to attack and destroy the voices of people who were subjects to displacement. For example, the government of Bhutan, as Robin explained, "stopped Nepali radio national broadcasting". Banning the media services through which the people in crises could disseminate their voices nationally and internationally, the Bhutan government forcefully tried to silence ethnic Nepali people, who were all but losing their national identity. Rather than normalizing the situation and regulating the population—what

Foucault elaborates as the biopolitical mechanism and governmentality—the Government of Bhutan tailored the possibilities of displacement. The government of Bhutan phased out Nepali curriculum from schools; it wanted people to be unaware of their rights to citizenship because school was where people could spread their messages of being displaced. It used force to make people silent against injustice.

"Better Death than Rape": Necroresistance

Foucault (1978) argues that "where there is power, there is resistance" (p. 95) and others have noted that "power breeds resistance" (Bargu, 2014, p. 54). Foucault introduces multiple forms of resistance and their importance in prevailing in various locus in society resulting even from compromising, sacrifice, and violence. The Foucauldian notion of resistance does not indicate something coming out of "heterogeneous principles"; it is instead an "irreducible opposite" to power (Foucault, 1978). In this sense, power and resistance are binaries that coexisted in the modern political power and practices, either in being a state citizen or being subjects of rejection. However, while analyzing the narratives of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, necroresistance appears critical and central in the tension created between state power and the responses of exiled bodies reactions to it. Bargu (2014) provides the concept of necroresistance, primarily focusing on the various forms of necropolitics that the state practices to exploit and displace people. Her ideas of necroresistance are grounded in how people are involved in self-harm and destruction. Self-destruction may not only be caused by the psychological and pathological diseases of the people; it can also be produced by continuous state violence.

"Rape terror" is one form of state violence often produced through the necropower of the government of Bhutan contributing to the mass displacement of the people. Interview

participants reported hearing of rape survivors around their villages and experiencing such unlawful but legitimized state acts. The Bhutan police arrested Babi after physically punishing and mentally torturing her in her home. “I was so frightened; I did know nothing about what they would do next.” People had less fear of death than rape, which, as Bargu (2014) suggests, signals a necroresistance of the people at risk of state violence. The negative biopolitics of disciplining and controlling people going beyond the law played a crucial role in the displacement of Bhutanese refugees, in which people were prone to be the subjects of necropolitics, which soared because of continuous state violence. A kind of terror was reflected in one interview when Babi was so frightened while narrating her stories of being arrested. “I heard that police raped many women in our village. I instead wanted them to kill me rather than rape.” Babi’s refusal to accept officers’ use of force to criminalize her informs the necroresistance produced in between the state power that enforced for a bare subject on the one hand and the counterforce of the subjects to resist on the other.

Babi’s refusal also points to something else important to understanding thanatopolitics, necropower, and necroresistance. All of these are experienced and resisted intersectionally. Applying an intersectional lens to refugee experience and subjectivity exposes and resists the tendency of “refugeeness” labels to generalize about the circumstances, experience, and motives of refugee “populations.” Refugees experience and respond to their situations differently depending on caste, religion, age, gender, and probably also sexuality. With respect to gender, Babi’s account shows that, while both women and men can be raped, women were particularly vulnerable to sexual assault during displacement and in the camp, and they were conscious of that vulnerability. Babi was conscious of it to the extent of thinking through her response to the possibility in advance. Further, as I have noted above, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees

belong to different ethnic groups, and also to different religions. Some in the Lethbridge community have joined Christian churches since arriving, possibly as a way to gain acceptance in the host community or because of contact with Christians who provided aid and welcome when they arrived, or because they hope to escape the social constrictions of caste. Religion also may have affected their treatment at the Indian border, and in relation to the Nepali community surrounding the camp. Also, they may belong to different castes, which could have had an impact on their circumstances during displacement and in the camp, whether or not they themselves believed in the caste system. As for age, younger members of the Lethbridge Bhutanese community, born in the camps or after resettlement, do not have the same memories or traumas as their parents. That is a reason why the generations who remember displacement and camp life want to preserve and pass on narratives of their experience as part of the subject-formation of their children. However, age has another effect. In times of displacement and encampment, it is often young children and infants who are especially vulnerable to harm and official neglect. Also, children as young as nine in some refugee camps and detainment centres are at risk of suicide if they come to feel that they are part of the "walking dead" (discussed below) because conditions in the camps and arbitrary delays in resettlement mean that their lives may be over before they have even begun.

In thinking through necroresistance, I found that Foucauldian ideas of state power, Agamben's concept of bare life, and Mbembe's theory of necropolitics, tended to merge. Necroresistance ignites when life is pushed to such a condition and space that one feels more than death—the death in life. The state sanction in Bhutan produced a non-political space for bare life created through continuous violence, which was more than but different from the sovereign power of the right to kill; it was rather necropower of making disposable, killable, and

deportable by violating the regular norms of biopolitics. The necropower creates vulnerability (Bargu, 2014; Mbembe, 2003) and that allows people to kill themselves. As Harry narrates, "Due to regular violence and fear from the police, I attempted to commit suicide." Both Babi and Harry were in the position to resist the state power by being prepared to sacrifice their lives. The sense of self-destruction was produced by the perpetual demands of necropolitics, with a capacity of producing and reproducing disposable subjects among the targeted and unwanted people who were potentially exiled. Babi and Harry express:

> Many of the relatives of those who were arrested went to the police station to know their whereabouts, and they made them sign in the papers they prepared and gave the dead body of their relatives. (Babi, personal interview).

> I was so frustrated at some point when we left the country. I had some mass suicidal [he and his family] thoughts but controlled myself in doing so. (Harry, personal interview).

The potentially evicted people of Bhutan did not know where their arrested relatives would be nor what would happen inside the jail. Women were the "target of authority" and would be the victim of sexual exploitation, and this necropolitics maximized destruction of bodies. Women are the subjects of violence in the proliferation of state conflict and humanitarian crisis (True, 2010). The prisoners' relatives in Bhutan would dream of reconciling or reuniting the family, but unfortunately, they had to accept the deaths of their loved ones in jail, which then pushed those people to leave the country.

A significant portion of the population of Bhutan was forced to occupy the exceptional space of noncitizens to be qualified for refugee status. This was legitimized by the Bhutan government, which created the possibility of necroresistance in various forms—such as being ready to be killed instead of being raped. I argue that this position signals a necroresistance to state power—the discriminatory power and politics in exercising power upon ethnic Nepali bodies. Agamben argues that necroresistance exists in the politicization of bare life (by

intervening to manage and control refugee agency politically by intervening in the lives in the border between life and death in refugee camps) is created by the sovereign form of power, in which power acts, according to Agamben (1998), beyond the law. I argue that necroresistance is produced in the space of exception but by necropower, through the legitimization of such brutal power, creating a threat subject under the logic of biopolitics of caring for the population, which is the paradox and multiple functioning of modern biopolitics. The Bhutan government declared ethnic Nepali a threat to national integrity and politics, meaning that it employed an indirect form of killing of the people through a spectrum of forces involving the misuse of power, such as rape and sexual harassment, which is a destructive power to be imposed upon bodies for torture, carceral imposition, and displacement. Ethnic Nepali people living in southern Bhutan during the violence that started in 1988 were terrified because, as Kevin reported in his interview, "police personnel would ask ethnic Nepali parents to send their daughters to the police barrack". They had established the police barrack near the schools; If people rejected their demand, they would be tortured and jailed." This mayhem and the entry of police forces into people's daily lives were foundational, yet destructive. Such elements produced the inevitability of necroresistance. Self-destruction sounds negative, but in such spaces as bare life, it becomes more political and counterpower. In this understanding, necropower demands rampant moving of people, creating borders inside the state by loosening and tightening the territorial border at the same time to make the people cross through. Necroresistance is not an explicit refusal to 'bare life' as discussed by Bargu (2014) and Owens (2009); it is rather forcibly produced in the bare life within the tension created by the necropower and political subjectivity of those who have been subjects to be displaced. Necroresistance discards the notion and practices of dismantling the

political subjectivity of forcibly displaced people. Necropower does kill refugee bodies but does not kill the agency / political subjectivity that exists in its perpetual demand of necroresistance.

Spreading a tremendous sense of insecurity among the people was an initial violence, that later became a method for the government of Bhutan of uprooting people. It fragmented many families because people were compelled to leave their families when they fled to Nepal. Dev narrates that "I also was taken to the demonstration by people of our community for the citizenship right. The army was looking for the local leaders to arrest, and I was also not secured and fled to Nepal." The politics of displacement produced various intersecting conditions among people that, in turn, introduced a subject of noncitizen and disposition by calculating the lives to be placed into danger. Harry chose his and his family's lives instead of citizenship; in lieu of surrendering, he resisted the everyday violence and left the country. Harry recounts:

> I had to leave the country because one of my brothers was involved in demonstrating our rights to citizenship. The government threatened me to tell them his [his brother's] whereabouts, or I had to leave the country. I chose my brother rather than my citizenship. If I told them my brother's whereabouts, they would kill him (Harry, personal interview).

These narratives reveal the abandonment of life from the national entity as a biopolitical subject of life-affirmation and longevity (Foucault, 2007) through the imposition of necropower and precarity of living (Mbembe, 2019).

Stratification of Population: Technique and Politics of Displacement

The Foucauldian notion of biopolitics underscores the population as a target of a state for regulation, management, and care by normalizing them through variations of techniques (Foucault, 2007; Lemke, 2011). These techniques produce varieties of necessities through the state apparatus that people seek and internalize as a notion of governmentality (Burchell; Gordon & Miller, 1991; Ramp, 1999). However, the state also creates a need for the population to be

exiled through necropolitical intervention under the guise of biopolitical nationalism with the capacity of deciding who must live and who should die. One complexity in exercising political power in present society is the complexities of stratification of the population by race, gender, and ethnicity, exposing the subjects of punishment, disposition, and displacement. States create a sense of precarity based on their political power to appropriate and politicize the sovereign right of absolute decision and depoliticize the political. The political homogeneity as practiced in Bhutan, "One man, one nation, and ethnicity", creates a different subject that appropriates for displacement, producing a threat subject to national integrity and politics. Stratification is political practices embedded with power to create a space for exclusion (Lockwood, 1996; Lai & Kennedy, 2017). The category of people and cultural and ethnic differences is the political ground for the Bhutan government, as Roben expresses**,** "monarchy developed a method of evicting by creating categories—the government would have a tremendous pressure if it evicted all the people at once, it did by category." Categorization is a gradual process of disposition and eviction; it attempts to dismantle the power of people being evicted. So, the categorization strategy is politically grounded, but the question is whether it acts on legal ground? The question is contested in examining what is illegal and political and the relationship between a legal and political subject. In some sense, sometimes a political subject becomes illegal, as Agamben (1996) discusses: the sovereign rights of making refugees go beyond the boundary of law. Foucault (2007) highlights the ideas of biopolitics that target population, its management, and productivity through a statistical calculation. However, the Foucauldian life-affirming ideas of biopolitics insist on a mode of shift, not in a linear way, from absolute sovereign power to biopower. Now, Agamben's idea of static sovereign right didn't act accurately as he claims in

the eviction of ethnic Nepali from Bhutan; it instead acted as necropower—practice of varieties of killings, resulting in forms of deaths of people. Roben narrates:

> The 1985 census involves a conspiracy theory, and that census impacted since then, and people started getting frightened in thinking about their future after a decade. The government did not favour the petition, rather than that it arrested our leaders. The 1988 census started evicting people who did not have citizenship. 1988 census divided people into seven different categories. People were not satisfied with the non-national categories. The important thing at that time was that the Bhutan government conducted a census to identify national and non-national, which was good, but that time while doing that, those who were identified as non-national started inquiries about what is non-national; because we had been living for decades and we had families and children (Roben, personal interview).

There might be different methods and institutions that exercise sovereign power; monarchy in political history is one of them—from East to West. Whatever the method employed to apply power and whoever exercises the legitimized sovereign right, death is at the centre of the sovereign exercise of power. However, the exposition of disposable subjects categorizing and calculating people in the outer space of national political mechanism indicates that sovereign life was controlled and threatened by the sovereign power possessing the capacity and right to kill. In this context, the sovereign pays no attention to public dissent; instead, it employs the legitimized right to kill. The ruler monopolizes and exercises absolute power through the sovereign form of power (Foucault, 1978; Lilja & Vinthagen, 2014). In such systems, power shifts from one to another, for instance from sovereign to necropower, which significantly produces subordinate subjects appropriate for the imposition of this very necropower on national bodies for pushing out of the country to make refugees. In other words, necropolitics thus defines people as disposable and unmanageable subjects within a political system by appropriating them for their material and spiritual decay in various ways. Ironically, people sought safety and security to protect their lives, but the government itself became a threat to them. Analyzing the narratives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, I noticed two different threats created in the tension: one

was the government's threat through census, and the other was the threat that the potentially evicted people created. I argue that the production of the threat subjects generates meanings in two ways: the Bhutan government's threat was produced by the necropower implied for displacement, and the government itself was a threat to ethnic people demonstrating the necroresistance of various forms. In this sense, death sometimes can be perceived positively because it is a counterpower to the authority through necroresistance, which is political.

The stratification by the government of Bhutan, especially through conducting a census, injects a political awareness to the ethnic Nepali people to form a human rights organization, as Roben articulates: "We formed a human rights organization to disseminate and 'internationalize' the problems. This organization was formed after the climax of the tension in the country with the slogan, Bhutan: We Want Justice". This human rights organization could spread the message of those people in need of humanitarian assistance and help release some of their people from jail in Bhutan. However, those released from jail received conditional releases: "they were not allowed to meet more than one person and obliged to leave the nation". The policy imposed a double-bind everywhere, however the people had no alternative choice to leaving the country, that also identifies a location for the development of necroresistance. Power without resistance and resistance without political agency are impossible.

The census conducted in 1985 demarked from category one to seven of the ethnic Nepali that allows the government of Bhutan to legitimize its power to evict people. Those who fell under categories two through seven had a condition either to leave or stay in Bhutan. And the demonstration of the people for citizenship rights became the ultimate choice before they left the country.

> People started a demonstration in different districts in September 1990 for their rights. The demonstrations—was not for anything else but survival—the demonstration was a

> fight and collective voices to survive as a human. “Please let us live” was the slogan of the demonstration. But the Bhutan government said that “human rights is being transferred to democracy”. That meant to say that human rights will change to democracy, and the Bhutan government did not want democracy; that was the fact. The main idea of Bhutan’s government was to reduce its population through ethnic cleansing and give them democracy and remain in power forever. India had a vital role in evicting the ethnic Nepali people for Bhutan. Rajeev Gandhi [then Indian Prime Minister] stayed continuous three months in Bhutan (Roben, personal interview).

Demonstration for citizenship rights became possible when power prohibited people’s desire to be governed. When power becomes brutal it demands resistance and necroresistance. Resistance to power characterized the collective voice against the state mayhem and the terror of making non-national. In contrast, necroresistance entailed the collective power for the subversion of state policy and the conflict and crisis among the potential evicted at the same time—the conflict and crisis among the same ethnic group involved in silence, negotiation, and resistance. The conflict within the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese group was about either going for the demonstration of rights to citizenship or remaining silent and neutral against the Bhutan government’s policy.

The categorization method that the Bhutan government implemented was what Foucault (2003) calls state racism—to kill people of the same nation to provide the rest with biopolitical care and management. As the participant narrates above, the notion of Foucauldian state racism practiced in Bhutan was influenced by the neighbouring country or international political communities. The participant interestingly reveals his experience that the head of the state of India made an extended visit to Bhutan concerning this issue of making refugees. In this sense, international political regimes involve such a necropolitical exercise for making people subject to displacement and non-citizenship. Ethnic Nepali were between 25% and 43% of the total population of Bhutan at the time of displacement (Sen, 198; Giri, 2004). As the participant articulates above, Bhutan was not ready and reluctant to practice democracy before the ethnic cleansing happened.

Human displacement in the history of world politics also includes colonial intervention, indicating the enforcement of necropower, such as the Nazi brutality in the European context or the making of refugees in Asia in other contexts. For example, Bhutan's government practice of eviction in 1989, when another part of the world was suffering from the close-to-ending Cold War, hundreds of thousands of people were already displaced from Europe. More than 100,000 people from Bhutan were compelled to seek asylum in India due to this persecution. In response to this humanitarian appeal from those asylum seekers (ethnic Nepali), the action that the Indian government took—dumping them, including seniors, youth, and children, off to the eastern border of Nepal—was the necropolitical strategy of killing. This practice is identical throughout the world, from World War I to the present day, as a necropolitical operation in the apparatuses of contemporary nation-states' governance politics.

Necroborder: Geography of Danger

The border is where criminal subjects are manufactured, resulting in mass displacement by imposing power on immigrant bodies (Walia, 2013). Borders are also a structure of operation through which migrant bodies are labelled under the interest of advanced capitalism (Walia, 2021). The notion of necroborder is imperative to investigating the experiences of the displaced people at the border and the function of the border at the time of crossing. The idea of necroborder is grounded in the necropolitical theoretical underpinnings for navigating various forms of death at the border when refugees cross a border. Cowan (2016) used necro-borders only once, referring to the racialized notion of economic concerns. This article does not define and describe what necro-borders are or what they look like. Labayen and Gutierrez (2021) also used the term "necroborders" only once in their article. Their focus is the use of social media

while making regular migration in the Moroccan–Spanish border. This article mentions “the EU necroborders” without a clear explanation of the terminology. The intention of this article to use the terminology “necroborders” seems to have demonstrated microaggression towards the EU policies on European border control mechanisms. I use and define “necroborder” differently, being concerned with refugees crossing the border at the time of their displacement. The necroborder is a trap that opens one way yet closes the other; it creates a space of exception, which is a trap. At the same time, the necroborder is the final stage that implicitly provides a licence of silence for a refugee to be labelled and can be politicized through international refugee regimes. Necroborder broadly is the borderline in which both national and international refugee regimes possess the capacity of multiple interactions: between refugees, the host country, the country of eviction, and any international agencies operating at or in relation to the border and border crossings. It is essential to investigate that the space of exception exists everywhere for the refugee evicted for a particular country—the border is everywhere (Yuval-Davis et al., 2019) and no border is anywhere definite—the necroborder that reads people’s national affiliations and consigns them to different fates can operate anywhere. At this point, the border as a lawful entity exists only for citizens, not for evicted people. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees did not have borders; instead, they had restrictions and orders of expulsion. Borders refer to a legal term constructed by nation-states’ power and politics. Both border and refugees are social and political constructs; the relationship between the border and citizens is that citizens are metamorphosized. When a citizen becomes a refugee, the border becomes a necroborder—the blind border, but it moves to push lives at stake.

The concept of the border has complicated and broader biopolitical connections, either regarding the politics of nation states fortifying their territories to protect their citizens or

restricting other people from trying to enter them. At the same time, the border is an essential mechanism for defining territory, populations, and 'security' for national and international politics to open and close, from making refugees to maintaining humanitarian obligations, yet it is a controversial space within which national and international interests and forces interact in various ways. Gilbert (2019) argues that a border is more than a territorial boundary line, and it is elastic, expanding and contracting over time. Gilbert's notion of the elastic border deconstructs the traditional understanding of border that focuses on the geographical boundary. This idea of elasticity is imperative to navigating the social and border politics of making refugees, in which the border opens and closes selectively (Young, 2018). But how does the border look to refugees? And how does it function in the displacement of people based on politics and power dynamics? These are contested questions to answer, since the notion of border structures changes within various geographies over time. However, I argue that the border is the final stage for the construction of spaces of exception in the manufacturing of refugees. The border is a method, and politics coexist to dichotomize and label citizens and refugee subjects. For instance, the Bhutan–India border was expanded in making some of its people refugees but was also contracted to displace unwanted people from Bhutan. Kevin narrates his border crossing experiences:

> There was no obstruction in the border to leave Bhutan. We could cross the border without being checked, but no one could go back to Bhutan. Even now, we cannot go to Bhutan. We stayed a week in India to manage the travel to Nepal (Kevin, personal interview).

As the participants expressed, there were no obstructions for them entering India, but the other side of the border was closed. These were the necroborder; one side was open, and many borders were produced to restrict or prohibit. Necroborders is space to produce many borders outside of geographical territories. Necroborder primarily communicates with international political power,

since it has the task of completing a displacement and legitimizing its capacity to create disposable subjects. As Gilbert (2019) explains regarding the notion of an elastic border, the border for the displaced Bhutanese was expanded inside its land to people's backyards, which is the blind side of the border; I call it necroborder.

All the interviewed participants expressed that the way into India was open, but the other way was closed. The situations of the participants at the Bhutan–India border differed; some left quickly to enter India, and some had to stay there for several days or longer. Paul shares his experiences of arriving at the Bhutan–India border and entering India:

> While those people were sent out of the country forcefully, there were two different categories, and those who had been asked to sign the documents had some sort of documents to carry with them because the government gave them the passes to cross the different army checkpoints to go out to the border. The rest of the people who fled took uhh!!! their ways of evading those checkpoints and entered India from the Bhutan side (Paul, personal interview).

As the participants expressed above, the evicted people had to cross various checkpoints after starting their move from Bhutan. This meant that the regime had also manufactured two different categories of refugee border-crossers; those with documents, who could pass the checkpoints, and those with no documents, who were thereby doubly subject to exception, and who thus had to evade the checkpoints and also had to evade both the Bhutanese police and the Indian border police—the border from inside the country to the edge of its territory. This is another characteristic of necroborder manifested as political power but in death form; as Mbembe (2003) argues, "politics is therefore death that lives human life" (p. 14). Why did they (refugees) need to have a pass since the one-way border was open to cross through and the exceptional space was produced? It was because the Bhutanese regime tried to systematize the displacement within discriminatory politics. Agamben's notion of bare life was not produced vertically, in which sovereign acts beyond law in Bhutan; there were serious exceptions that were fabricated by

categorizing people to dispose them into the spaces. It means that the government of Bhutan produced not a single space of exception that would fit all unwanted people it declared but produced many spaces for displacement, which later were merged into one space of exception called a refugee camp. Paul's narratives express how the necroborder travels through and interacts with countries to create displacement.

> It took us three days to cross the border, but we had to take full permission from the government of Bhutan and the Bhutanese army, and they guided us up to the border, Indian border. At the Indian border, we stayed overnight. The next day, the Indian government loaded us into the trucks, with no space for the family to even have proper space to pass across, through the Indian state up to the Nepalese border, and on the third day, we were taken into Nepal from the Indian border because we had to again overstay at the India–Nepal border and got verified before we moved to the camp. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul had to ask the Bhutan authority if he could leave the country, yet other participants did not. The regime forced people to leave the country, but it placed an obligation for some people to get permission to leave the country, which was an extreme form of brutality and violence of definition and separation. In the interview, I felt that Paul was visualizing the scenario of being guided by police forces to the border. How scary was that moment to have been followed by the armed police force? Paul's body had to endure another necropower by the Indian authority through the dehumanization of loading him, his family, and fellow displaced people to cross another border—everywhere and nowhere border for refugees—the necroborder.

"No Hope of Surviving": Perpetual Death

The first place where Bhutanese refugees arrived was Timai, Jhapa district, Nepal, but they were known as Nepali, not refugees. They had no proper material to make huts to survive; no food to eat before the UNHCR intervened with humanitarian assistance. Siman shared the miserable situation he encountered at the beginning of the camp life: "We had no food to eat. Water was

not nearby to drink. There was a tube water system, which was not good drinking water. We had no hope of surviving." As the participants narrated in the beginning, they hid and said that they were evicted from Bhutan because they feared having another persecution by Nepali authority. At that time, there were 7 or 8 families; as Siman says, the "local community did not know that they were Bhutanese refugees" instead of being from some villages in Nepal. However, "their situation could not hide the fact" (Siman, personal interview). The precarity of living was being narrated in the interview, as they did not have "proper materials to build up camp and food to eat". Roben adds his experience about the "walking dead" situation during the initial phase of camp life: "We did not know what time our turn would come to die".

Displacement expanded through the exposition of various confinement of living, even if the refugee bodies were free to move. Refugees' disassociation from national and political identity towards their country continuously encountered various forms of fear and violence imposed by intercountry regimes, such as Bhutan and India. There was no authority for their settlement, food, health, or wellbeing. Gina expresses, "We have some plastic tents and bamboos to build a small hut" at the riverbank when they arrived in eastern Nepal. Violence played a crucial role in the lives of these refugee populations, explicitly and implicitly. When the Indian authority dumped refugee bodies at Nepal–India Border, humanitarian assistance for refugee bodies was a myth. It was that necropolitical practice that stepped on what little hope the refugees had for survival.

> The first camp in Maidar was officially not allowed by the Nepalese government, but people had got small tents, and they started the camp there, so people were coming every day, so it was going bigger. So eventually, the local government of Nepal allowed them to stay there; at the same time, some people were diverted to Timai on the riverside, so the people started the camps. So, the first actual camp as such the formal camp in Timai and then Maidar started growing bigger and more significant because of the influx of a lot of people. (Paul, personal interview).

This sense of hope to survive was the land in Nepal. They at least got space to stop their movement from having to cross another border. Gradually, the flow of refugees increased; how difficult it was for them to assist their relatives and friends, since they had no electronic communications or social media to use. The policed bodies from Bhutan to India could have some relief in the isolated riverbank areas in Nepal, but that became the actual space of exception. Building a refugee community with their collective identity and pathos is resistance to the state power at some points, which was driven through their political subjectivity. Various forms of "brutality by police" in Bhutan and "dehumanizing" behaviours by Indian authorities were reported in the interviews, which traumatized them before and during their arrival in Nepal. Several deaths were reported throughout the interviews regarding their early phase of camp life, due to hygiene, quality, and drinking water.

> Every day, the number of people [displaced from Bhutan] was increasing. The situation turned worse day by day. A lot of people died due to diarrhea. I did have no idea where to go to help since every family has a death. This situation lasted six months long. Most of the children and senior people lost their lives. I felt that it would be better to get punished and killed by the king in Bhutan rather than facing piles of death and dead bodies in Maidhar. We did have a feeling of life. The sympathy would automatically disappear due to the massive death. I wish such a critical time never come to anyone else. (Siman, personal interview).

The situations of these refugees grew grimmer with every step from leaving Bhutan to settling in two refugee camps in eastern Nepal. The flux of refugee bodies continued. They had no option but to accept their deaths due to lack of food, poor drinking water, and poor health and well-being. Death prevailed everywhere; nothing can be more of an example of the death world of necropolitics than this situation. Seniors and children were particularly affected by the various diseases that took hundreds of lives in a short period. In every interview, respondents shared with me the death of their community people. As reported in the interviews, the ultimate reality of

necropolitics manifests the punitive and precarious situation in which bodies are subjects to be tortured and, finally, killed.

> I even remembered in Maidhar [one refugee camp] that 20 people died on the same day. We could see people being burned by the side of the river. We could count there, and the other day that I could see in Sanischare [another refugee camp] camp, 17 deaths on the same day because of dehydration, cholera, diarrhea and also some other diseases, like pneumonia, because people did not eat, like, proper food or they did not have hygienic water to drink because the water also got contaminated due to no sanitary environment for the people to get it. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul's narrative indicates the clear picture of the unlimited necropolitical violence and failure of biopolitical care. The prevalence of the diseases was high with the lack of health care, food, and hygiene monitoring system the Bhutanese refugee camps. Life-affirming and productive Biopolitics was inadequate and excluded in the Bhutanese refugee camps has been elaborated on and described in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Critical Camp Infrastructure and Governance: Towards the Notion of Biopolitical Governance

> The biological existence of human beings becomes the primary subject of politics incorporating such matters as life expectancy, disease control, food, and water supply. Unlike sovereignty, this form of 'disciplinary' power is not, in essence, repressive. It is productive. It works across a variety of fields, such as mental and physical health, education, sexual activity, policing and parenting to 'produce' functional individuals. (Owens, 2009, p. 570).

Introduction

Modern national biopolitics it seeks to perpetuate but also simultaneously to control distinctions between the political and the unpolitical, which produces, as Datta (2006) claims, the "exceptional state" as its characteristic face. Paradoxically, distinctions between political and unpolitical are always *made politically*, in specific political circumstances, and thus, to reproduce them is to reproduce politics. Agamben agrees that the camp is not "simply an external space", and he admits that its internal order is, in a certain sense, produced in a way that also renders it political. According to the interview reports, Bhutanese refugee camps, physical borders, and spaces of exception were established with the help of UNHCR starting in 1991, which resulted in seven camps in Nepal. Six were in Jhapa and one was in Morang districts. The refugee camps were controlled basically by the mechanism formulated in agreement with and through coordination of UNHCR, the Nepal Government, and Camp Management Committee (CMC). Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees were apparently granted residency and food in their space of exception, but their bodies of deportability and subjects of violence still existed. Each camp was divided into seven sectors, and in every sector, there was a sector head. The role of the CMC was to look after the overall activities of the camp. There was an election system for selecting a sector head for one or two years. A sector was divided into four parts known as subsectors. Each

subsector had someone who was supposed to be responsible for settling minor conflicts, disputes, and family violence in the camps. If problems were not resolved within the subsector, the cases would escalate to the sector head, then the CMC, and finally, if needed, to the Refugee Coordination Unit (RCU) in the Jhapa and Morang districts. RCU was created by the Nepali government based on policy it developed to manage the refugee population by executing power. There was at least one RCU staff in each camp. If the RCU also failed to settle the problem, the case would end up in imprisonment. According to the participants, a juridical process was involved in declaring imprisonment because the court was involved in such a process. This indicates the involvement of the court in the state of exception and also informs that a refugee is a political being controlled under the law.

The model below demonstrates the critical camp infrastructure of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee in Nepal. The critical infrastructure demonstrated in the model is a blend of biopolitical intervention of the refugee regimes and refugees' political subjectivity driven through their self-governing mechanisms. The refugee self-governing mechanism is not explicit in the model; however, it is understood by their everyday political responsibility by reflecting both the obligation of the camp-controlling mechanism and refugees' silent resistance to the power constructed refugee and refugeeness pushing them into the non-political zone of refugee camps. Secretary, sector head, and sub-sector head were formed by the refugee people in the camp by democratic election practice. A camp secretary was a leader of CMC or the head of every camp. CMC was formed by the people in the refugee camps; no Nepali, Bhutanese, or UN authorities were involved in forming this committee. The sector head and sub-sector head had their particular roles and limitations. Sub-sector head was fundamentally responsible for the distribution of the ration to every household. The ration was distributed to every family in a

specifically designated place inside the refugee camps. The sector head was responsible for spreading the message if any changes in the camp rules were made. There used to be migration practices inside the refugee camps; people would migrate from one camp to another because they wanted to live close to their family or friends. In most cases of camp migration, people migrate close to the hospital location since there was a scarcity of transportation services. On request, CMC approved migration of those refugees from one camp to another, but it had to go first through the sector head of the camp that they belonged to. The invisible political power of refugee populations is crucial to international refugee regimes to recognize as political through deniably accepted forms and interventions perceiving and creating threat subjects. The following illustration shows the critical camp infrastructure developed from interview narratives of the participants.

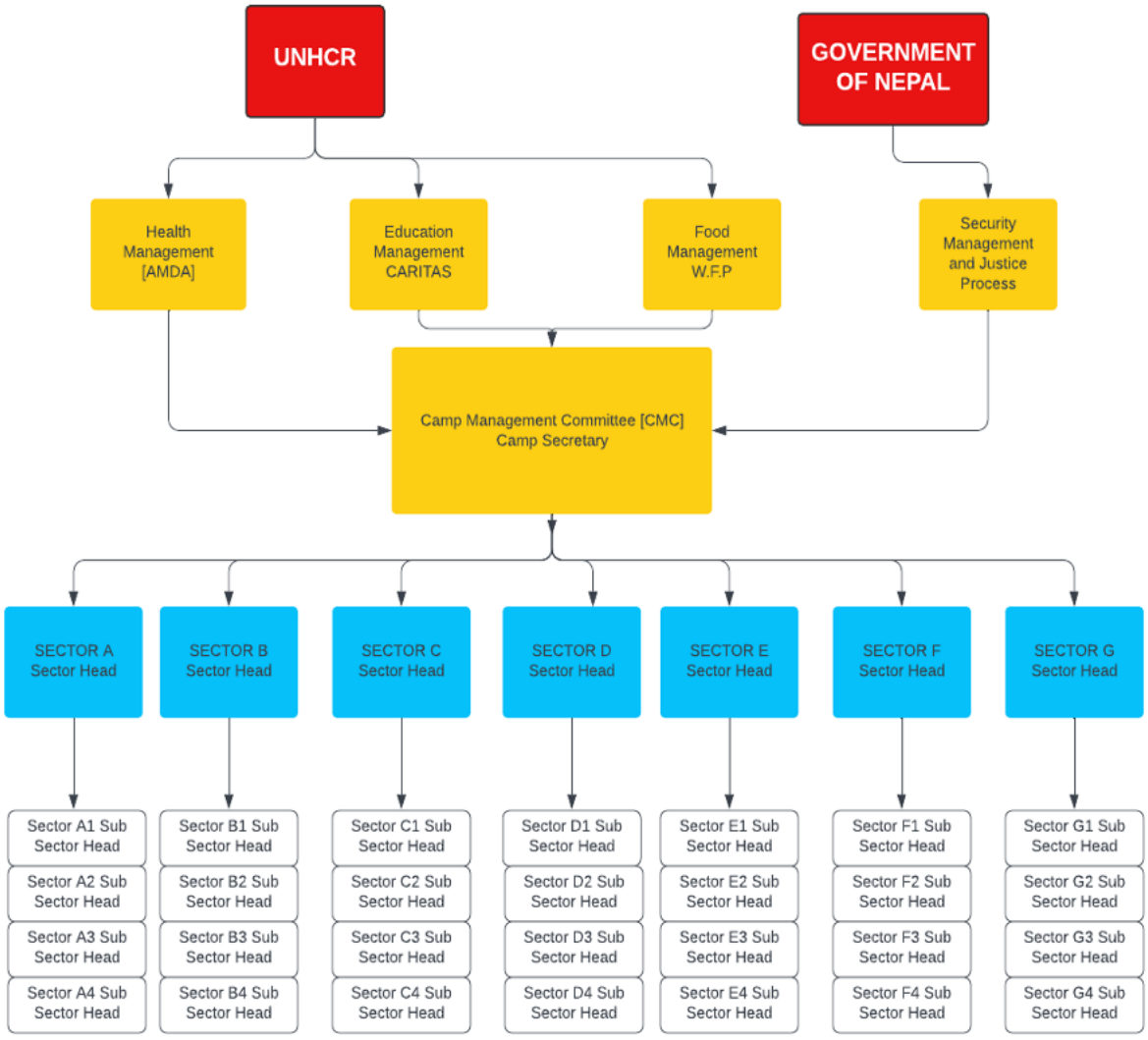

Figure 5.1 Model of Camp Critical Infrastructure

Ration (Food) Supply Mechanism

Bhutanese refugee populations had to wait every other week for new rations. The following image demonstrates the realities of the refugee camps and the ration distribution mechanism that

the refugees would follow implied and regulated by the UNHCR in coordination with the Government of Nepal.

Figure 5.2 Ration Distribution in the Bhutanese Refugee Camp, Source: Ration distribution in the Bhutanese Refugee, Beldangi I Camp, Jhapa District, Nepal. UNHCR/12.1992/A. Hollmann, cited in Brown (2001)

The ration was one of the significant variables in the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee camps defined by distribution mechanisms based on the household composition of the refugees. The ration distribution mechanism and the way of consuming signifies the refugee camp biopolitics occurring in a non-political space, based on refugee desire to survive and international refugee

regimes' obligation to manage the refugees with a specific amount of food. The more inadequate the ration was distributed, the more compulsion they would have to work outside of the camp. Participants state:

> Food [ration] was not enough just for survival. For example, Ration was distributed depending upon the family members. If a family had many adolescents or adults, they would need more food and was [the food given to them] never enough. (Gina, personal interview)
>
> Talking about the ration, it was just for survival purposes, but we had to say it was good because we had no option to survive. (Harry, personal interview).
>
> The ration was not sufficient for 15 days. We were many children in our family, so it was difficult for us to save the food for 15 days. (Marley, personal interview).
>
> The ration was not sufficient at all. If you are talking about survival, it was, and we could survive. Everything had to be compromised. If you go outside of the camps for more than six months, your ration would be cut out, and you would have to go through the application process upon your arrival in the camp (Mike, personal interview).

All the respondents in the interviews reported that the food system in the refugee camps was neither healthy nor good, nor was there enough distributed. It would not be called food but rather a "ration". A ration is something granted and provided by someone or some agency in a particular and calculated amount for a specific time; if it was not sufficient for them until the next distribution day, they had to survive on it alone. Rations in the Bhutanese refugee camps were provided every two weeks. The refugees were not provided with any specific card to use when receiving the rations but sub-sector heads within each camp were responsible for distributing rations. Every family had a serial number in the residence as family numbers were calculated for distributing rations. Refugees called the refugee residence a "hut" because, as Sean said, "It was not a house." Household data was taken and recorded, and households would receive ration based on the family composition in those statistical records. Sam states:

> So, while growing up, we were given ration every two weeks. Our ration would include, I think about, uhm, I don't know the exact amount, but about 2/3 kg rice for 15 days per

> person and the rice was the third—I would say low quality, the ones that were mixed with the stones and all those dirt and stuff. So, it wasn't—I would say it could have been better; it wasn't the healthy and standard food I would say, but with the vegetables and the stuff we would get every 15 days as well but not much. (Sam, personal interview).

The UNHCR did not directly supply the food for the refugee camps; it instead used an agency to supply it. The ration was given for survival purpose; refugees had no choice of the food they wanted. The refugee is subject to being displayed as they have been provided humanitarian assistance, but the corruption of their food supplies is an example of the type of exploitation that neoliberal political mechanisms commonly practice. The food supply mechanism and agencies involved in this business is another form of necropolitical power in the refugee camp, their resilience to accept whatever food was supplied, which is clearly expressed by Sean's experience: "The ration was not of good quality, but that was well based on our situation; we were not able to work, nor did we have enough money to buy the food." We can understand that the politics of human categories and their access to survival resources are juxtaposed, but these practices were unwanted choices of the refugees in the camp. Their resilience capacity and desire to survive do not explicitly allow them to question the authority.

> But there used to be a problem of ration if people happened to have many guests. In that situation, people who had money would go to the market and buy food, but people who had no money to afford in buying food would borrow the food from their neighbours, and they had to return when they received the next ration. (Sean, personal interview).

This situation does not indicate the desires of these people in the camps regarding ingredients in the dishes they would have before their displacement but reflects the realities of precarious lives in the refugee camps longing to survive with a portion of sufficient food. A racialized form of subjectification of refugees in the camp is another form of necropolitics. As Datta (2008) elaborates, this situation produces the continued practice of exceptional state to create a bare life.

The refugees in the camp needed to cross the legal structure of the camp for an alternative economic source to survive.

> The alternative economic sources would be to go outside the camps and find a job that would pay you something. See what happened first, the ration provided by the UNHCR and WFP was minimal because people had their desire, they sometimes they wanted to eat meat, and stuff like that, and that kind of things were not provided to people; vegetables were never provided to people so either had to eat just pumpkins for all the year or they had to go find a job to eat something else. So, a lot of people had to find a job, even though it was legal or illegal (Sam, personal interview).

Looking for an alternative economic source is a form of resistance that places resisters in a state of exception, questioning the notion of legality (the notion of legality in the refugee camp constitutes as places in a state of exception which indicates the controversial and multiple biopolitics functioning in refugee camps). Foucauldian biopolitics focuses on the calculation as characteristic of biopolitical management of population (Foucault, 2007), but population in this notion incorporates those who belong to a state with a citizenship status. However, the calculation of the regimes of refugee management in the camps indicates a new form of punishment and persecution under discourses of humanitarian assistance of biopolitical care. This form of resistance to cross the politically constructed (or legal) border of the refugee camps comes out of the refugees' biopolitics of self-care seeking to enter the structure of modern governmentality of nation-states, which is driven through their political subjectivity in liminality. By analyzing Sam's narratives above, we can identify that refugee bodies want to be political entities of modern governmentality in their strong sense of desire for the longevity of their lives to be governed by life-affirming biopolitics.

Healthcare System and Hygiene

Healthcare and its access is important to modern nation states, yet there is an exclusory practice within the citizen–non-citizen dichotomy (Dhesi et al, 2018; Foucault, 1978; Redfield, 2005; Sparke, 2009). Although health is a fundamental concern for the population management of modern nation states, there were no sufficient health care facilities within the Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal. Health crises responses and healthcare normalcy in the Bhutanese refugee camps were the indicators of the limited biopolitical management under the continuing refugee management system. Apparently, the international humanitarian agencies seemed to have focused on regulation of refugees in the camp, but the hidden reality is that the healthcare system within the refugee camps was excluded by humanitarian organizations such as the UNHCR, resulting in the poor health condition of the refugees. As reported by the respondents, personal hygiene and camp sanitation were poor; drinking water was not properly monitored, so various diseases could easily emerge and spread throughout the camps. The refugees had no choice but to drink the unpurified water which led to many deaths. To examine the health care system, immunization, and regulation in the Bhutanese refugee camps, there was a healthcare unit between two or three sectors, which would, as Sean said, 'provide 'general services':

> UNHCR in coordination with AMDA [Association of Medical Doctors of Asia] Nepal helped refugees with medical and hospitalization. The basic health facility was available in the camps. Secondary healthcare was available through referrals only to the nearest local community hospitals/centers. Major care like big/major operations were obtained through special referrals and sent to Biratnagar/Dharan and Kathmandu, Nepal. For special/major surgery, a particular patient needed to wait for a month. Too long waiting. A patient had to go through different referrals to go see specialists for surgery. Only a few lucky persons get the referrals on time; rest had to lose their lives for too long waiting. (Gina, personal interview).

Medical facilities provided in the refugee camps were limited to providing them with proper biopolitical management. A primary healthcare unit was established in the camp, which seemingly would show that refugees were provided with healthcare services. However, how this

healthcare unit functioned, and how the medications were prescribed were fundamental concerns in the refugee camps. Refugees had to wait a long time if they needed effective treatment, due to one of two reasons: either the Nepalese institutional management system ignored them because they were treated as a refugee, not as a human, or treatment would be delayed because the refugees had to pay for it, which they would not be able to do. Delayed treatment for Bhutanese refugees in the camps was the leading cause of death, as reported by the participants.

The participants' narratives about the health care system and refugees' access to services reveal several exclusion and inclusion controversies of the refugee management system. Refugees' primary health care services were provided inside the refugee camps by untrained personnel. Some participants reported that the same medications were provided to the patients with different symptoms, causing reactions and even death. Another controversy of refugee management biopolitics (this is how the non-political space connects to and intersects with the political space) and the healthcare system is that they are politically segregated but regulated with the healthcare system that applied to the local community. However, everyone who needed treatment outside of the refugee camp would require a referral approved but the health post inside the refugee camp. Refugees were required to go to the hospitals outside of the camps, where the community people commonly take services, but the question is how accessible was it for them to receive the services, as Sam said, "The refugees who needed major treatments in the hospitals outside the camps would pay themselves. UNHCR would not pay for it." Sam further says:

> … all the health workers [in the health care units in the camp] were from the camps. They would get some vocational pieces of training or something for a couple of years, and then they would come back and work in camps. None of them were the doctors, but health care aides, or CMA (community medical assistant), or something like that. We did not have surgeries there; basically, they had some pills and some usual saline stuff. It was just a general treatment service. If they could not do anything, they would refer the

> clients to the big hospitals outside the camps. So, it was 5–6 km from the camps, and that's why most of the people died in the camps because they could not get the proper treatments. Many pregnant women died, and a lot of people were bitten by the snakes and other stuff. They died because they did not have immediate access to the hospitals. (Sam, personal interview).

The provision of medication in the refugee camps by general health workers without a specific medical examination was the primary practice, but it can also be called a form of violence. For example, the refugee population had no option but to take medication from the non-professional workers inside the camps, since they were incapable of arranging the necessary funds for outside camps treatments. This is invisible violence inside the refugee camps, which is deniably acceptable to authorities, and it constitutes a necropolitics of everyday violence and death. As narrated by Sean, "Suicidal cases were many there; nobody knew the meaning of depression until we came here [Canada]." Violence inside the refugee camps, then, is a by-product of exclusory politics and practices, but refugee management regimes understand that violence as the manifestation of characteristics inherent to the camp and distinct from and unrelated to the surrounding community. The refugee population had to survive by making choices between the undesirable or impossible options they were given. However, choosing between undesired options, nonetheless indicates a form of political agency, expressing a desire to survive and to be governed within a system, however unfair.

Education System and Language Politics

In the refugee camps, the Bhutanese refugee (as a society in the camp) played a crucial role in developing and disseminating the education system, responding to the value of culture, language, and humanity. In this regard, for instance, how does a refugee population establish a society for education inside refugee camps when the political system and practices of power excludes them?

The exclusion and selective inclusion practices that shape the education that the refugee population can access in the refugee camps are problematic, even in terms of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights from 1951, and especially in the way they reflect the actual social and material contexts in which refugees are situated. The notion of inclusiveness is informed firmly through the human rights convention that a child has the right to education no matter what ethnicity, language, culture, religion, and gender they belong to (UNISCO, 2003). However, obscured under the inclusive (de-)political rhetoric of international humanitarian regimes there are multiple exclusory practices to be found in the education systems provided to children in refugee camps. Most of the participants became emotional while telling me about their school system and the situation they had to encounter every day in the camps, including the refugee houses and the bamboo structures that were the schools. “Leaking from the roofs was not uncommon, which was one of the challenging factors during the rainy season,” Rita says. No “electricity facility” was provided in the schools, significantly affecting the students’ learning process. Having no attraction for education in the school environment in terms of its infrastructural aspects appears to have contributed to producing passivity within the students, hindering the development of enthusiasm for learning. Even so, they were passionate about going to schools to acquire education, no matter what challenges they faced. One critical thing identified in the interviews is that students in the refugee camps were aware of gaining education taught by their parents, signalling the realization of lives in the past without education. There were schools in every sector, and the funding for education in the Bhutanese refugee camps was provided by various organizations, such as Caritas Germany, Caritas Australia, Caritas Japan, and the Italian Bishop Conference (Brown, 2001). CARITAS Nepal, a non-governmental organization, was another agency that provided significant educational funding in the Bhutanese

refugee camps, partnering with UNHCR. While UNHCR was supposed to provide the funding resources for primary education (grade one to eight), CARITAS Nepal was to oversee the funding for high school (grade nine and ten) (Brown, 2001). As reported by participants, every camp had a sector school, extension, and secondary. While grades one to six were taught in every sector school, grade seven and eight education could be obtained in schools called extension, and nine and ten was in high school in every camp. As reported, the teaching mechanism and availability of resources are worth noting and analyzing:

> Each class would have about 50 to 60 students. The class system was different in Nepal, compared to what we have here. We would stay in one classroom and would get different teachers. It's not like here in the rooms, we go to different classes, but we would have different teachers back there. It was a school made out of a bang bush and a thatched roof. So, no electricity, no computer, no nothing. Practically zero lab work; just theory of papers and memorization, and our teachers were from the camps, so we didn't have anybody experienced or with a higher level of education coming from outside to teach in the camps. Basically, the same student would pass grade 10 and then go to college for two years—grade 12; they would come back to the camps and start teaching the grade 9 and grade 10 students. (Sam, personal interview).

The deprivation of the resources in the Bhutanese refugee camp schools indicates that the inclusive exclusion policy affected the productivity of refugee children. Refugees are included as subjects for protection but excluded from all resources and rights as humans that nation-states themselves define. The conflicting notion of the international educational framework concerning the rights to education in its theory and practice escalated the tensions of the refugee population, reminding them of the exclusory politics and practices of the Bhutan government through which they were displaced. The education of refugees themselves to better develop the education system in the camp is crucial to their self-regulatory and disciplinary awareness. Kevin narrates, "We tried to maintain teacher–student rationale to teach but couldn't because one teacher was supposed to control 60 students in a class because of many reasons behind it, such as availability of resources." As reported, one self-made disciplinary mechanism in the camp schools was the

dress code for students. The dress code was in effect in the schools for differentiating students from the public, but the families were not able to provide appropriate dress financially and were compelled to negotiate work and wages outside the camps. It shows the grimmer situation and the learning environment of the schools in the refugee camps. Going to school with no educational environment, such as a lack of trained teachers, is exclusory politics in the refugee camps. “Their teachers in the school were not trained to teach,” Sam says. They would simply complete their high school (grade 10 in Nepal at that time) and become a teacher in the camp school, which was the bitter reality of the refugee. Exclusion from the proper education in the Bhutanese refugee camps is identified in micro and macro (resources such as lab, electricity, computer, trained instructors, etc.) levels of various components such as educational infrastructure for accessing the resources, food quality and distribution, and the behaviours, situations, and practices of ethnic diversity within the refugee community. Another challenging yet exclusory part of accessing education in the camps was a barrier to higher education. It was almost impossible for them to explore higher/university education outside the camp. The politics of international refuge regimes document that refugees are not allowed officially to go out of the camps, but if they resisted the politics of camp restriction for university education, they would not afford the expenses.

> The most challenging part of the camp was for me, from my experience because of lifestyle as you know, very ordinary. We did not have a lot of things growing up: we did not have cars, we did not have bikes, we did not have anything else; just worked around living in a small, tiny house, sharing just a tiny bedroom with four people and stuff like that. So the school was the most challenging part, you know, because up until grade 10, it was free, so the CARITAS Nepal would look after you; it would pay for your school up until grade 10, but after grade 10, you would have to go study on you own, and if you don’t have money, then you cannot really go to grade 11, and 12, or further education, and lot people did not have that money, so a lot of people did not go to school because they just could not afford to go to school. (Sam, personal interview).

Due to the increasing number of refugee children and the lack of proper funding, refugee students were deprived of quality education in the camps. There were not "efficient in learning materials supply," "no equipment for lab works," and no "electricity and computer," Sam adds. The refugee teachers were hard working, but they did not have proper training. As reported by the respondents, the most challenging part of the refugee camp was education. Regardless of the everyday challenge, acquiring high school education was provided in the camps but going for higher education was almost impossible for these people since they had to go outside of the boundaries of the camp and had to pay for it on their own.

The educational system and practices in the camps were influenced and controlled by Bhutan, Nepal, and the UNHCR. One method the Bhutanese government practiced while displacing ethnic Nepali people was withdrawing the Nepali language from the curriculum and making the Dzongkha language mandatory. However, the Dzongkha language was also mandatory in the camp schools until grade eight. Participant responses to the Dzongkha differ slightly. Some consider that learning different languages is good and never minded learning Dzongkha, while some argue that their parents and grandparents were evicted from Bhutan with the imposition of this language replacing the Nepali language from the curriculum. Gina and Sean narrate their perspectives these ways:

> I learned in Bhutan and never got a chance to study in camp school. It was not in the curriculum at the beginning. I never mind learning Dzongkha. Thinking that it will be a plus point. The more language we learned the more advantages we get. I learned Sanskrit; it was in the curriculum. (Gina, personal interview).

Gina considers learning Dzongkha worthwhile. She was passionate about learning different languages, including Sanskrit, but some participants said it was worthless for them to learn the Dzongkha language. Youth born in the refugee camps were especially not motivated to learn Dzongkha. Sean says:

> And there was a discourse in the camp that we had to preserve our culture, since we had Bhutanese background; that is why the Dzongkha class was mandatory until class eight. I could not speak Dzongkha. I had already known that our parents were evicted from Bhutan when I started learning Dzongkha. From my heart, I felt that, why would I learn Dzongkha since these people evicted our parents? But the situation in the camp was different; our voice was not heard, so I did not say that I would not study Dzongkha. I was also confused, who was the authority to listen to me if I raised the voice of my interest. (Sean, personal interview).

Picking Sean's words, "who was the authority to listen to me," signals the state of exception because the refugee regimes ignore it as refugees' problem, but at the same time, it also depicts his desire for governmentality. Dzongkha class was mandatory until grade eight in the camp schools; according to participants, it was compulsory from grade two. Dzongkha was taught using the Nepali language because the students would not understand the language properly. It means that Bhutanese refugee students were not interested in learning the Dzongkha language. The interesting thing is that Bhutanese refugees encountered the language terror policy of the government of Bhutan, which completely phased out the Nepali language from schools, yet they had to continue learning it in camp. Dzongkha was mandatory in the camp school curriculum, according to the participants' response, because the first generation of the displaced people wanted this language to be included since they had both hope of repatriation to Bhutan and fear of another persecution. However, many students, as Sam says, "would fail the class due to Dzongkha because if you failed more than two classes, you would fail the whole year, and you cannot go to the next grade. That's how it works back in Nepal." Sam was not happy about taking the Dzongkha class. "I find it very unfair to some students because someone like me was born in Nepal. I didn't see the importance of learning Dzongkha." This narrative indicates the obstacles Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees faced in trying to continue their education.

Language is central to the politics of displacement; while language became imposed on the refugees while they were in their country of origin, it was also prescribed compulsory until

grade seven in the camp. Why was the Dzongkha so important to camp curriculum? The government of Bhutan was legitimizing its politics of displacement and ethnic cleansing, consistently insisting that it did not displace ethnic Nepalis, that it was voluntary migration. Refugee parents encouraged their children to learn Dzongkha, which indicates that they held hope of repatriation to Bhutan, but it never become possible. At some point, the mandatory teaching of Dzongkha, which the students did not want to learn, and Bhutan national day celebration in the schools were the post-displacement liminality and uncertainty of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the camp. In this sense, the education system and practices in the camps are the production of political subjects of liminality of refugees produced through the exceptional space of the modern political system. So camp is the space created for the refugee population to live to obey the rules of two countries and international regimes. The political power of refugee regimes that creates a unique space for specific groups characterizes and manifests necropolitical practice in the refugee camps. The subjects that are formed and transformed in the refugee camps—such as poor education, low-quality food, no proper health care, no employment, no citizenship, no community, no recreation, poor sanitation—are tools to label these populations as refugees, appropriating their bodies in state of exception where national and international regimes intervene. What is essential in the refugee camps for refugees is self-regulation and self-caring, and their political subjectivity becomes potential human capital for the neoliberal political system after their resettlement. The political violence of everyday life exists under the foundation of displacement and the making of a refugee. This means that refugees are included under and excluded from the refugee zone's political system, but this inclusion is possible when the exclusion happens. It means that refugees become inclusive subjects for refugee regimes to manage after excluding them from a certain political order

through violence. The establishment of sovereign rights through violation leads to the construction of subjects from displacement to the refugee camps, and interdiction of social and political space signifies the necropolitics in everyday life in the multiple forms of sovereign control. The politics of inclusion and exclusion thus takes place when sovereignty coincides with the non-politics of exception in the camp. The political confinement and variety of surveillance systems in the camps appear to be inclusive in the scope of law to punish but exclusive in terms of a politics of care. For the refugee population, the refugee camp appears to possess a self-sufficient power to demonstrate its apolitical humanitarianism for international refugee regimes, as a space of humanitarian obligation for biopolitical management. To the host country, the country of displacement, and countries of resettlement it presents an image of a space of exception *from politics* that is nonetheless ordered in terms of humanitarian *governance*— but this is a space in which such countries often intervene politically. Refugees, therefore, are treated as included under law but excluded from state politics. Agamben (1998) argues that no law is needed to create a law—the essence of sovereign power lies beyond the law. Where a life-affirming biopolitics might involve interaction between law and the needs of a population, a biopolitics of neglect or political concealment involves one-way communication and a selective combination of law, power, and neglect that produces refugees and refugeeness.

Festivals and Cultural Practices

Festivals and cultural values are crucial to composing a society, but they are also vital causes for people's displacement, as reported by the participants, based on their experiences of exiled lives. As studies demonstrate, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees would reside in Bhutan with Nepali culture, ethnicity, and religiosity as their identity markers. Eventually, the displacement affected

their political lives, being bound to the refugee camps by non-citizen status. However, their legacy of religious and cultural practices in the camps was significantly rich and consistent, regardless of movement being restricted to the outer geographical territory. Marley remembers her life in the camps and narrates, "We would celebrate festivals very nicely, but we had to compromise a lot here." In a broader sense, refugee camp is the space where everything should be compromised, and the refugee is a compromised subject—between hope and uncertainty. During interviews, all participants expressed excitingly about how they would bind together inside the camps. Rita explains:

> I miss my friends in Nepal, but they have already been settled in different countries. I have a connection with many of them. I miss my neighbour and the bonding we had. I do think we have this thing here. I cannot have the vibe that I used to have in Nepal, especially at festivals. (Rita, personal interview).

Rita's expressions highlight the importance of the geography of her birthplace, whether it was politically recognized or not. It also indicates that everyone contributed to building a camp society, providing them with satisfaction and happiness in their situation. Cultural practices and festivals were key in the Bhutanese refugee camps and holding such festivals in the camps was also a form of resistance to the power that banned them to be performed by the Bhutanese authority in Bhutan. The festivals they celebrated were the same as those in the community outside the camps.

> Even being in a refugee camp, none of the refugees forget to celebrate cultural events in their own way. Dashain, Tihar, Losar were the main events almost every refugee used to celebrate. Religious event was also equally performed. Refugee days were celebrated. Few political events and social events as well. I miss things in Nepal, such as temples and holy places, beautiful nature, Himalayas, and mountains climate/weather. (Gina, personal interview).

Nepali-speaking Bhutanese would celebrate each festival, meaning that they would celebrate the differences within their group in terms of their diverse religious and ethnic affiliations. They

were evicted by the Bhutanese authority because of these differences (these differences would broadly identify that they were ethnic Nepali) between them and non-Nepali-speaking Bhutanese.

> That [Nepal] was only my culture; I wouldn't know about Bhutan. I am from a Hindu community, which is very, very common; most people in Nepal are Hindu religious. All the festivals are common, but all the celebrations should occur inside the camps because we did not have access to go outside to celebrate the festivals. We did have some people living close to the camps, so we did celebrate with them sometimes, but mostly it was inside the camps. (Sam, personal interview).

It is imperative to examine the narratives of these people to examine the relationship between politics and culture, to what extent people's culture is connected to political practices. The intersection of cultural values to those born in Bhutan and those born in the refugee camps informs us that the geography of people's birthplace is essential, culturally, and even politically. Those born in the refugee camps can only imagine Bhutan based on the international narratives of displacement. Sam was born in a refugee camp in Nepal; he attempts to connect himself to Nepal, where he was born, emphasizing the culture, they are tied up together.

Crime, Punishment, and Security

Crime and punishment are essential security measures that modern biopolitics practice; however, criminalization and making people punishable subjects are common practices in human displacement. In the Bhutanese refugee camps, UNHCR allotted officers for the overall security and justice monitoring system in coordination with Nepal government. Camp volunteers were "voted by the refugees" (that resonates refugees' practices of governmentality) to monitor each unit and sector. "The need of the camp was a camp secretary. Every camp had a camp management committee," Gina says. As reported in the interviews, punishment and security mechanisms in the Bhutanese refugee camps were a blend of the law of the government of Nepal

and a self-regulated mechanism of settling the disputes themselves. According to Sean "If crimes were not serious, such as murder, it was supposed to be settled inside the camps" from their ad-hoc practices of dispute resolution. However, if cases were severe, they would go to court outside the camp which shows the involvement of the court in the refugee issue and relationship between so called unpolitical and political. One interesting thing about the refugee camps was that they seemed to have been provided with a high-security alert; this tendency created refugeeness and trauma by criminalizing the refugees. The participants shared that "there was no police and army camp inside the refugee camps until the Maoist movement started in Nepal," but police base camps were established after the movement started. It indicated that the refugees were pushed into more vulnerability since they were considered more potential threats to the government of Nepal. The underlying reality of establishing the police camps inside the refugee camps was not to provide security to the refugees but to control them with a force that would not support the Maoist movement. There was a violence taking place in the war between the Maoists and the government of Nepal, and the government could sense that the refugee force could join the Maoist revolutionary movement. In terms of security control, the security management that the refugees themselves regulated in the camp seemed effective to themselves, instead of seeking the Nepalese law and justice system. Sam says:

> So, it would depend on the level of crime. There would be a camp sector to deal with if it was something small, a minor theft, or a small dispute. To every sector, there was one head, and the sector head would look after all those small cases. If it was a little bigger than that, it would go to the camp secretary if the camp sector could not fix the case. It was called secretary —camp sector secretary. And even when the camp secretary could not do it, it would go to the police or the court outside. (Sam, personal interview).

There was not a written law book to make decisions in the refugee camps, but the decisions were made on an ad-hoc basis. Any crime inside the camps that wasn't manageable inside the camps would fall under the law of the government of Nepal. So, if the Nepalese law is active and

applicable to these refugees, are they not political subjects to be governed? Crime and punishments are measured by the shifting policies and priorities of modern nation-states by producing a subject to be tried and punished, such as refugees. Also, the practice of going to the court signals the relationship of the state of exception with the court. Paul narrates the security and crime control mechanism that he experienced in the refugee camps:

> Omm! For any crimes, the Nepalese law was there; the same was implemented for the Bhutanese refugees there. So, there was no discrepancy because there was one camp committee even to run the camp. So that was the group of people elected among the Bhutanese and placed them to run the Bhutanese camps. The second one was that the UNHCR representative would be there in the same office. Along with that one, there was one representative of the Nepalese government, so they had at least two people. So, one was the RCU; the other was the deputy RCU. They were the representatives of the Nepalese government, and they would always be working together to determine what needed to be done. Ultimately, the Nepalese law was implemented, even within the camps, because we resided in the land of Nepal. So, it was the Nepalese law that we were following, but if there were anything that we could resolve before getting into that investigation or that would be implemented under the Nepalese law, we would be trying to enforce our own things there. Yes, many people died by suicide, were murdered outside of the camps by the Nepalese authorities, and a few were killed inside conflicts. (Paul, personal interview).

According to Paul's narratives, there was discrepancy between the Nepali citizens and Bhutanese refugees in terms of the implementation of the law or providing justice. As part of modern politics, the camp runs through specific norms to define crime and punishments implemented by the refugee regimes and the host country, and included some principles made within the refugee camps as informed by their care of the self-mechanism. In other words, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees were regulated by their own norms to resolve problems inside the refugee camps. Paul's narrative underscores that the refugees were following and being controlled by Nepali law. The international refugee law has granted a legal and political space for a refugee (Goodwin-Gill & McAdam, 2021), the refugees in this sense are global citizens, as Malkki (1995) argues.

Between Camp and Community: A Space of Political Violence

> The paradoxical status of the camp as a space of exception must be considered. The camp is a piece of land placed outside the normal juridical order, but it is nevertheless not simply an external space. What is excluded in the camp is, according to the epistemological sense of the term "exception", *taken outside,* included through its own exclusion. (Agamben, 1998, p. 169–70).

Agamben's understanding of Foucauldian biopolitics concerning refugee and refugee camps is an error and negative, since he considers the refugee a subject of biopolitics (Agamben, 1998). Agamben contradicts scholars who promote and demand the political rights of all humans, by introducing the political capacity that creates spaces for a citizen (political life) and a refugee (non-political life), such as Sayla Benhabib, who argues on the "cosmopolitanism and normative theory of global justice", which enhances the political rights of all humans to be recognized as political subjects (Benhabib, 2007). Agamben's notion of bare life borrows the political ideas of Aristotelian forms of life: "*zoë*" and "bios," or the Greek understanding of useful life, the political life, and bad life; this notion denies the political agency of refugees, a point on which I disagree with Agamben. Owens (2009) reinforces the ideas of the modern political system, in which the central aspect is to care for humans, in terms of their daily needs—such as health, food, education, and others—based on the Foucauldian biopolitical perspectives. This concept of biopolitical management and administration is life-affirming for Foucault, whereas for Agamben it is a weakness of the Foucauldian biopolitics. One of the most divisive arguments Agamben made, for which he has been bitterly criticized, is his concept of camp: sometimes, he claims the city where we have been living is not a city but a camp, yet at the same time Owens explains:

> The refugee camp, for Agamben, is an exemplary zone of indistinction where individuals can be subject to various forms of violence without legal consequence on territory that is outside the normal juridical order. Refugees are produced as (or reduced to) 'bare life' literally and metaphorically in camps. (Owens, 2009, pp. 572–73).

Agreeing with Owens, I argue that refugee camps are where violence occurs, because the camp is created due to the violence outside of the camp. Violence in the camp is conceptualized by refugee regimes in a certain way that makes the camp refugees vulnerable, defining them as weaker, non-political, and helpless, so they can resist the authority. The lived experiences of Bhutanese refugees call into question Agamben's theory of refugee biopolitics. Paul states:

> We were not allowed to work outside of the camp initially; it took us almost 5 or 6 years to get out. It was just because people could not wait to depend on what UNHCR, and other support agencies. So, it was a compulsion for the people to go out, but there was no permit or anything given to the people. By taking a risk, people would go out of the camp to work during the day and come back with a bit of food, or little extra vegetable, or little nutritious food for their kids, or maybe bringing some money to have their children go out of the camp to study. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul's camp experiences do support Agamben's idea that refugees "are a man, not a citizen" but at the same time it also signals their capacity of resistance. Together, Paul's narrative also highlights that modern politics functions as a taken-for-granted power to create a dichotomy between human and citizen and is a politically-technical condition of refugees as "exceptional state". Let's bring Sean's experiences here:

> Technically, we were not allowed to go out of the camp because we did not have any citizens' identities. In terms of mobility, I did not go out much from the camp. But people would go outside of the camp for work. There used to be a census, that time you had to come, and you had to be present to verify that you were registered. (Sean, personal interview).

Refugee camp biopower in the form of disciplinary control controls refugees' mobility to leave the camps. However, Sean they do manage to cross the boundary that constitutes the exceptional space of the camp, they are no longer engaging in submissive activity. Instead, they are subverting its authority. The political subjectivities of the refugees drive and empower such subversive actions. The notion of the camp and the categorizing of camp and community as different, and defining refugees as different from citizens, are political conceptions that can

change and shift over time. The making of refugees and refugee camps indicates the necropolitical at work through the capacity to create a space of violence and death anytime. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees encountered violence frequently, especially that inflicted by the people outside the camps. Such outside violence reinforced the boundaries that defined the camps. Paul shared that "Conflict would take place in the refugee camp if a person [from the outside community] married a girl from the refugee camp because the community people would not approve it." In this example, we can see that the rejection and disapproval expressed by "the community people" served as a political reinforcement of camp confinement, in terms, perhaps, of a local version of the politics of national purity that Foucault identified with state racism. In this sense, modern politics has the capacity to reject humanity in an ontological sense both locally and nationally and thereby creates deaths everywhere; as Mbembe (2003) said, "Politics is death that takes a human life" (14). At the same time, the camp is a proving-ground for a political tactics of punishment meant to make people accept the unacceptable and to hide certain aspects of the identity of "refugee" applied by refugee regimes, in which refugee bodies encounter death everywhere on the dark side of the modern biopolitical mechanisms of social control. Therefore, refugees in the camps are manufactured as both subjects and objects of control, producing for nation-states and international regime a plethora of manageable, readable, and knowable discourses within the framework of the national and international provision of political and policy parameters. But every time a refugee manages to cross the boundary of the camp and enter the world outside it, to work at an illegal job or to see a lover, they subvert not only that boundary but also the distinctions it maintains, and the politics that drive those distinctions.

Chapter 6: Biopolitics Manifold: Un(political) life, Subject Production and Formation

Introduction

This chapter discusses forms of biopolitics at work in in the refugee camps that housed Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. I argue that biopolitical as well as geopolitical issues have shaped the refugee systems developed under national and international political regimes and have also impinged on the refugees' own development of collective self-regulating mechanisms. This chapter explores life with and without politics, applying a biopolitical lens to refugees' own narratives of the politics of refugee management and camp life. The first section discusses the relationship between life and politics in the refugee camps, followed by a section on refugees' self-caring biopolitics. This leads into a consideration of the politics of refugee governance and management and how they provoke controversy in discourses about refugees. The questions of whether refugees are nomadic and where their political subjectivity lies are both discussed in this section. The final two sections of this chapter then examine and analyze, through the experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, how refugeeness and homesickness are produced in the same context but also confront each other politically, and how necrobiopolitics functions within international refugee regimes despite the supposedly humanitarian aims of the agencies that intervene under their canopy.

Life Beyond Politics and Politics Beyond Life

A refugee camp is a space where life exists and is defined in various forms by different agents. Refugees may be defined as unpolitical, or as controversially political through different labelling practices. However, refugees' own accounts of their political subjectivity and their sense of political responsibility, even within a space officially defined as unpolitical suggests that they were and are political agents. Foucault discussed how the legal articulation of power did not exist

on its own, floating above politics, but intersected with biopolitics and with disciplinary forms of power. The practices of citizenship revocation and expulsion, and the processes of designating and imposing 'bare life' and of making the camps into its repositories, is politicized and this very politicization hierarchizes the system of human rights into two forms of life (Schuilenburg, 2008).

The absolute power—as Agamben formulates it —to take life is an abuse of sovereign power and contradicts, according to Genel, how Foucault conceptualizes biopolitics (Genel, 2006). Agamben's understanding of sovereign power has led to an abundance of theoretical controversies in terms of the sovereign exception that possesses capacity for criminalization of who are displaced and production of bare life. As well, his insistence that refugees are the subjects of biopolitics has generated practical problems for scholars in refugee studies. Through his argument about the intrinsic nature of sovereign rule, Agamben has theorized the concept of exceptionalism at the marginal level of the state (Mountz, 2010). Since governments produce and reproduce multiple zones concerning their political and economic security, refugees and forcibly displaced people by default fall under the marginal zones as subjects to be excluded and banished. Sean's narratives highlight how refugee regimes establish the refugee binary (refugee/citizen) and force refugees to internalize this categorization as refugees (this is also the process of internalizing refugeeness), discerning themselves from citizens and the community.

> According to my experience, I heard the word "refugee" when I was too young. I could not make Nepalese friends because I had a refugee identity, and they were Nepali citizens. I was always confused about meeting with people or friends in the Nepali community because I would have no answer if they asked me who I was. Neither I had the property nor a house, so I started losing my confidence level. (Sean, personal interview).

Sean's experience regarding his feelings towards his social and political status underscores life beyond politics and politics beyond life. The life beyond politics indicates his positionality

outside the state when he internalized the notion of refugeeness that reduced him to silence and inferiority in the zone of unpolitical. There is politics beyond life in Sean's narrative because he desired to have friends in the community; he did have a sense of non-citizen and knew he had confusion. It can be understood that a refugee camp as a space creates a dilemma in refugees in their everyday actions because their being guides them to act politically, whereas the outward community (so-called political community outside refugee camps) produces borders for them to be political. The complexities and contradictions of modern biopolitics makes it difficult for refugee populations because this biopolitics has the dual nature of governing refugees as both political and unpolitical. Sean was looking for a political answer to potential questions that people outside the camps would ask; he was not convinced that his status as a refugee was not political. The refugeeness as a subjective sense and political components are two essential things that the refugee population in the camp internalize, which signals both life beyond politics and politics beyond life. Rita narrates:

> It [identity] was very controversial in the camps because, in the beginning, people used to hide their identities by showing their different identities. If people identified that they were from the refugee camps, they would lose their jobs right away. The capacity of the people in different sectors is controlled by identity. It is a kind of tag tagged at our forehead. So, the identity of the refugee people who worked outside of the camps would be a matter of tolerance. My father went away from the camp to teach by hiding his refugee identity, but they knew that we were refugees and going to Canada, and they made my father quit the job. (Rita, personal interview).

Hiding identity while searching for jobs and working outside the camp seems to be a vulnerability that refugee people faced in their everyday lives. However, these vulnerabilities identify them as political subjects for the authority—either international organizations or the nation-state—to manage them based on their interests. A camp is a politically-defined space of exception for governing non-political bodies in transition, potentially shifting from one stage to another in the modern sense of refugee politics. The camp is politically created through eviction

and genocide. While Agamben's notion of the unpolitical is controversial, it is often difficult to identify an unpolitical subject in the Foucauldian notion of biopolitics. However, Foucault's idea of power, which is omnipresent (Foucault, 1978), is imperative to digging out the arcana of political power imposed by refugee regimes (camp administration, international organizations, and the role of the states) and the power that the refuge population possesses. Refugees are not "allowed to go out of the camp", as previously stated by participants, but "they go"; they are not allowed to work, but "they do". Refugee and resilience capacity demonstrates and signifies that they are an integral part of the modern political system performing forms of subversive action in their everyday political responsibilities in and out of the refugee camps.

> There were no professional works; labour jobs could be available [outside the camp, which was not legal], such as labour to build houses. The wages between the labour from the camp and the labours outside the camps were significantly different—it was almost 50% different in the daily wages. Some jobs were available, but due to [lack of] the citizenship certificate, people's skills would not work at all, such as teachers [here he means that refugees' professional skills in any particular areas would not be paid well due to lack of citizenship when they worked outside the camps]. [However,] many teachers in the camps would go outside of the camps to teach in different schools. (Mike).

Refugees are not allowed to work out of the camp, as part of control mechanisms that the refugee-management regime uses to politically normalize the refugee condition. However, refugees tend to violate these norms on different levels, demonstrating a power to struggle in resistance to authority—obeying and resisting rules and norms are juxtaposed in a tactics of survival. Refugees act as political subjects within the camp regime and also in response to the political mechanisms of the national state outside its boundaries. Thereby, they learn how to enable themselves to resist systemic forms of power. Thus, their resistance is not the binary opposite of political power but rather a resistant or subversive *counterpart* of it.

> Ahh, they [refugees] never got a job [going outside of the camps]. It is because they did not have a legal paper to work, first thing, and the second thing is that we had our camp authority, and we would have to get a special permit for them to get out of the camp

> every day. So, it was very inconvenient [for the people] to get out, so most people [were] dependent on just the ration provided to them. But afterwards, people started going outside of the camps, and then they worked, but even though they did the same job [as other people in the community did], they were paid less and would have to find the job umm that was already difficult to find, and they would get paid less. (Sam, personal interview).

We can understand that refugees know the totality of modern political power and its exercise; the modern political system itself banned them from being citizens and again tried to regulate them within the system. The modern political system and the refugee regimes define refugee lives beyond politics because refugees are considered non-citizens; the refugees survive within the modern biopolitical mechanism but subvert the everyday power and politics that tie them in the refugee camps.

> There was not a vital difference in the governance of the population and the refugee. But the fact is that if you were a citizen having a problem, your case would go through the various local, regional, to national levels of the authorities of the government of Nepal. In our [refugees] case, the case would move ahead in a specific way of managing refugees. The differences are the medium and representatives. (Sean, personal interview).

Sean's experience indicates the practices of making people refugees producing refugee tag as a refugee indicates that the refugee populations in refugee camps are placed in such a political situation where the refugee regimes force them to realize that they are an unpolitical zone. It also indicates how the refugee population demarks themselves into the unpolitical space but with the hidden power of political subjectivity. This notion of political powers between the refugee regimes and the refugee population shows a mixture of necropolitics and biopolitics operating the refugee camps. Later in the chapter, I elaborate on the assemblage of necro and biopolitics.

Between Life and Politics: Care of the Self

The distinction between politics and political is crucial to critically examining modern political power, and it is unclear whether Foucault distinguishes them properly. Foucault imparts the idea that everything is political or potentially political (in relation human and society), while

Agamben's theoretical idea is complex and has a point of departure: he insists the sovereign form of power functions beyond the law that transfers political subjects into unpolitical. In this sense, Agamben admits that a refugee is not a political subject. However, partly agreeing with Foucauldian ideas that "everything is potentially political", I argue that everything that exists is political but may not be addressed by the power *as* political; however, the power possesses the capacity to verify political and unpolitical binary is unpolitical in the sense of making people refugee and intervening with them politically.

National and international aids are always central to discussing refugees and refugee camps, while refugee self-care mechanisms and responsibilities are ignored and undermined. This is because refugees and refugee camps are determined and defined, and also objectified based on the political discourses and practices operative in various refugee regimes. It is tough to have a clear distinction between politics and political in Foucault's works, but it is essential that we discuss it based on experiences of refugees in the camp and the refugee discourses. Having a concept of politics (the system) and political (inclusive subjects to politics) is imperative to examining the diverse and intersecting experiences of refugees in the refugee camps. Refugees have been pushed away from modern politics, despite politics being embedded with refugees; otherwise, the refugee regime would not access refugees' agencies. Refugee political potential or subjectivity is a universal citizen's unique quality because their agencies create a political space in which the refugee regimes politically engage to manage them. Refugee care of the self is politically motivated to make a human society different from the modern governmentality of nation-states. Many social and political institutions are needed for modern nation states' bio(politics) to normalize the situation and regulate the population out of which refugees are apparently pushed. Three critical factors determine Bhutanese refugee self-care practices during

their stay in the refugee camps in Nepal: volunteerism, educational awareness, and self-regulated security. These determinants are politically (the refugee themselves made it political in terms of their engagements with social and political components) regulated and practiced managing the population and continuously building human society. Human society refers here to the resistive vision expressed by refugees in terms of their everyday engagement as political responsibilities. The participant narratives were interesting and important for analyzing the idea that the refugee camp contradicts refugees 'own political subjectivity. Sam states, "I did grow up in a camp in a very social environment, even though we were in the refugee camps." While being interviewed, Sam was entirely retrospective, remembering the camp controlling activities practiced. Sometimes, I felt as though I was listening to the narratives of a society that is well managed in terms of security levels regulated by a government. Sam further states:

> So, most of the volunteering was, like I said, with the patrolling—camp patrolling. The second thing was the sanitation part. So, all those sector heads and camp secretaries did not get paid. People in camps did all those free jobs—volunteerism—but there was an officer—the RCU—who was the head of the camp, and that person would from outside of the camp get paid but not the other workers who work in the camps. (Sam, personal interview).

The school children in the Bhutanese refugee camps were trained by themselves for volunteerism, and they were not paid, as Gina and other participants mention. The camp patrolling activities they were involved in indicates their awareness of political responsibilities and sensibility towards security of their own. It is essential to realize that the state (Bhutanese, Indian, Nepalese) saw the refugees as a threat, which is why they were displaced; however, the continuous threat posed by these states perceived by the refugee populations—from their displacement to their lives in the refugee camps—is ignored. Sam's narratives regarding the notion of care of the self, as Foucault (1988) discusses a set of practices carried out by an individual, illustrates that the refugee population in the camps is the source of knowledge

blended from an ontological and epistemological sense: ontological because they are at a larger degree cut off from human relationship as a social subject and epistemological because the modern political system explicitly and implicitly produces knowledge defining and categorizing them as refugees.

In addition, the Bhutanese refugees were guided by their religious faith in building a camp society. As Rita articulates, even school children were "involved in various religious activities" that helped them learn discipline, respect, and admiration. Below is her narrative, which clearly shows the socializing process of the Bhutanese refugee in the camp.

> People were social belonging to the same culture and exact language in the camp. Life in the camp was complicated because refugees are always scared, but the social lives were fulfilling enough. For example, if anyone got sick in the neighbourhood, everyone would be working through bonding with their deep human relationships. It was a self-regulated kind of assistance. There is so much about surviving. We lack in the materialist things, but lives are fulfilling in terms of social aspects. (Rita, personal interview).

Rita's narratives provide insight into the distinct social world within the refugee camp. The social world inside the refugee camp is distinct not because they perform and do things differently from those outside the camps but because they are self-regulated and self-managed in creating a society of their own. This is also a message to the refugee regimes, that refugees are political, and they bear an everyday political responsibility even though they constitute a managed population in the eyes of various political apparatuses outside the camps.

> Volunteering was one of the main things in the camps. Everything was supposed to be based on volunteerism. All the responsible members designated to a specific position did not get paid for their work in the camps. I was also lucky enough to perform some volunteer work in clubs, such as sports and libraries, as a youth facilitator. (Mike, personal interview).

One of the self-care mechanisms, which is both individual and collective, in the Bhutanese refugee camps was the notion of volunteerism in the refugee camp. The assistance provided by the humanitarian agencies was for helping refugees survive, but the social life constructed inside

the camps was regulated and managed by the refugees themselves. They learned different skills through their volunteer work, and new awareness and knowledge were generated to build up a society inside the camps. For example, they felt the need for a school for their children when no international agencies would help them establish schools in the camps. Paul narrates that school was the main thing for Bhutanese refugees to provide education, especially to those who were compelled to leave their schools in Bhutan when they fled to Nepal. "The schools were kept open for the people to come and learn along with small children, and we opened up schools under a shade of a tree." Paul's narrative show that they were aware of the importance of education; it might also be that fact that the various generations came to know about the politics of their displacement through the schools they tried to establish and the training they sought. Paul narrates about the camp security mechanism and volunteerism.

> We did not have any police camps in the beginning. Uhh, our own, like, volunteer guards were there. They were the ex-army from Bhutan; they were responsible for the safety of the people around. They were the volunteers and were trained a little how to manage a crowd or any fights because if there is a minor conflict, there would be hundreds of people coming over. So, they were trained to disperse the mob. That was all was done, and they did that volunteer jobs for years. (Paul, personal interview).

Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees' notion and practice of collective care of the self are reflected in such indicators as educational awareness, volunteerism, and self-regulated security. Their self-care notion is a bridge between the unpolitical component they internalized through various refugee regimes and their self-awareness of the political. This political drive of these refugees pushed them to decide to have a new home in various countries, such as Canada, was often hindered in the refugee camps.

Nomadic Character: Deconstructing Unpolitical Notion

> A person who is outside his/her country for nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself of

> the protection of that country, or to return there, for fear of persecution (The 1951 Convention, Article 1)

The 1951 Convention was drafted and conceived for managing European refugees after World War II, and the protocol to the convention designed in 1967 expanded its limitation geographically to assist refugees in other locations of the world (Mountz, 2010). The statement above provides with the definitions of refugees and citizens indicates the relationship between state and citizen, which characterizes a person as a citizen and refugee based on established definitions that national and international political and humanitarian regimes constructed. In other words, this Convention statement is the legal document for identifying and qualifying people for being through what they lack, instead of discussing the state power to exile people from their land, speaking about the helpless and stateless situation of people. The 1951 Convention has also spoken to the prominence of the state in making citizens and refugees; however, it does not talk about the causes of persecution or the limitation of the right of the state to make its people politically and socially illegitimate. Refugee studies have a significant number of concerns in terms of the method of studying refugees, but what matters is how effective they have been in examining the histories, memories, and power associated with refugees. The exploration of refugee studies should deconstruct the Western power and narratives of constructing and examining refugees. In other words, refugee studies should employ a tool for investigating how established discourses silenced refugee historical and political memories and also how refugees addressed those silences politically.

Espiritu (2014) explores the idea of critical refugee studies analyzing the historical realities of refugee studies in social science research. She insists on the need to rethink and alter the traditional tendency to implement policies, politics, and practices to define and manage refugees and camps. Critical refugee studies is not meant to construct refugees as an object of

research and knowledge; instead, it is a paradigm that works to substantiate a broader category of questions and problems concerning refugees as political agents, tracing the historical realities that bring insight into new ideas (Espiritu, 2014). Espiritu insists on a critical level of examining refugees, which deconstructs existing politics of Western-centric knowledge in examining, making, and managing refugees. She argues that scholarship in refugee studies has tended to adopt ideas that refugees are stateless, helpless, and voiceless and subject to being managed by nation-states. Critical refugee studies debunk the ideas that perpetuate the discourses of nation-states as geographical givens and refugees as terrorized by law and power. Critical refugee studies deconstruct the superficial concept of refugee studies continuing the dichotomy between citizens of a national community and refugees made by expulsion from very state. In other words, critical refugee studies collapse and challenge the validity of the nation-state and its paradox of producing, settling, and resettling refugees. In this sense, the ideas of humanitarian interventions or aid and the politics of welfare are an illusion that a nation-state uses to politicize human bodies. The notion of defining people as refugees is the contingency of making a refugee space secured for continual exclusion. The ramifications of such recurrent expectation of the state of exception and production of bare life reflected in the making of refugees in modern politics are challenged by the critical refugee studies approach**.** Sean's narratives and experiences help deconstruct the definition and labelling of the refugee figures:

> I don't know how migration and nationality are defined. My grandfather was born in Taplejung district, Nepal. There is still his land. He was migrated to Bhutan; we, later on, came to Nepal. I am unsure to which nationality migration pushes us. (Sean, personal interview).

Sean is confused about the political power that defines migration, refugees, and nationality in which people are distributed. He visits and revisits the history of his grandparents and their geographical belongings. Sean struggles to locate himself in the several categories and identities

from the space of exception. This is the process of subjectifying people to rank and category, which is characterized and dominated by state power, whether it is sovereign power or disciplinary power (Thobani, 2007). The confusion for locating their cultural, social, and political belongings and the dilemma of refugee agencies produced in the refugee camps also pushed Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to seek their political being as a citizen, and many of these refugee populations in the refugee camps thought of going back to Bhutan, which was quite an impossible task. Mike and his family wanted to return to Bhutan from the refugee camps:

> At some point, we wanted to go back to Bhutan because we had no option for a better settlement, but we could not. Before the third-country settlement program, we had only one option: to go back to Bhutan. I still have my uncle in Bhutan. My mom visited Nepal, where they met my uncle. The Nepal government was reluctant to take us as Nepali citizens. I was eager to go to Bhutan in the hope of getting citizenship. (Mike, personal interview).

The decision that Mike's family made to return to Bhutan was quite impossible and yet dangerous for them because the Bhutan regime would impose more power on their bodies, since it evicted them, producing a threat subject to the national politics. However, the sense of wandering is produced among refugee populations in the absence of their political status of being citizens. The desire of Mike and his family to return to Bhutan from the refugee camp does not say that they would have a second persecution, but it was in a sense appealing to have a space—a political space to be revitalized through their political agencies. It means that Mike and his family did not want to be nomads. Politicizing the refugee condition (political condition of modern politics of nation-states) creates refugeeness and unpolitical subject, but it is political because the law and constitutions are involved in political actions in settling the refugees. The problem is that the political account of so-called unpolitical is ignored by the established

discourses, documents, and practices, due to their focus on the damaged-centred aspects of refugees as persecuted, helpless, subjected to be managed, and finally unpolitical.

> The government of Bhutan had not decided to keep us in land we were born. We did have no dream of such life here now, which was beyond our imagination. We did not know that there were many people evicted from around the world. Our thought that time [in the refugee camps] was to go back to Bhutan because we were Bhutanese. People were killed there at the Nepal–India border while attempting to go back to Bhutan. The Indian government used force and prevented us from entering their border. When we were evicted, the Indian government opened the border. As a layman sense, Bhutan moved on according to what India directed. (Roben, personal interview).

As exemplified by Roben, every interview respondent shared that they wanted to return to Bhutan, but they were not sure that their lives would be safe and secure. Refugees' imagined travel to the land of their birth is important to consider in terms of their resistance to being persecuted and unpolitical. Refugees longing for their belongingness is not what negatively defined the refugee as nomadic but in fact it is their rejection of the camp, the political institution that is applied to politically control a group of people, controversially imposing unpolitical subjects. I developed the following figure by closely examining the narrated experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, which deconstructs the negative notion of nomadic and instead

depicts refugees' political space and subjectivity within a broader political and social spectrum.

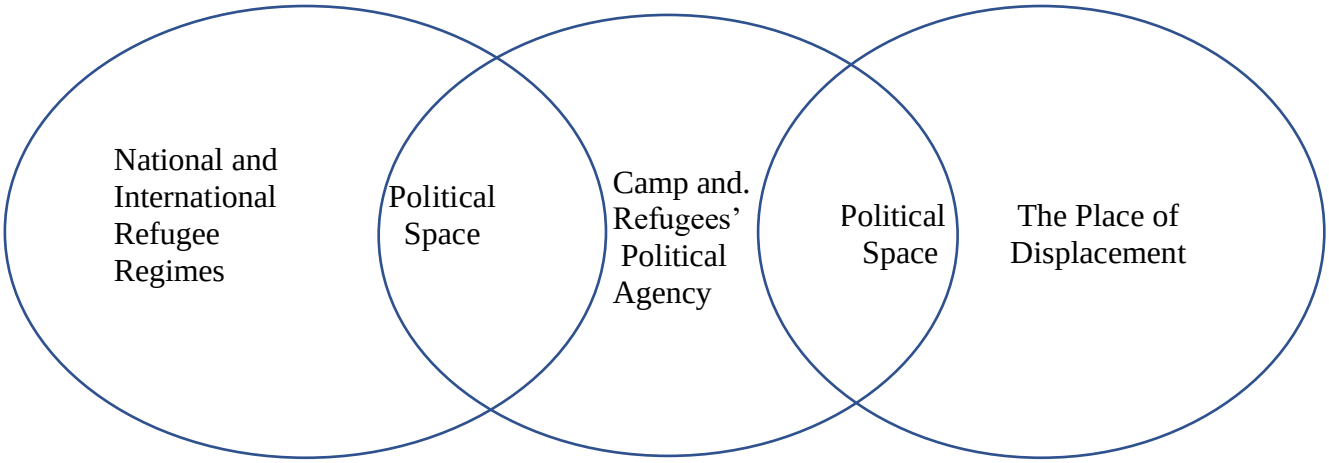

Figure 6.1 Refugee Management Regimes, Transitional Space, and Political Space

The political subjectivity and space of refugees are among the controversies of modern political power, practice, and governance. Some thinkers have attempted to study refugees and their historical, social, and cultural realities by excluding them from the political system. If refugees are unpolitical and subjects to be managed, then the problem is the modern political power allowing them to intervene in refugees and camps. The previous figure is a model for examining and visualizing refugees' political space in modern biopolitical practice, management, normalization, and regulation. I argue that a refugee cannot be thrown away as an unpolitical subject (bare life) from the modern biopolitical practices; they are instead at the center of the political world—between the country of their displacement and international governments. Refugees' space at the center between the international governments and the country of their displacement accumulates power for subversion; the power evolves refugees' political subjectivity to be global political. The political space between the intersection of refugee and modern governments is a space where national and international governmental organizations acknowledge and refuse to acknowledge in a different way refugees' political agency or political subjectivity to manage and integrate them into the political system. This intersection is a space in which national and international laws and politics influence refugees' collective and political subjectivity. Agamben's notion of the state of exception and static notion of sovereign power and nomadic character is criticized here, in order to account for refugees' political subjectivity. Simultaneously, the political space between refugees in the camp and their country of displacement is not the space to be shared by both. This intersectional political space is thereby the memory of refugees regarding their ethos of hospitality, produced by mayhem and terror of the government during and after displacement. The political space of the refugee population's

memory produces a political subjectivity and power with a sense of resistance to the established political system. So, the politics and practice of displacement cannot disconnect the political agency of refugees' ontological condition. As Foucault explains, power is everywhere, and it is not only vertical. In this sense, a refugee has power, the political power for micro and macro subversion (such as demonstrating for their rights to citizenship and breaking the camp rules that the refugee regime made, by going outside for work) to the system of power itself. Resistance to the political system is one cause of the politics of making refugees. Resistance to the system of power forms a way in which refugees reproduce their collective self-subjectivization as a political entity. The modern totalizing political notion that deals with unpolitical (if modern political power categorizes refugees unpolitical) is controversial because it engages with its unpolitical notion (refugees or refugee bodies) politically. The modern political system of the nation-state acknowledges power for both: to categorize refugees as politically fractured and exercise power to fix the problems of refugees they see through the lens of their political discourses that allow them to intervene in refugees' political subjectivity. A refugee then is political because the tendency to construct refugeeness and unpolitical figures are the problems of the modern political system. A refugee is also a political condition produced by state racism that speaks many things about political life, caring for the collective selfhoods of the refugee society, and resistance to the system of power and its exercise.

The refugee camp for the refugee regimes is both a political and unpolitical space, in terms of its continuous imposition of biopower. The national and international refugee regimes politicize the refugee issue to a political space concerning political and unpolitical discourses by using the political subjectivity of the refugees themselves. It is, at the same time, a non-political space for them because they do not count refugees as political beings. Necrobiopolitics, which is

defined in the next section, is exercised on such a controversial political nature in modern politics of human displacement by producing the impossibility of integration, repatriation, or resettlement into the social and political system of refugee management.

Homelessness and Refugeeness: Desires to be Governed

Researchers have debated the construction of refugeeness: some argue against the generalizing tendency of discourses about refugees (Zetter, 2007), whereas others insist on exploring in-depth the states of refugee experiences (Malkki, 1995). The anthropological investigation of refugees, such as essentialism and functionalism (anthropology opposes these things today), identify that the refugee is simply a "mixed" classification of people with a "certain legal status"; they are also in a broader sense "a culture", "an identity", "a social world", or "a community" (Malkki, 1995). Malkki (1996) examines the effects of refugee studies in terms of the dehistoricized construction of "the refugee" as a humanitarian category based on the international order of things. Malkki's ideas about the dehistoricization of refugees and refugee identity teach us that refugees are identified as refugees based not on their historical and political agency but on the international regime of defining and categorizing them as *objects* of institutional agency. She suggests that international humanitarian agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations tend to abstract from refugee's historical, cultural, and political subjectivity and make them objects of knowledge by silencing them. In other words, the quick relief assistance of international humanitarian organizations to the refugee camps works within the tendency to universalize refugeeness by constructing these in terms of a managerial discourse. Nyers (2006) argued against the appropriation of the refugee definition that the 1951 convention had constructed. He argued that the "fearful human assumed by the Convention definition is not a universal category but a category that can be employed to exclude, to produce

difference, and to reinforce social and political hierarchies" (p. 46). He further argues that the convention's characterization of refugees creates "refugeeness" and that classifies the refugee via a contradictory equation combining "the human capacity to reason" that is built in as an assumption that fear of persecution must be "well-founded", which "is held in tension with emotion" resulting in influencing an individual's flight (Nyers, 2006, p. 47). Nyers argues this results in a fragmentation within the refugee's subjectivity, which in turn is an indicator of the paradox of humanity in dealing with the refugee problem today. Nyers's claim about the construction of a refugee definition by the 1951 Convention is that it is "more general in its scope" since it is the expansion of the spirit and discourses of the western liberal universalism[24] of the postwar period. According to Nyers (2006), the United Nations definition of refugee established a notion of sovereignty that creates a fearful refugee subjectivity. It means that the Convention documents can be used to verify and qualify refugees and also contribute to conceptualize refugees as fearful objects to be managed and manipulated but removed from political humanity. Nyers (2006) argues that "the reason-fear nexus" of the refugee definition should be a matter of political interpretation. In this sense, the international refugee regime and the humanitarian refugee regime creates a fragmentation within refugee subjectivity as unpolitical, when that fragmentation was already being produced *politically* during the displacement. Again, to definitionally fragment the already *politically*-fragmented is to subdue the subjective aspiration of becoming a citizen, and to *produce* a fearful refugee subjectivity that,

[24] Peter Nyers argues that the UN convention of 1951 introduced Western-centric and hegemonic discourses concerning refugees and a permanent solution to the refugee "problem" that create differences among refugees and between refugees and so-called citizens by politicizing hierarchies in the labelling of refugees and production of refugeeness (Nyers, 2006).

from the standpoint of power within refugee regimes, would make refugees more likely to assimilate, negotiate, and accept the undesirable.

Malkki (1995) addresses the bureaucratic and discursive spheres as locations in which to challenge the established discourses of "refugeeness" because the controversies of the supposedly non-political intervention of the United Nations in order to "resolve" the political problems of mass displacement are also located in these spheres. Malkki claims that the UN organizations that entertain national and international emergency relief agencies, non-governmental institutions, charity groups, and development agencies function decisively to establish an "international refugee system" (Malkki, 1995, p. 505). The nexus between the international formation of refugee management policies and organizations, and the very notion of migration first emerges from the national bureaucracies which conceptualize and strengthen the norms that are incorporated into the international refugee regime to intervene in refugee problems (Malkki, 1995; Hein, 1993). Involuntary—or forced—migration is always active and political, even in its supposedly unpolitical management by this regime in terms of the strategies of governance that are termed "humanitarian intervention," and this can be seen when they are directed at or in concert with the neoliberal economy (Malkki, 1995; Hein, 1993). The Western domination of political and humanitarian intervention creates how "refugeeness" as an imposed and internalized set of identity categories, and also refugee subjectivities, are constructed and legitimized, socially and politically (Malkki, 1995; Lacroix, 2004). Based on her research in the refugee camps in Kenya, Hyndman argues that "Humanitarianism is the site at which the projects of development and relief are being contested and recast in light of new geopolitical landscapes and neoliberal economies that transgress the boundaries of states" (Hyndman, 2000, xv). Let's

examine the participant narratives that depict the forms of refugeeness and homelessness they experience as part of the refugee population in refugee camps.

> I played a leading role in the camp; however, I felt a wound in my inner heart because I didn't have citizenship. I felt homeless—homeless life—neither we had a house, nor citizenship, nor any property. I never felt anyone would love me; I felt I wouldn't belong anywhere. (Kevin, personal interview).

> I felt like having a house of our own when I was in grade six. I had some relatives in the eastern part of Nepal, and the status of the relatives in community and ours in the camps was quite different. My father was born in Nepal, and he migrated to Bhutan. Our relatives had properties in Nepal, but we did not. (Mike, personal interview).

Refugees are defined as subjects to be divided and selectively expelled in terms of a "national" political system, and refugee camps are designated as depolitical spaces designed by and practiced through the intersection of these modern nation states with international regimes. In terms of this nexus of political deniability, refugees perform what are actually political responsibilities, even if they are placed into what is designated as a non-political zone. Seeking a house of their own, education, security, and health care service signals desires for access to modern governmentality, but that access depends on the granting of citizenship. However, the political responsibilities that refugees in the camps bear, as narrated previously, are not recognized as criteria for approving refugees as citizens with a right to be governed or "made to live." Rather, it is a politics of *exclusion* from the political that produces refugees, camps, and their subjection to an objectifying management. Refugees' political responsibilities inside the camps, which include imposed responsibilities like the paying of school fees, a mutual responsibility of care for a collective selfhood, daily obligations, and norms to follow in practices of disciplinary regulation, and volunteerism, form the basis of refugee political agency and responsibility, but they also make this agency and responsibility deniable by the refugee regime that defines and legitimates the camp. The gap between refugees and their relatives outside the

camps who may still be called citizens contributes to producing homesickness and homelessness as elements of refugeeness. It is imperative to go beyond the political and legal documents that approve who are refugees, to have a robust understanding of how refugeeness is *practically* constructed, internalized, and transformed. We can view from the narrative of Harry below how refugeeness as a defining characteristic of subjectivity begins to be internalized (but also to be resisted) right from the verification process after the displacement and before the approval of the bureaucratic tag of refugee.

> We had to be verified to be eligible to stay in the camp. They made inquiries about the situation that we faced in Bhutan. We were verified and became eligible for the refugee camps; we got ration approved. In the beginning, we could not [make ourselves] go to receive the ration because we remembered our prestigious and reputational life in Bhutan (Harry, personal interview).

The verification process is the start of producing refugeeness and highlights the arcana of political complexity in dichotomizing between political and unpolitical. The unpolitical subject has become subjugated to the political; it is because the political power itself attempts to act upon this dichotomy between refugee and citizen, and controversial practices. People are politically displaced from their country of birth, but they are labelled refugees through other institutional and (deniably-) political practices in terms of certain negative connotations, such as vulnerability, statelessness, non-citizenship, and the unpolitical. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees were, as refugees, products of this labelling since they were, as Paul says, "forcefully asked to sign in the voluntary migration form by the Bhutan government" and later were embedded into international refugee discourses and definition. The politics of national and international organizations to fit refugees within the policy discourses they developed by creating and forming objectified refugee subjects are what they mean by the international order of things. National and international policy discourses create a sense of refugeeness similar to attaching

stickers and tags on a suitcase. They fit refugees into the international order of things by developing a composite picture of refugees as vulnerable, and a picture of the camps that dehistoricizes and neglects both the politics of national states and the political subjectivity of the people that national politics have displaced and that international agencies have made into objects of knowledge (Malkki, 1995). Most importantly, the tendency of international organizations to silence refugees' legacy of political responsibilities as citizens, with their own social, and cultural values, develops a pervasive social consciousness of refugeeness in the country of their transition that intensifies dehumanizing practices in the local communities surrounding the camps, as Babi narrates, "The bitter experience was that the local community outside the camps would treat us as non-human". The development of a social consciousness of refugeeness is a problem with the potential to have a lasting impact on generations to come if the conceptualized dichotomy between citizen and refugee becomes internalized as a mark of shame or fear. This impact might manifest in various forms, such as intergenerational trauma, hindering active involvement in the process of social and cultural integration in the third country settlement. Sean's narrative reveals how refugeeness is produced as a sense of homelessness and homesickness that inhibits confidence and agency:

> To be honest, I felt homeless from my childhood. Whether people of my age would feel about that, but I realized from when I was small, I used to compare the refugee community and the community outside of the camp. I knew that people from the community outside of the refugee camps would come to the camps, and we felt frightened from the community outside of the refugee camps because we did not belong to this place. From my childhood, I used to feel that we were kept here and saved, but we did not belong to the place we lived. I now realize that I have lost confidence in my childhood in the camp because I understood my parents' situation as a refugee at an age I was not supposed to know. I am Canadian now, but I feel deep inside I was a refugee and stateless person (Sean, personal interview).

This narratives signal that the sense of refugeeness produces and reproduces a complex within people in the camps that humiliates them. Refugee regimes create one of the notable elements of

refugee subjectivity by pushing refugees in the camps to confront the political dilemma of considering themselves as human or non-human by silently forcing them to compare themselves to the people outside the camps. Refugees are people with identities, histories, and cultural solidarities but who were persecuted in their land due to political, religious, or social turmoil and who are compelled to live in legal limbo, impacting their ability to maintain and reconstruct their identities on their own terms (Lacroix, 2004). Refugees are human but pushed into unproductive zones of bare life under the condition yet problem of modern political systems. Refugees are verified and constructed as refugees, but the so-called universal parameter of categorizing them within the legal domain according to methods based on individual subjective experience of persecution and defined in terms of Western abstract universals is not good enough (Lacroix, 2004). In this sense, refugeeness as a form of subjectivity and also of subjection is created by the intersection of state policy and international humanitarianism, which overlooks the diverse historical realities of a person's social and political belonging and highlights instead a one-way and one-dimensional observation and classification of "victims"—helpless and stateless. Grant, one of the participants, notes that, "there is a difference between the situation of being governed by the government and life in the camps under international humanitarian organizations assistance." As reported by participants, there were debates among refugees in the Bhutanese refugee camps in Nepal regarding whether they would accept or reject the third-country settlement process. Grant continues:

> We wanted to go for a memorandum to the CDO [Chief District Officer] for not cancelling the third-country settlement program. There were people in the camps against the third-country settlement programs. We would go back to Bhutan if the government of Bhutan had accepted us to go to our country, but it was impossible. (Grant, personal interview).

There was an evident divide between those who wanted to go through the third-country settlement process and those who insisted on a repatriation process. This divide indicates the strength of homesickness among the refugees and their demand for political responsibility toward them, by any state. Grant had no hope for repatriation, but he was homesick and desired to be governed as a citizen. Like Grant, other participants reported that they wanted a home of their own. Marley was a student who felt her homeless situation, as she narrates:

> When I was seven years old, I knew the fact that we were evicted from Bhutan. I knew that we did not have citizenship. We could see the building outside the camp and imagine that we would also have a house. (Marley, personal interview).

Marley's narrative indicates a controversy over the political practices of the modern nation states since state political power legitimates the making of people into refugees while at the same time it leads people to define themselves in terms of home and citizenship. Definitions of and knowledge about refugees has been produced through an imbalance of practices of power and politics between the refugees' transitional location, where they are constructed as refugees, and the social locations of those people and organizations that categorize and construct refugees. Refugees in the camps are both "in transition" and also stuck in place as the products of refugee-making organizations and are placed far away from the locations in which their displacement is subsumed under a generalizing discourse or silenced and marginalized. Refugees are subjects who have been constructed in particular places and through displacement. They should be given the means to develop a capacity for resilience out of their forfeiture of a social, cultural, and political past, yet instead they are also made the objects of knowledge production, depending on how discourses to study them have been formulated by others. Ways of defining refugees and of producing refugeeness and forms of refugee subjectivity need to be revisited through the lens of refugees' own political subjectivities, which emerge not only in relation to the concept of

citizenship but also from the spaces and identities of people who are embedded in the historical realities of belonging as well as the present realities of displacement.

Refugeeness, then, is something constructed by state policies, and the international humanitarian regime in which a camp becomes an identity marker that signifies the qualities of being a refugee. The camp, especially as it developed after the world wars, is a space where refugee bodies are put, disconnected from social and political access (living bare lives in Agamben's notion of the sovereign exception, i.e., beyond the law). Nyers argues that through the camp system, "refugeeness is concerned with the various qualities and characteristics that are regularly associated with and assigned to refugee identity" (Nyers, 2006, p. xv). After the Second World War, the camp became a prominent space, characterized by a political justification for appropriating displaced peoples' identities and making the political aspect of doing so appear unpolitical, taking up and reconditioning social technologies of control practiced in biopolitical administrations (Agamben, 1998; Arendt, 1943; Malkki, 1995; Espiritu, 2014; Nyers, 2006). The camp has a relationship to political and social power that occupies space between state power and politics and international humanitarian regimes. In other words, the refugee camp is a *political* institution made to control and manage the unmanageable under the state's normative principles – *which are political* – but it is *designated* officially as *un*political (in Agamben's understanding) in its modes of governance and management. The refugee camp occupies one of the paradoxical borders of modern political practices: it employs policies developed to be inclusive, but which are here employed to exclude. In turn, these policies provoke a silent resistance to the bio-sovereignty of modern politics, when embodied refugee subjects seek a home of their own and want to be governed *within* and to belong *to* a political system.

> Of course, we had homesickness, so that when father and grandpa used to narrate about their properties in Bhutan, such feeling would come that time. Why did they leave

> Bhutan, and if we were there, we would have something else? In camps, we are dependent on all the things [other?] people provided. Fear was always there. We would not feel insecure if we had a sense of belonging somewhere. I think the land of our own would be reflected in every conversation of my parents and grandparents. (Rita, personal interview).

During her interview, Rita was emotional and expressive about having subversive thoughts, even in the refugee camps. In mentioning her wish for a "sense of belonging", she indicates also a wish for inclusion in government and citizenship. The refugee crisis, and the wishes it generates, ranges from the local to the global today, causing an endemic effect in the lives of ethnic and religious groups suffering expulsion, dividing power worldwide between those who possess the right to displace, those who have the power to know and to classify, those with a right to manage, and those who are subjected to practices of displacement, objectification and management. The international refugee regime and related organizations, the so-called relief providers, have significantly complicated the issues refugees face. Refugeeness is created step by step, from the displacement of the people from their land to the transitions to and in camps, where (deniably) political interests prevail over strategies to resolve the problems. Refugeeness, for instance, was created among Bhutanese refugees as a result of the Indian government refusing to provide them with shelter during their displacement to the seven camps in Nepal and before their third-country settlement in Canada. Rita continues to narrate her experiences in limbo:

> Of course, I felt a non-citizen situation; everyone in the camp used to have such feelings. I experienced that if my parents had been citizens of Nepal, my education would not be in the camps, but outside of the camps. My parents had given me the sense of the importance of education for my childhood, and I used to imagine if my parents could have been citizens of Nepal, that would have helped me find the ways to take education outside the camps. When we saw people outside of the camps, I used to think that they were doing so great and imagined if I were in such a position. (Rita, personal interview).

Rita's narrative helps us understand that refugeeness is a plethora of obstacles compromising everything. In other words, refugeeness is not something produced by everyday experiences of exiled people regarding their predicaments in tolerating relatives' deaths, having houses burned down, and being raped. Refugeeness is created by refugee management regimes in terms of abstract ideas, or the imaginaries of national and international organizations involved in categorizing and controlling exiled people in what they designate as an unpolitical zone. Such refugeeness is produced through practices using established documentation and discourses that refer not to the diverse political and cultural histories of the refugees or to their ontological sense of humanity but rather to the history of managing refugees as a generic category with its own characteristics but without any grounding beyond the camp. Refugee management policies produce refugeeness both in the country that hosts the camps and the country that eventually provides a resettlement destination. In both locations, the host country or the camp gradually makes refugees accept the refugeeness forced upon them, which, in turn, creates fear and anxiety because refugeeness is a mark if dislocation or rather, of *dys*location, not of location. The mark of vulnerability placed on the refugee population is also a stigma that pressures them to negotiate and compromise everything political and social that they had by mystifying themselves regarding who they were and are, and what determines their future being. What they are learning to become in the camps (i.e., what global politics *wants* them to be) is to be uncertain in a context of uncertainty, which escalates their own fear, anxiety, and pessimism. Refugee subject formation is the fundamental indicator of the work of national and international refugee regimes. Sean narrates:

> —if I and someone else from the local community were seen together, people would not identify that I was from the refugee camp and he/she was from the local community, until I disclosed my identity. But the problem was that there was a fear which was shaped by

> the trauma. And I have said many times that I was Nepali because I was born in Nepal. (Sean, personal interview).

We can understand that refugeeness is produced and commonly forced on refugees to be internalized as an identity. The fear factor created among refugee people (along with their displacement and persecution) creates a sense of danger in constructing refugees as a subject of biopolitics in a negative way. Nyers (2006) notes that "fear is an enigmatic concept, one that expresses some of the deepest contradictions and paradoxes of modern political life" (Nyers, 2006, p. 51). Fear is sometimes an act of forgetting oneself, and of thereby doing damage to self that results in feelings of fear, and subsequently of mistrust, hostility, and anxiety (Nyers, 2006). The political mechanisms of the modern nation state create spaces for fear—especially for refugee populations—by categorizing citizens and state, producing political paradoxes through categorical distinctions and definitions, and stoking subjective and intersubjective contradictions and ambiguities. Any communication between non-refugees, governments, international organizations, and the refugee population begins with the presumption of a refugeeness that is threatening (to certain national states), vulnerable (in terms of the discourse of international organizations), and *inherently* stateless or generically nomadic. Again, the grim situation of refugees becomes grimmer once refugeeness is created within themselves and comes to form their subjectivities, through their sense of homesickness and their definition by states and international organizations as stateless non-citizens, as threats to a 'purifying' national project or as "vulnerable" migrants, and as objects of management that need to be re-subjectified as docile.

Necrobiopolitics and the Refugee Camp: Dilemma of Refugee Agency

Achille Mbembe, the social and political philosopher who propounded the notion of necropolitics, inspired by Foucault and Agamben's biopolitical concepts, wrote a book *On the*

Postcolony in 2001, in which he examined the social and political issues of postcolonial Africa in terms of the notions of power and subjectivity. These notions are essential to mapping postcolonial Africa. They are also prominent in Mbembe's remapping of colonial and postcolonial issues throughout the globe relative to power and politics. Frantz Fanon equally inspired Mbembe's discussions of decolonization and the legacy of colonialism—in different forms—in contemporary Western political practices. Mbembe became well-known in postcolonial theory after introducing the concept of "necropolitics", influenced by Foucault's elaboration of a kind of biopolitical sovereignty by relating the sovereign "right to kill or to let live" to the biopolitical "make live" and "let die". Mbembe insists that "to exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 12). Mbembe understands the modern political apparatus as a reason-subject-politics nexus in which reason becomes the truth to the subject and political practices shape a rationale for these practices in the public realm (Mbembe, 2003). Mbembe claims that the Foucauldian notion of biopower gives an incomplete understanding of the domain of the contemporary "subjugation of life to the power of death", which is what he means by necropolitics. Necropolitics has become an important conceptual tool for navigating the politics of the displacement of the human being reduced to bare life through several modes of operations such as refugee camp and border violence (Mayblin et al., 2020; Mbembe, 2019; Davies et al., 2017). It is sometimes confusing whether Mbembe's necropolitics is similar to Agamben's description of the biopolitical as the making of bare life (*zoë*). Mbembe's notion of necropolitics has a similarity to Agamben's notion that the sovereign right to reduce subjects to the unpolitical thereby disqualifies them, and that bare life is to be understood in terms of the necropower not only of "letting die" but of actively making death. Death is placed at the centre of Mbembe's

political philosophy but in various forms. His discussion of necropolitics locates forms of dying *within* the government of the living, thus introducing the possibility that killing could be seen as a feature of modern biopolitics (Braidotti, 2009). Mbembe carries Foucauldian ideas about biopolitics into his claim that necropolitics indicates how forms of social, moral, and cultural death—constitutive of the "walking dead"—pervade certain exercises of modern biopower. But Mbembe's ideas do not support the conception of an autocratic, static, and transhistorical inheritance of sovereign power that Agamben insists on. In this sense, Mbembe's discussion of necropolitics was birthed from a theoretical gulf between Foucault's treatment of sovereign power as displaced (to a degree) by modern biopolitics and Agamben's insistence on the continuous existence of an absolute sovereign right to kill, which is beyond the law and thus also beyond legitimation within or by biopolitics in Foucault's understanding of the term. I agree with Mbembe's use of the concept of necropolitics because it situates killing or "making die" *within* the realm of politics at least to the extent that to it is a *political act* to *designate* necropolitical spaces or states of exception (even as "*un*-political"), in which dying can be *promoted* and killing can take place *systematically* (even through a set of mechanisms deemed to operate "beyond politics"). Further, we can relate Mbembe's conceptual usage to evidence of actual death-dealing practices or mechanisms that occur as consequences of national and global political apparatuses which shape the modern biopolitical milieu and the modern exercise of biopower.

Thus, examining the actual assemblage of a biopolitical necropolitics is vital to a critical discussion of refugee camps. The camp, in one sense, is produced as a politicized form of the unpolitical, but this production of the unpolitical embodies a hidden political agency in which, I

argue, something that can be called necrobiopolitics[25] is present, functioning in the transition of becoming a citizen (from becoming to being or from a refugee to a citizen). Necrobiopolitics involves the political power with an idea to deal with a refugee agency in the refugee camp, but this agency is controversially recognized and defined as unpolitical. I did not coin the term "necrobiopolitics", but I have a distinct understanding of it as applicable to the analysis of refugee camps and the politics of modern displacement. Bento (2018) uses this term once in her 2018 article "Necrobiopolitics: Who can inhabit the nation-state," to denote inseparable components of biopower and necropower in issues faced by trans people. Without elaborating further on the concept of necrobiopolitics itself, Bento then turns to this nexus of biopower and necropower to describe gender issues in Brazil. However, I do not see necrobiopolitics as an inseparable union of biopower and necropower (even if they *are* connected) and I prefer to preserve the *political* aspect of necrobiopolitics in focusing on the production and function of necro*political* power in relation to refugee subjectivity and within refugee camps, acknowledging the social and political elements of that subjectivity as it changes or develops through displacement from the country of origin to the transition to camp life and to eventual resettlement, by exploring the narratives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees:

> Umm, our people did not know the need of their citizenships because the government [the government of Bhutan] did not pressure [the government did not make ethnic Nepali people aware of the importance of citizenship] for it. People knew the importance of citizenship once they had an awareness of it, that it was the most important document to be a citizen. Our common voice in the camps was that we wanted to solve our problem of being non-citizens. (Roben, personal interview).

[25] While Bento used the term "necrobiopolitics" once in her article, the term necro*power* is used nine times. Bento focused on gender and transgender controversies that emerged when Judith Butler visited Brazil to deliver a talk about gender controversy and construction in 2017 (Bento, 2018).

Roben's narrative clearly highlights the development of a collective voice of refugees in the camp in demanding their rights to citizenship, which we can call a micro-subversion of their definition in modern refugee regimes; a refusal of mere submission to the de-politicizing emphasis of the political authorities which take part in constituting those regimes and in perpetuating the powers that produce both refugees and the condition of refugeeness. The political subjectivity of refugees is always collective, constituted in terms of an ontology of hospitality in connection to the country of their displacement. A new form of politics – necrobiopolitics - targets that subjectivity through the international refugee regimes established to verify the refugee with a refugee tag but demonstrating "neutrality" in their reluctance to take into account the genealogy of the *humanity* of the people they verify. Verification thus becomes an exercise that allows the *atomization* of refugees and their subsequent *agglomeration* into context-free and manageable "populations" which are to be isolated from politics (whether of their countries of origin, the countries whose borders they cross, or the countries in which the camps that house them are set up). "Refugeeness" is central to this process in that it negates refugees' wish for government, for citizenship (these now become subversive), for productive work, and for a placement in time and space that reflects their history and experience. But this atomization/agglomeration is not completed with the act of verification; it is constantly repeated in a micropolitics of the camp, composed of a depoliticizing exercise of power (through forbiddance, limitation, policing, and surveillance, and also neglect) and in response, a *re*politicizing subversion (through calls for citizenship, remembrance of country of origin, refusals of refugeeness as an identity label, "working" camp rules to advantage, evading rules and surveillance, seeking productive employment on the "outside," etc.). The refugees' sense of collective resistance, as noted by Bousfield (2005) and theorized by Rancière (1999) as a form of

political agency, is their *political subjectivity*. Negotiation and resilience practiced by refugees emerge in response to necrobiopolitical interventions and constitute refugees as a self-made political entity that confronts the social and political orders which deny them political status. Foucault claims that biopolitics targets populations, but necrobiopolitics, I argue, also targets the consolidation of a *collective subjectivity* among refugees in the camps, continually working to reduce their condition and their expectations to mere (or perhaps we could say "bare") resettlement. The lived experiences that Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees make sense of in narratives about the state brutality they suffered, and their complaints about their politically-disqualified status, inform their collective political subjectivity. This subjectivity is vulnerable, due to their exposure to killing, terror, and mayhem, to their arbitrary treatment at borders, to neglect and deprivation in the camps. It is also fearful, but it is nonetheless assertive of shared rights to humanity, to a civic identity, and to civil rights. The biopolitics that constitutes modern refugee camps as arenas for insufficient and neglectful mechanisms of biopower *also* works to deny or to erase the *history* embedded in this collective subjectivity and the *genealogy* of its formation. In overlooking the terroristic exercise of necropower imposed on refugees at the time of their initial persecution and subsequent expulsion, it functions as a necrobiopolitics which accepts the neglect and arbitrary power that leads many to their deaths, and which also functions to encapsulate the living into a biopolitical system that denies their narrative identities. Here, we need to bring together three points: (1) There is, as argued in a previous chapter, a resistive necropolitics of self-harm and suicide among refugees. (2) There is also a resistive politics simply in remaining alive. To be alive and to stay alive in the camps is a form of *persistence* in the face of a governance for whom refugee deaths mean a reduction in the number of mouths to feed and the number of potential governance and distribution problems. (3) Those who *persist in*

living do so not only by manipulating or subverting the camp system or by seizing opportunities (often clandestine) for food, work, or a place on a resettlement list, but also by *remembering*, and by forming narratives around such remembrances. Necrobiopolitics in the camp operates to integrate the political subjectivity of refugees in terms of a necropolitical endpoint which involves both a tacit acknowledgement of and a killing of refugee political life. For instance, the options offered for the repatriation or naturalization of refugees indicate the tacit acceptance by modern nation states of refugee political subjectivity as a problem to be dealt with. The space of exclusion constituted by the camp system and by the imposition of labels of "refugeeness" as if they are simply inherent in refugee populations is then an *un*-political space produced by political and extra-political forces of sovereign power imposed on people; for example, the politics of national "purity" adopted by the government of Bhutan to gain popular support for the suppression and expulsion of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, and acts by which sovereign authorities in Bhutan, India, and Nepal reinvented these people as *exceptions* to the political and as *extraneous* to civic and national identity. I agree in part with Agamben that the sovereign may institute the law and the political sphere from *beyond* the law and politics, and may also decree states of *exception to* the law and to constitutional politics. It is clear that refugeeness is both warranted by and reproductive of such an exception. In relation to refugees, sovereignty can reserve for itself a potency beyond the law. At the same time, I disagree with Agamben because those excluded from politics, who embody the "exception," still have the capacity to be political and still exercise that capacity, and in so doing they have the capacity to politicize the relations of the camp and to resist designation as a space of exclusion from the political. If exclusion in the modern biopolitical system is a space of true politics, then why should the logic of sovereignty present only its arbitrary power and its great horrors (Bousfield, 2005; Rancière,

1999). Agamben's understanding of the subjectivity of refugees appears to be that it no longer exists but is reduced to bare life through the operation of the sovereign rule of exception, which all by itself constitutes spaces for the operation of allegedly non-political and extralegal forms of governance.

Agamben's theory is problematic in that it decontextualizes the sovereign exception, thereby over-emphasizing its abstract power to designate spaces and modes of legitimated eviction or killing under decrees of emergency or exception, and also to assert a sovereign right *beyond* or *above* the law to evict or kill. Thereby it also treats the extra-political possibility of displacement and uprooting as expansive. Camps, in one sense, can be said to have been manufactured to reduce the political to the unpolitical, but to focus on this exclusively is to neglect that a *political* subjectivity can emerge in this unpolitical space: a vulnerable, often hidden subjectivity. In the camp, this emergence can be treated as a *problem* necessitating a depoliticizing exercise of necropower or biopower, or as something *usable* in bio*political* management; for example, in co-opting refugees into the daily business of camp management or policing, or in managing the transition to citizenship for those who are to be repatriated or resettled. The narratives provided by interview participants in this project strongly support questioning and problematizing Agamben's theoretical absolutism as applied to the modern biopolitics of refugee-making as seen in displacement, the camp system, and resettlement or repatriation, as illustrated by these comments by Sean.

> I disagree with the discourse that refugees are not political or do not have political agency. Refugees are taken to be people who do not associate with any government; they are stateless; they do not have specific nationality, but I don't know whether I am still confused about [what is] a stateless person and a refugee. These discourses exist due to the assumption, for instance, some people are born within some nationality, and they compare us [to them], and because of that, we are excluded. (Sean, personal interview).

It is not refugees themselves that create distance from the people who are designated as nationals or as so-called citizens. State acts of criminalization and displacement created the gulf between so-called citizens and refugees and these acts embody the notion of *politicizing differences* (Nyers, 2006). The necropower imposed on the refugee population during their displacement aimed to kill all social and cultural features of refugees' collective lives but it could not kill their sense of a collective political subjectivity or of belonging to a shared citizenship, either in relation to their society of origin, or globally, or both. Political subjectivity is the key to refugees becoming global citizens (Malkki, 1995)

Bhutan government officials did engage in dialogue with the government of Nepal regarding repatriation of Bhutanese refugees, yet at the same time they sought to criminalize these refugees by separating them into categories of bonafide and non-bonafide, in order to put many of them in jail upon their repatriation. Roben, one of the interview participants, reported how the regime was involved in criminalizing people, even after displacement: "The government of Bhutan arrested our people from Nepal and [they were] taken to Bhutan and put in jail". Paul also elaborated on how the power of the government of Bhutan was imposed to criminalize refugees in the camps.

> Many people [ethnic Nepali people in refugee camps] were asked to go to India because they [Bhutanese authority] arranged things in such a way that they [Bhutanese authority] used their people [officials from Bhutanese authority] to come to Nepal to stay there in camps. They [people who were sent to refugee camps pretending to be refugees] managed to be a refugee or an immediate neighbour of the person they were targeting, and they [Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in the refugee camps who were targeted by the Bhutanese authority] had been taken to India for different purposes as soon they [Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in refugee camps] had been taken back to Bhutan arrested from the Indian land, whereas India did not do any intervention. Even today, India pretends to be the garden of the Bhutanese land; they had been the ones who had even funded the Bhutanese government for each and every thing happening in Bhutan. India played such a significant role in coinciding with the movement, our voices, and our advancement in Bhutan. So even when the Bhutanese and Nepalese governments decided to hold the bilateral talks, I think it was in the 12 or 13 bilateral talks that they agreed to

> have a joint verification in the refugee camps, so they started in the Khudunabari camp. Moreover, as soon as the verification started, the Bhutanese authority started treating the people as if they were their citizens inside Bhutan, which our people could not tolerate. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul's point that "the Bhutanese authority *started treating the people as if they were their citizens inside Bhutan*," and that "our people could not tolerate" that treatment captures the idea that it was not because the Bhutanese refugees *did not want* to be Bhutanese citizens, but because they didn't want to be *politically criminalized* within the Bhutanese legal system. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees demanded repatriation without any conditions while the dialogues between the governments of Nepal and Bhutan were underway. The act of criminalizing them, as well as the option of taking them back to Bhutan to put them in jail, constitutes a form of necropower that stamped on refugees' political subjectivity and that also subjected them to fears of torture and death in Bhutanese jails. Bhutanese refugees in the camps noted and protested their recriminalization at the hands of Bhutanese officials, demonstrating a strong sense of collective political agency in resistance to the system of power at work in a space legitimated and constructed as *excluded from politics* in which state officials could nonetheless *engage in a politics of criminalization*. Refugees also can resist the sovereign rule though their collective political subjectivity (desires to be governed politically) emerged from an unpolitical zone (refugee camp). It means that at some points, refugees in the refugee camps neither accept nor deny the refugee regimes, which I call a micro subversion of power, denying dehumanizing and depoliticizing policies and practices. Bhutanese refugees who were settled in the refugee camp in Nepal under the assistance and protection of the UNHCR desired to revive their sense of political responsibility and political power by creating a movement to return to Bhutan, as these interview participants narrate:

> I remember that moment on the Mechi Bridge. I was in grade 6 or 7, something like that. So, what happened was a lot of people started a movement for going back to Bhutan. I did not know how they were trying to go back to Bhutan because no one told us anything like that, but I noticed that many people gave stuff to their friends because they thought they were going back to Bhutan. So, all of a sudden one morning, at about eight o'clock in the morning, I saw about 8 or 9 big buses close to my house, and a lot of people were getting on the bus, so I inquired. Then they said that these people were trying to go back to Bhutan where they came from. (Sam, personal interview).

> So, they [Bhutanese refugees] organized what we call a peaceful walk, a peaceful walk from Nepal up to Bhutan. As if they were going through a peaceful march, just like Gandhi did in India. So, it was a peaceful march. [When] as the demonstrators or the marchers were in Nepal, they did not have any issues, but as soon as they were in the middle of the Mechi Bridge, the Indian police came up, and they used force with lathi-charged[26]. They even arrested a few people and prohibited the peaceful marchers to go beyond the Nepalese border. (Paul, personal interview).

The reports of these interview participants shed light on not only on the continuing capacity of national regimes to impose power on refugee bodies but also on the capacity of the refugees to resist that capacity, demonstrating their political responsibility and desire to be governed fairly. The emergence of this collective and political subjectivity – and agency -- on the part of the refugees disqualifies an application to refugee lives of Agamben's notion of a sovereign power that acts beyond the law, and refugees as disqualified biopolitical subjects without voice or agency who are merely to be placed in a zone of displacement. Agamben (1998) claims that the refugee in the camps (his characterization of camps is also problematic) is prone to have a bare life because the suspension of sovereign law in the camp means that the refugee has no political voice or agency. That voice or agency may not be *recognized* by authorities in charge of refugee

[26] Oxford dictionary defines the phrase "lathi-charged" as "a coordinated assault with iron-bound bamboo sticks, used by the police as a method of crowd control." This phrase comprises Nepali and English words: *lathi* and *charge. Lathi* is a Nepali appellation that became popular in South Asia, especially in Nepal and India, when "*lathi"* became the prefix to "*charge*" to be used as an instrument for police in their confrontations with demonstrators to remove a crowd from the public and restricted areas.

regimes, or state intervenors in such regimes, but it is *present*, nonetheless. In contrast to Agamben, Bousfield (2005) argues that refugees do have the political agency to problematize, address, and resolve the problem of the unpolitical posed by the camp system. Refugee political subjectivity asserts the potential to be citizens within a modern political system, in the face of the collusion of nation-states and international organizations in attempts to "resolve" the "problem" of refugees through biopolitical but depoliticising forms of intervention. In contrast, strategies which seek the death of refugee solidarity, mutual respect, and civic status through displacement, criminalization, exception from civic and human rights, and exclusion from a wider society, amount to a series of state-sponsored necropolitical interventions. These rights and aspirations are declared defunct as soon as national regimes and international agencies label them with the bureaucratic tag of refugee, yet they inform the political agency of refugees that national and international refugee regimes can also, if controversially, *accept in practice* when convenient to some bureaucratic or political end.

Chapter 7: From Camp to Community: Biopolitics from Exceptional to Political Spaces

Introduction

In 2007, the UNHCR finalized a third country settlement process for the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, in collaboration with the government of Nepal. Many refugees were confused in deciding on third country settlement. They had negotiated their camp lives, but they did not want to get into more trouble by making another decision about something they did not know. Eventually, most Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees decided to choose the third-country settlement process. This chapter examines their pre-arrival experiences and the settlement process they underwent in the destination country. The first section of this chapter discusses the settlement stages, the refugees' first experiences in Canada, and the roles undertaken by community agencies to assist them. The second and third sections discuss Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee life satisfaction in their third home and their strong desire to have a national identity in Canada. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees' continuing fear of being policed and the language politics are discussed and analyzed in the following fourth and fifth sections, followed by a discussion of their concern with the label of "refugee" and their diverse experiences with racism and discrimination.

Pre-settlement Stages: Experiences from Camp to Community

Among the fifteen participants in this study, three landed in Quebec, St. John's, and Regina but later relocated to Lethbridge. They chose to land in these places to connect with their family and friends. Lethbridge later began attracting Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees wishing to

relocate from various places within Canada. Participants reported their exhausting experiences of air travel to and within Canada because many of them had no experience with travelling by plane. They experienced this travel as confusing because they were going to a new country, meeting new people, and encountering everything new. But they recalled being worried about their future lives in Canada throughout their travels. Those who came directly to Lethbridge landed at the Calgary airport, and initially were helped by Lethbridge Family Services and Lethbridge Immigrant Services.

> The very first day we arrived in Lethbridge, we had a few people from the Lethbridge Family Services-Immigrant Services come to the airport to welcome us, along with an interpreter. We were taken to the hotel, where they had bought some groceries for us. We were a family of four—two parents and two minors—and were provided with $150 for a week for groceries. (Sam, personal interview).

People from LFS who were at the airport to pick them up, brought them to the hotel, and taught them a little bit about how to use a stove and microwave and other basic things. They were provided with some fruits and vegetables to eat. They were provided caseworkers, as Sam said, "who helped us learn some basic norms and cultures and setting up all of that looking for houses".

Rita and her family were informed that they would be taken to Australia, but they chose Canada and landed in St. John's, Newfoundland, in 2010. As she mentioned in the personal interview, they did not have any relatives in Canada. Her mother had known some people who had already landed there, who helped them initially. After two years in St. John's, Rita's family moved to Lethbridge. Similarly, Kevin landed in Regina with his family; he also got initial assistance from local agencies and later moved to Lethbridge. Gina and her family landed in Montreal around Sept 17, 2009. Gina's first choice was Australia, but she did not get it. She was confirmed to migrate to Quebec, but she asked whether she could move to other places besides

Quebec as she was aware that French was mandatory there. Gina was supposed to take care of her elderly parents, and she had no family and friends in Quebec. However, Bhutanese refugees in the refugee camps had no choice of where to go for their initial destination. Gina requested of the agency, "I want to go to other places in Canada where English is spoken instead of French." The French language barrier in Quebec was the reason for her eventual relocation to Lethbridge; however, she and her family were supposed to stay and learn French in Quebec for one year. She shared her first-day experiences of landing: "Most of the families were lost and confused. Didn't know whether it was day or nighttime." They got their paperwork done through immigration at the airport. After a couple of hours, they were brought to Quebec City by bus by the caseworkers of a local agency who were waiting at arrivals to take them to a motel. They also received food upon arriving at the motel.

During the interviews, participants shared intersecting experiences regarding accepting or contesting the third-country settlement process and their pre-settlement experiences. Their lives in the refugee camps were in uncertainty and limbo since the dialogue between the governments of Nepal and Bhutan for repatriation had failed. There was no chance for them to get Nepali citizenship, so the camp was their home to survive. While many Bhutanese refugees demanded their peaceful return to Bhutan, they were afraid for their lives and how the government of Bhutan would treat them if it accepted their return. They could see their lives being secured in the camps at some point. The interview record identifies that many of them did end up accepting the third-country settlement process despite not knowing what their lives would be like after arriving. There were various rumours and points of view inside the camps about the third-country settlement. Sam shared her experiences before she decided to come to Canada:

> Back in 2007, the third-country settlement proposal brought to the camps to settle the refugees in different countries; we didn't want to come [go] anywhere because of some

> uncertainty. We were happy with what we had in the camps. Because we had seen all of these wonders, we did not want to come [go], and then we said no. After that, everybody started coming, [every family then decided or agreed with the third country settlement] and we also agreed for the third-country settlement process. We left the camp on July 30. We came to Kathmandu and stayed there for a couple of days, and on August 4, 2009, we arrived in Canada. We came directly to Lethbridge. (Sam, personal interview).

From Sam's account, we can gather that the fear of ethnic genocide in Bhutan led people to prefer the status quo, compromising with whatever they had and whatever situation they might encounter. Many refugees in the camp were reluctant to accept the third-country settlement proposal. Every family wanted others to accept the settlement process and go so that they would know to decide what to do. The settlement issue was the primary concern of the Bhutanese refugees after their eviction and during their time in the camps. They had understood that they were somehow to be settled for a while in the refugee camps, so they were reluctant to easily accept going to a third country. The third country option was a new thing for Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, and their lack of knowledge of what it entailed also confused them in coming to a decision about third-country settlement.

Another thing that made them hesitant to accept third-country settlement was how it would or would not work with their joint and extended family structure. They were worried about their senior family members. The initiation of the settlement process itself was also not easy for those who accepted it; they had to go through many more medical and physical examinations. Sean became emotional in revisiting his memories of this pre-settlement time in the refugee camps, imagining what Canada would be like and coping with what they were supposed to do before their final approval.

> Umm, [laugh]—it sounds crazy, but there were some processes before we came to Canada, such as a medical exam, physical examination, like screening process, and finally, we got an orientation, and they shared about Canada and Canadian culture with us. I would think what Canada would be like, and I used to make a map in my mind. It was like a fantasy. I imagined the sense of liberty. (Sean, personal interview).

The sense of liberty that Sean imagined and the map he drew in his mind signals that he had maintained a sense of political agency that provided him with hope for a better life and for civic liberty in Canada.

During the orientation session, several questions were asked of the refugees regarding what they would do after they arrived in Canada. They received a booklet in which they could write their stories and poems and draw pictures. The questions they were asked include “Draw your life tree. Where do you live? Draw a picture of where you live. Demonstrate your happiness. What are the good aspects of you? Where are you going? What do you think shall your new life look like?” I was lucky enough to be allowed to read the questionnaires and to see the answers given by my interviewees. Sean was emotional remembering the questionnaires and said, “When we got the orientation, there was a question on the paper: ‘What will you first do when you reach Canada?’ I had made my own house, car, and a picture of going to school. I did paintings, and I can give those things to you, too. I will give it to you after this interview.” Below is a picture drawn by Sean as part of his response to one of the questions he was asked to answer.

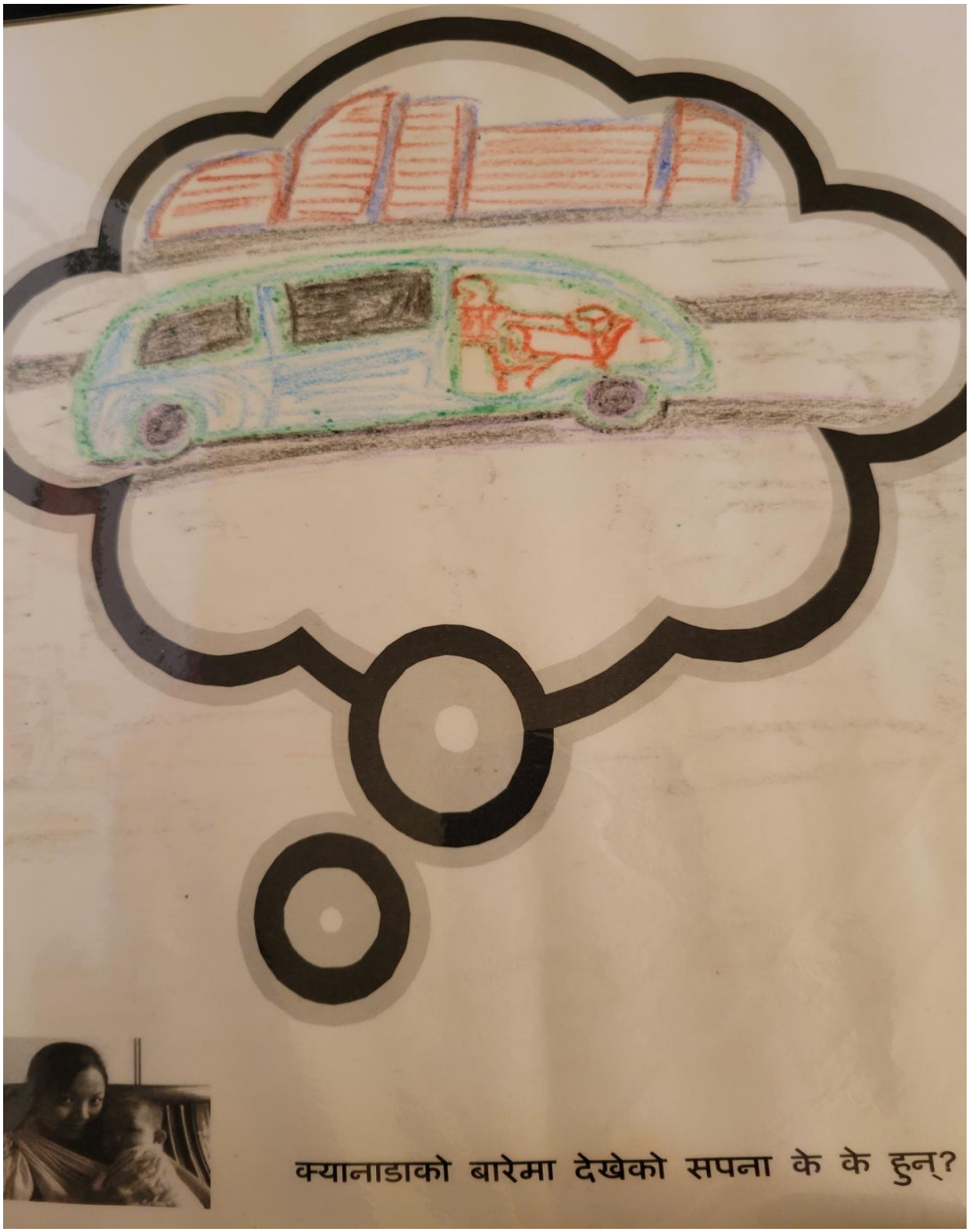

Figure 7.1: A participant's drawing about his dream after moving to Canada. Source: participant (Sean)

At the bottom of the picture above, there is a question in the Nepali language that can be translated into English as "What dreams do you have of Canada?" This drawing speaks a lot about the repressed desires to have freedom (in the picture, symbolized by the freedom to move granted by a car) and a strong sense of desire to be governed as a citizen (symbolized by the house and car).

Life, Home, Satisfaction

> The expectations by the refugee within the camps were not large, but the expectation was that we were going to Canada for a better life, better education, better living standard and quality of life. It is better for the future generation. (Mike, personal interview).

Lethbridge is now seen as home by Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, not because of the size of this population residing in the city but because of a growing sense of belonging. They have developed a good community that is involved in various intercultural programs, which has enabled them to integrate into Canadian society faster. A comparison between the present perceptions of resettled refugees and the questions asked of them in the camps before they migrated to Canada about their expectations once in Canada are critical to examine for policymakers to assess settlement policy for future refugees coming to Canada. Participants excitedly shared their expectations of Canada as their chosen country before they migrated and their achievements afterwards. No participant reported that they were unhappy in Canada. There is significant difference between life in Nepal and in Canada, with the latter providing a better life with more predictable potential. "We were poor in the camps for many reasons," Rita said, but she added that "I am happy in Canada; I feel like myself, a person who came out on the surface from a quicksand." Sila was quite excited to share her sense of belonging as a Canadian citizen, as she states, "We could not say that Nepal was our home because we were not citizens;

now, we can say Canada is our country." Roben chose Canada for his family settlement for many reasons, but he was particularly inspired by Canada's health and education systems. Babi cannot work because of her health situation resulting from the physical punishment she received at the hands of the Bhutanese authorities. She is happy to live with some of her children and grandchildren in Canada, although she has some children outside of Canada. "I am happy with my life here in Canada;" Harry said emotionally, expressing that he "would die in the refugee camps because of lack of health care facilities if he was not in Canada."

Many youths in the present-day Canadian Bhutanese community were too young at the time of resettlement to have expectations, even though they would have developed some familiar feelings in the camps because of their everyday experiences of scarcity and compromise. Sam compared his life in the refugee camp and in Canada: "I had only seen what I had in the camp on which was not much; so, I did not think of all these things we have now. So, for sure, this is a little bit beyond our expectations." At the same time, Sam also mentioned:

> …but with the social life, I found that we don't have a life in Canada as much social as we had in the camps because camps were a little bit congested; a lot of people live in a small space, and people are very socialized back in the camps in Nepal. Especially in Nepal, all of them talk with neighbours; we know everybody from our neighbourhood. We hear someone who lives right next to us, so the social expectations of life [in Canada] were not as we expected, but different, which is disappointing in a way because that is the central part of your life, as social expectations are a big part of life. Concerning population—people from all Asian countries we do have quite a big community now, so we are getting integrated. [We heard that] the school system was excellent in Canada and was the main reason why they [my parents] came to Canada, and I hope they are happy, and I am also happy. (Sam, personal interview).

Sam's narrative and experiences in the refugee camps and Canada signal life directly connected to different political systems as well as to life in the unpolitical zone. When he says that social expectations were, in the camps, "the central part of your life … a big part of life," he is not referring to something that is simply generic to "Asian" families, but to sociality as a specific

mechanism by which Bhutanese refugees held on to their sense of collective identity and historical continuity in the camps. When he notes the difference between expectations for sociality in Canada – that they are not as close or central to life – he is reflecting in part on the neoliberal and individualistic characteristics of Canadian society. Another social transition for Bhutanese refugees resettled in Canada is more closely tied to elements of a political and political-economic transition. The interview participants referred to specific markers that defined their political and economic integration into Canadian society: busy lives, time-management, strictly following rules, crime control, equal status of men and women, hard work, and dedication. Gina reflects on her experience of life in Canada as being a "collection of happiness, joys, and sorrows." She states:

> My expectations of Canada before I came were to be safe, [have] peace of mind, healthy food, education, work, citizenship. It's ok so far; the starting phase was a struggle. Bhutan [was a] small world, your family, your small village, and your school—later strict [nationalist] rules and regulations [were] imposed—no freedom of speech, fear of arrest, losing family and country. In Nepal, mental disturbance, lost identity, poor living, no good dream, no proper education, or health care but [we] learned to adapt and adjust in a changed situation. In Canada, work is the main mantra: [through] self-dependency, busy life, dedication, hard work, time management, we regained an identity. (Gina, personal interview).

Gina's narrative outlines three stages in her travel through political geographies in which she had distinct experiences: first, displacement, then a depoliticizing transition in which her identity was not acknowledged, and finally a new identity as a citizen in a very different country. We could imagine how life was in the camps, gagged by their designation as non-political spaces in which refugees were expected to conform to their definition as unpolitical individuals or families within a negligently-managed population, reduced to living limited, incomplete, and barely-fixable lives. As participants shared their experiences about their post-resettlement involvement in various workplaces and communities, they indicated repeatedly that Canada is to them, by

comparison with their past experience of displacement and camp life, a land of opportunity and freedom. Participants such as Kevin focused on the schooling available in Canada and the legacy of their parenting in preparing their generation for the future. Kevin wanted to go to university, but he could not meet the requirements for admission, and at the same time, he also had his responsibility to his family, so work was essential for him. In his interview, he shared his various work experiences, such as carpentry and bus driving, and later establishing his own business. Even if he could not get a university education in Canada, he dreams of seeing his children attaining such an education. As reported by the interview participants, Nepali-speaking refugees have a strong sense of the importance of an education, even if it is tough for the first generations. Paul states:

> Canada is a good place [to live], though it is cold. It is a democratic country, and as it is a developed country, we wanted to see how it would be. And even while I was a refugee, I tried a few times to come to Canada, but every time I applied for it, the bilateral talks between Nepal and Bhutan led to my application being cancelled by the Canadian authorities. However, when the First World countries decided to resettle the Bhutanese refugees, I [still] preferred Canada because it is more of a liberal country than any of the other settlement countries. (Paul, personal interview).

Those who have experience of the authoritarian misuse of politics give importance to democracy because they can revisit in memory their eviction from citizenship by autocratic regimes. Paul already knew about Canada's reputation for liberality and democracy before the third country settlement process started, and he tried to apply for asylum there, resisting the authorities before the third country settlement process was finalized. The 1951 human rights convention mentioned that everyone had the right to asylum, but political practices of exception did not permit people like Paul to exercise that right.

"I Didn't Want to Die without Being a Citizen-less Person"

> There would always be a sense in the inner heart whether I also would be a citizen of a country one day. When I got citizenship, I somehow felt that I gained confidence, which was lost by [my] stateless status. If I had this level of confidence, I would have had many friends from the local community in Nepal. Citizenship status brings a psychological change in our perception. I could feel the experiences of being a citizen when I first voted in Canada. I feel different while practicing my democratic right as a citizen. I also felt I am something to this country. (Sean, personal interview).

Let me begin this section with a short story based on my lived experience. The Government of Canada's policy for awarding citizenship to people with immigrant and refugee status requires a test if they are under the age of 55. This policy politically categorized people by age. In 2019, I went to Calgary for my citizenship test, where I met a couple from the Bhutanese refugee community in Lethbridge, who were also writing the citizenship test. I had no chance to talk to them before the test was finished. The wife was the last person to finish the test; she was serious about her test and felt that she had to pass it at any cost because it would grant her something that she had been denied for several years. After the test, I was there chatting; it was easy for me to talk to them because I knew them, and we all shared the same language. A little later, the results were announced, and the couple heard their names announced of those who had passed the test and who were to be awarded. I had rarely seen a person react in such a joyful manner. She was busy sharing her happiness with her family and friends. She responded as if she had won a battle. Indeed, she had won a battle: her decades-long dream to be a citizen had come true. It demonstrated her victory against the regime that looted her identity, evicting her from the place of her birth and from political space. I share this story to demonstrate how people's connections to a state now underscores their political subjectivity in modernity. Sila also shared her happiest moment when she was awarded citizenship: "The day I got citizenship, O, my God, [laugh], I felt so proud. I was so happy when I passed the citizenship exam. I realized that everything could be

possible." (Sila). However, how painful the moment was for people when they lost their political identity can be conceived by Roben's expression:

> The day I lost my citizen status from Bhutan, I thought of not being a citizen of *any* country. The day I got Canadian citizenship, three years after I landed, was my happiest moment ever. There are many differences between citizen and non-citizen. (Roben, personal interview).

Citizenship is the measuring-rod of identity in modern nation-states, and this is what is attacked by regimes driven by a conception of national "purity" to push people out and to abandon them to refugee confinement. The statement above indicates that Roben had no hope of being a citizen, of getting out of the space segregated from politics that he found himself in. Forbidding people's political status allows all kinds of discrimination to prevail and be practiced, crucially, discrimination relating to work or travel. An element of Agamben's discussion of *homo sacer* does fit here: the stateless are placed in a state of exception where they are exposed to arbitrary forbiddances and to things that can be done to them with impunity, and they have *no status* in terms of which they can seek official recourse. Participants shared their difficulties with immigration at airports when they had to travel and did not have citizenship status. As Marley stated, "I encountered such a difficult situation once when I travelled to Nepal *via* China when I requested them in the Chinese airport to return me to Canada." This kind of situation pushed Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to fear another deportation. They feared being criminalized by state power and deported again, finding themselves in another space of exception. As Kevin stated: "After becoming a citizen, I realized we have confidence because I belong to Canada. I felt proud. Before citizens, there used to be a fear of whether we would be deported again from here". Gina's articulation about her continuing connection with Bhutan and Nepal, now supplemented by a third connection to Canada signifies her triangular affections.

> We lived [in refugee camp] a very simple life with no big dreams, fully dependent, felt lost, losing our birthplace identity. Apart from this, [we] learned to adjust and adapt to live with at least minimal resources and made good use of that. I am from a big family. We are siblings. All brothers are in Canada. One sister in Bhutan and one in the USA. One passed away in Bhutan. Her family are still in Bhutan. Birthplace is never be replaced with any other place. Yes, the most important part of life is spent (childhood and adolescence) in Nepal. Felt like a second home. Nepal and Nepalese are closely connected [to us]. Yes, some of the friends, family, and relatives are still living in Bhutan. Your home, your village, first school are all connected to what you were taught, [what you] learned in your childhood is never going to fade away. (Gina, personal interview).

Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees have a strong sense of connection with their different birthplaces, but their connection experiences intersect. The first generation born in Bhutan showed their affection towards Bhutan, while those born in refugee camps demonstrated a political affinity towards Nepal. Members of the second generation shared that they would always introduce themselves as Nepali, not Bhutanese.

> I didn't want to die being a citizen-less person**.** Isn't that a gift to obtain your lost identity again and be a citizen of another country legally? I have the right to vote, right to move freely. Canada has given [me] a chance to resettle for a safe and healthy life. Including a regained lost identity. I become [a] naturalized citizen, [am] free to vote/move freely within Canada, [have] right to work. Canada has given [me] all your fundamental rights. (Gina, personal interview).

Gina is proud of being a citizen of Canada, which ensured her voting rights and freedom to move. She appreciates the Canadian government re-establishing Bhutanese refugees' political rights. As of the time of the interviews, thirteen participants had already received Canadian citizenship, and one was in permanent resident status, while the other had applied but was awaiting it.

> I am not a Canadian citizen yet. But I have already applied for it. I am excited to be a Canadian citizen. When I take an oath, I will request them to speak a few words; I was compelled to quit my citizenship of the country of my birth and [I] salute the Canadian government for letting me to become its citizen; I will speak like that. I would articulate the misfortune of the Bhutan government because it looted our citizenship. (Grant, personal interview).

Grant experienced delays in getting his citizenship, which might be because of the test requirements. There are many people under the age of 55 in the Bhutanese community in Lethbridge who are deprived of having Canadian citizenship because either they failed their citizenship test, or they are hesitant to take a test due to a fear of failing it. Refugees can suffer political and educational as well as physical and mental conditions, and the political course of displacement obstructed them from receiving a proper education. They may not have enough skills in the English language to prepare enough for the citizenship test. As narrated by interview participants, this obstacle to citizenship is one of the biggest challenges that this community has encountered, and it is felt especially during their travel. Participants shared their concerns that the condition of the refugees and their educational abilities are already well known by the refugee-receiving countries. The participants saw the lack of sensitivity to condition and context in the administration of the citizenship test as a kind of structural barrier to getting citizenship for refugees who have nowhere else to go.

Policing and Fear

Policing is an effective method within the neoliberal biopolitics of population management and crime control. However, the deployment and consequences of policing are ambiguous, since it may involve life-affirming techniques of biopower while at the same time criminalizing and punishing people unequally. In other words, policing can be about the protection of those who are accepted and privileged as citizens, but also, and often at the same time, it can be about the protection of "society" *from* those defined as non-citizens, or as citizens of a lesser status, or as subversives "undeserving" of citizenship. In these latter functions, policing can become the fundamental method of carrying out human displacement and of making refugees. As discussed

in chapter four, Bhutanese refugees have unique, negative, and bad experiences with policing, since the government of Bhutan used police and policing methods to criminalize and displace them, thus making them refugees. Most of the Bhutanese refugees recall the mayhem, brutality, rape, arbitrary and cruel punishment, and killing that they experienced in Bhutan; their experience with policing was also not positive while they were in the refugee camps in Nepal. At some points, it seems as if refugees were subjects *produced to be policed* and *reduced* to being subjects who must bear everything unbearable. I asked a common question of the participants, whether they are frightened by police in Canada. All of them replied that they fear police. No interview participant had yet called the police for help, and they were not interested in calling the police for help no matter the situation they might encounter. Kevin stated, "I never called the police for help. I am afraid of the police because we remembered the torture that our people experienced in Bhutan. I have bad experiences with Indian police officers as well that escalate fear here as well". Some participants shared that they experience fear of police, even when they merely see the police uniform. They know that police in Canada differ from the police they experienced in Bhutan, but their trauma with police there played a crucial role in making them fear police everywhere.

> I feel fear when I see the police because it [triggers] within us a stigma. Many people were severely punished in front of us. I drive here, but when I see the police officer, it makes me feel different. I question whether I did something wrong. I never called the police to help, and I could not integrate with the police. (Harry, personal interview).

It is important to have a global biopolitical perspective to understand how necropower imposed on a population can take various forms in various political geographies, and how police can be and often are agents of necropower in service of a politics of negative differentiation.

> Uhhh, yes, I do fear the police; that is a fascinating question because even we had that question when we were taking our citizenship interview with the judge. It is still fear because most of the Bhutanese have come—especially those born in Bhutan—we have

> come with a concept of fear or trauma caused by the regimes. The atrocities practiced by the police and the army became a part of the Bhutanese government. Even in Nepal, we had many times when we had to evade the police because of their atrocities in a different situation, even [if] we were innocent and [were] not involved in any criminal activities. And that fear is still there, and even I say that I don't need to fear Canadian army or police, but as soon as I see them in front of me or when I see myself interacting with them, I have a little fear in me that they might be doing the same thing as was done by the Nepalese and the Bhutanese police. (Paul, personal interview).

Paul's narrative informs a lived sense of the continuous imposition of policing on refugee bodies. Refugee bodies are easy subjects for regimes to criminalize and appropriate as punishable subjects.

> Yes, I am afraid of police officers a lot. We have trauma. I could remember a police base camp in the refugee camp through which we had to pass to get out of the camp. Police officers here are friendly, but the fear is still there somewhere in us—the heart beating goes faster when we see a police officer. (Sean, personal interview).

Some participants mentioned that members of their community are frightened by police since the displacement has traumatized them in other ways, because of family separation, death of relatives, and lives in transition. They also added that there was an accident in the Canadian Bhutanese community in 2012. One of the families called the police for assistance, but the event turned into the opposite of assistance when the police officers shot the family member dead. This was a significant event that escalated their sense of fear towards police. This incident can also be considered, as the participants express, to be a contributing factor that hindered and delayed their acceptance of a mainstream (white) Canadian view of the police.

The Biopolitics of Language as a Neoliberal Mechanism of Exclusion: Barriers and Obstacles

Aside from perceptions of policing, interview participants showed their reverence towards the humanitarian efforts and actions of the Canadian government. They were happy in their new home with a new political identity. However, language is a systemic barrier for the refugee

population in Canada. Again, refugee conditions vary and can present them with obstacles when not recognized by the host country. Their education levels are often impacted by the politics of displacement and exclusion, and both their educational and financial resources differ from the economic class of immigrants (McKeary & Newbold, 2010). In Canada, language ability has impacted the lives of the refugee population, including their access to health care (Pottie et al., 2008). However, language competence is crucial to the neoliberal biopolitical rationalities of refugee management that limit and restrict refugees from accessing resources. Neoliberalism treats language ability and acquisition, along with other conditions of life, as an individual personal responsibility, regardless of background or context – these also are treated as "personal" matters. But the language barrier is systemic, and it explicitly and implicitly categorizes refugees as disqualified and thereby subject to social marginalization. Sam felt lucky that he came to Canada at an early age: "I was directly admitted to high school without asking me for my transcripts or anything from back home. Just my age was already enough for them to decide I was a grade 10 student." However, Sam did not have any grade 10 courses; "I only had English as a second language classes, where I would learn English all day long. It went on for a year before I could finally take any regular classes."

It was a challenging situation for all the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees to learn the English language quickly. Those who were not going to high school had to first go to, according to Sam, to "Lethbridge Family Services – Immigrant Services for the cultural orientations". They were supposed to go to the LFS office for almost two months for their orientation, which "included education about Canadian policing, governments, Canadian culture, and norms and many more [things]" (Sam, personal interview). After two months, these refugees could do language assessment at the Southern Alberta Language Assessment Services Ltd. (SALAS).

Those who scored three or less at the language benchmark would be recommended to go to the Flexibility learning Centre, while those scoring four or above would be recommended to go to Lethbridge College for ESL classes. However, they had to wait until January to go to their respective institutions, even though their assessments were done in October. The Canadian government provided these refugee populations with an allowance for only one year, and they had to learn a brand-new language in eight months to get ready to live and work in Canada. The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in Lethbridge still wanted to continue their language education, but they could not because they had to find a job to provide for their families and pay school expenses for their school-age children. Language politics and barriers played a crucial role in contributing to their being prevented from learning and training themselves for the competitive Canadian labour market.

Most of the first generation of Bhutanese refugees do not have education or English-speaking skills. They were engaged in agricultural work before their eviction and the cultural aspects of the ethnic genocide in Bhutan obstructed their educational chances. One anticipated factor that conflicted with the pressure on Bhutanese refugees in the camps to accept the third-country settlement process was a fear about their level of education and English proficiency. However, the Bhutanese youth going to school in the refugee camps did have some English language skills. As Sam reported, "Most of my language learning happened in Canada, but I did have a little bit of English from back home [refugee camp] because I went to school there. I was in grade 9 when I came to Canada, so nine years of school life in Nepal did help me with language for sure." Most of the youth who had done their high school do not consider English language proficiency to be their problems for better communication. However, they experience a language barrier with university admission, even if they have all requirements completed

(Chaulagain, 2022). Bhutanese refugees thus have faced language barriers in various forms. They have lived experiences of being discriminated against in job applications in Canada. They also have had difficulty in accessing Canadian university and college education because of language. As Mike says, “I studied the English language for two years here and completed a diploma in criminology, but my application for a professional job has been continuously rejected.” Language is a criterion of discrimination that can be used against refugees, and it has become a systemic barrier to education and employment in Canada. Even those who have no problem with English language skills and have a Canadian education have faced discrimination in terms of language. All the Bhutanese refugees who landed in different cities in Canada have faced similar problems. Those who landed in Quebec had an obligation to learn French. Gina says:

> Language barriers, in Quebec all immigrants needed to learn French, it was obligatory to learn French for an immigrant who resides in Quebec. Learning French was not easy for all the family; even in two years duration, I didn’t see good progress, so I decided to move to Lethbridge. Having heard [that] some friends and relatives [had] already resettled in Alberta, Lethbridge and of course an English-speaking province. (Gina, personal interview).

Gina’s reason for relocating to Lethbridge from Quebec was because of the French language; however, she saw language barriers in Lethbridge, “especially for adults and seniors,” that have hindered their social integration. Cultural differences, transportation, housing and employment issues, difficulties in raising children, rebuilding a religion, reorganizing credentials, engaging in entrepreneurship, and entering skilled jobs are all indicators or forms of discrimination linked to language that have affected these refugees’ lives. Interviewees also shared that they have also found language policies for citizenship to be a challenge. Most of the adults in the community cannot obtain level three in ESL to qualify for citizenship. This situation has effectively become

another form of discrimination that restricts the geographical and social mobility of resettled refugee populations. Rita says:

> They look for education and English proficiency level [for citizenship]; even in my extended family, everybody has their citizenship except for a couple of them. People who do not have education and required language proficiency must wait for the age demarcation [for citizenship without language proficiency] that the government has implemented. I feel that they know the fact that some people do not have proper education. The effect in many areas of the [lives of] uneducated families has now been reflected. There are challenges, of course. The policy for those vulnerable refugees should be changed in terms of providing them citizenship. (Rita, personal interview).

As reported by these interview participants—and as confirmed by my personal experiences while engaging in various community activities—language seems to be a fundamental obstruction to getting citizenship resulting in various forms of discrimination. Those who fail to meet the language requirement for citizenship are automatically considered disqualified candidates. Mike states, "I wish the government of Canada had a specific policy for those populations who are deprived of having Canadian citizenship."

"Refugee": Bureaucratic Tag and Long-term Impact

The most often followed and practiced parameters for verifying who is a refugee and what rights they can claim are laid out by the Unition Nations' 1951 Convention, which is controversial, incomplete, and discriminatory (Malkki, 1995; Nyers, 2006; Espiritu, 2014). Arendt (1943) claims that there are various types of refugees; that is why she was reluctant to be called a refugee, though she was among the Jews who were displaced by Nazi brutality. Foucault did not write much about refugee issues in particular, though his theory of biopolitics influenced theoretical and methodological debates about the modern biopolitical management of refugees throughout the world, including the provision of humanitarian assistance. Agamben's (1998) understanding of refugees as biopolitical subjects in terms of sovereign power has been

controversial, especially in terms of political and theoretical discourses, when examined through the lens of refugees' lived experiences. Let's discuss Agamben's ideas and one of the participants' experiences regarding the refugee:

> . . . [In terms of the] by now unstoppable decline of the nation-state and the general corrosion of traditional political-juridical categories, the refugee is perhaps the only thinkable figure for the people of our time and the only category in which one may see today—at least until the process of dissolution of the nation-state and of its sovereignty has achieved full completion—the forms and the limits of a coming political community. (Agamben, 2008, p. 90).

This is a powerful statement about the global political future, especially in an era in which climate change and sharpening geopolitical struggles seem to be making it possible that any population could become vulnerable to the possibility of displacement. However, Agamben's understanding of the relationship between the constructed figure of the refugee and political practices is ambivalent since he insists that ultimately the only definitional possibility open to refugees is their exclusion from the political in the exceptional zone of the camp. Agamben's categorizing of refugees as inhabiting non-political spaces has its basis only in how the massive displacement of European peoples was conceived of during and after the First World War, beginning in France, Belgium, and Armenia in 1915, and expanding to include refugee flows from newly re-boundaried nation states after 1919, and from other European countries, including Germany after 1932. This, and Agamben's reliance on Schmitt's discussion of the state of exception and of sovereignty above the law, is the foundation for his generalization of the statement that refugees do not constitute a political, but instead a *post*-political category. He claims that humanitarian organizations, such as the Nansen Bureau (1921), the High Commission for refugees from Germany (1936), the International Committee for Refugees (1938), the UN's International Refugee Organization (1946), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (1951), were not political *agents*, but rather social and humanitarian *agencies*

(Agamben, 2008). Agamben was highly influenced by one of the chapters of Hannah Arendt's book *Imperialism*, "The decline of the nation-state and the end of the rights of man", which links "the fate of a man with the fate of modern nation-state", such that "the waning of the latter necessarily implies the obsolescence of the former" (Agamben, 2008, p. 92). Agamben interprets the biopolitical apparatus of modern nation-states as one that primarily works to except more and more modern populations from the political, rendering them to the status of *homo sacer*. In this sense, if all modern humans are potentially *Homo sacer*, then all are potentially unpolitical or refugees. If so, then the questions, "who are not refugees? Who made them refugees?" become immaterial. The distinction between bare human life and citizenship (*zöe* and *bios*, unpolitical and political) is all that matters. I would argue that it is important to understand refugees as at least having the capacity to be *political subjects* and to examine the creation and labelling of refugees as *political acts*, even if the consequences of such acts are intentionally *de*-politicizing. Only then can we examine if refugees are mere objects to be placed under a state of exception or if they are figures not only created by modern political power but who continue to claim political rights and to act on those claims. Agamben's notion of the unpolitical space of refugeeness can be challenged by an examination of the experiences *and* the citizenship aspirations of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees who survived state brutality and refugee camps to arrive in Canada.

> One who lives in the refugee camp is not born as a refugee. They are made a refugee/ given the title. Canada has given the Bhutanese refugees a chance for a safe life, a happy life. I never feel bad about being called a refugee now, but [we used to have] a bad experience when people called you refugee. (Gina, personal interview).

Participants denied that they simply existed as bare life in a space of exception, as negative objects of biopower and condemned bodies. Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees would feel uncomfortable being called a refugee, as noted by Rita, and this discomfort signalled *resistance*

to the category: “In the beginning, I would get angry when hearing the word ‘refugee’ and would hide my tagged identity, and I wanted no-one to know that I was a refugee.”

The participants born in refugee camps signalled they continued to deal with identity ambiguity after becoming citizens in a neoliberal political system. They are uncomfortable with being called, as Sam notes, an “amalgam of Bhutanese Nepalese and Canadian. … I call myself Nepalese Canadian because I was born in Nepal.” All the same, according to Sean, this sort of identity crisis and associated uncertainties concerning the new political agency that came with Canadian citizenship, “impacted their lives” not because it disqualified them from being citizens as Agamben argues, but because it “reduced their confidence” by imposing a fear that caused a lasting impact, even in Canada.

> Fear is always there with us. The fear factor works silently to inhibit moving forward. That is the difference between a refugee immigrant and immigrant in general: self-confidence. That experience is in-itself of refugeeness. That memory always comes to our mind. So, I love to share my stories with the next generation, as our parents did. When I hear the word “refugee”, it takes me back to Nepal. If someone shares with me that he/she is a refugee from any country of the world, these narratives take me to Nepal; it is because I spent more than half of my life in a refugee camp in Nepal. (Sean, personal interview).

Sean’s narrative reveals that the exceptional space of border liminality and of the camps that is created by modern politics silently reminds him that he was once tagged and could still be tagged as a “refugee,”. Even in the politics of neoliberal individualism, the refugee tag has emerged as a means of both individual *and* group discrimination. But while the label “refugee” causes fear and uncertainty, and inhibits political agency, it has not erased the political subjectivity of Bhutanese-Canadians.

Racism and Racialized Subjects in Neoliberal Biopolitics

Neoliberal biopolitics is central to the Western political system in managing populations (biopower) in various categories (Foucault, 2003). Race lies at the center of modern politics as a method to promote life and death (Mbembe, 2003; Weheliye, 2014). Refugee populations, to a large extent, are victims of racism in many ways from their country of displacement (because they are represented as non-citizen "others" there) to the camps (because of the stigma of refugeeness attached to them there). Racism is an ideology of domination that systematically considers one group to be biologically and culturally inferior to a society's dominant group (Wilson, 1999). Racism signposts systemic practices of discrimination and inequality in access to resources, including education, employment, and health (Pager & Shepherd, 2008). Racism is an indicator of global hierarchical supremacy and domination, in terms of political, social, and cultural differences created through Western-centric discourses and out of the legacies of slavery and colonialism. Racism can be defined as a legacy of and a continued reproduction of Western-centric hegemonic power that hierarchizes societies in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, and nationality, and especially national "purity," to discriminate against and exploit people of colour. Practices of racializing people reinforce systematic mechanisms of exploitation, accumulation and political control in advanced capitalist society by classifying human bodies as superior or inferior and human populations as divisible, regardless of ability, productivity or potentiality. In a sense, racial practices create a "zone of being" and the "zone of non-being" (Fanon, 2008); which are terms very similar to Agamben's distinction between *zöe* and *bios*. But these theoretical concepts do *not* help us to describe the experiences of racialized people, including refugees, in terms of the resilience, resistance, and aspirations that make up their political subjectivities. Kevin shares his experience of racism in his new home in a way that shows the

critical edge of this political subjectivity still active here: “Canada is the best, but it still has discrimination. I also felt so—the colour of skin matters here”. Sean agrees:

> Based on my experiences, there is a lot of systemic racism in Canada. They say there is no racism, but it is everywhere, either in school or the workplace. The colour of your hair and your skin matter most here in any institution. I can feel that in the university as well. There were students inside the class, but outside the class, they had friends of their own. You cannot get as close with them as they are with their Canadian white friends. The reason behind this is the content of your colour. (Sean, personal interview).

Practices of structural racism in Canadian society are both explicitly and implicitly present in the assertion of dominance over and the limitation of the life-chances of racialized people in workplaces, schools, and other social organizations. Practices of systemic racism in Canada work through discrimination to place people of colour into a zone of non-being. Refugees who are defined as “not white” are victims of *deniable* racism in neoliberal social and workplace politics that celebrate and responsibilize the autonomous individual while systematically undermining the autonomy of racialized individuals (and then blaming their “failures” on a lack of *personal* initiative). Paul experienced an extreme form of such discrimination at his work which made him quit the job: “I had to quit one of my jobs, just because of the discrimination against me at the workplace. That organization did not give much support, so I had to leave that job. We are Bhutanese refugees.” Racism is central to the creation of racialized human subjects in the explicit and implicit biopolitics of state racism. This subject-formation is explicitly referred to but is *also resisted* in refugees’ narrations of their experiences. Modern political philosophies insist on a certain and static normativity that establishes the notion of othering, either displacing humans to other spaces or refusing humans *from* those other spaces full entry into the sphere of *bios* (Thobani, 2007). Normative legitimacy and political efficacy are the imperative factors in managing these displacements and refusals in the national public sphere and strengthening the state’s communicative power within which the public sphere and sovereign power are correlated

(Fraser, 2007). However, Fraser (2007), like Thobani (2007), argues that state sovereignty is not a static mechanism of modern political power constitutive of a normative model of Westphalian democracy. Thobani points to Foucault's discussion of the emergence and transformations of the biopolitical through specific social technologies of control and management. Both normative *and* resistive subjectivities are created when the state situates power and knowledge, and it is essential to investigate both to understand the biopolitical implementation of the practical technologies of investigation, power, and control that Foucault called biopower. Robinson (2011) has attempted to blend or reconcile liberal principles with the idea of cultural communities to categorize people in terms of national identities and national minorities within the modern nation-state However, Thobani (2007) condemns the modernist inclination to re-establish a liberal universalism that emerged from violence, discrimination, and racialization, and in fact that universalism could be said to rely even today on racialization as its unacknowledged binary counterpart. After all, the Bhutanese state itself treated its favoured ethnic group as the "universal" expression of Bhutanese nationhood and used that claim as an excuse to expel and disenfranchise its Nepali-speaking citizens as *particular* "others." In Canada, liberal universalism takes the norms and experiences of white, middle-class Canadians as normative, thereby othering immigrants of other backgrounds as "having" *particular* problems that are merely their *own* issues, lying outside the sphere of *public* affairs. Interviewees were conscious of this process, and of the necessity (as in the camps) of compromising with it. Yet they did not *simply* become compliant to it and continued refer to it *critically*; to maintain a *critical* political subjectivity.

> I have experienced a lot of difficulties in Canada when we first moved here. And I still do experience a lot of difficulties now. First thing, every country has their problems; nevertheless, Canada is considered one of the best places to live in the world, but we do have some racism, here and there. We have to compromise a lot of things here. I think

> adaptation is the biggest thing, and the other is the celebration of different cultural festivals and stuff—it's challenging to get the day off. Regarding funerals, our culture demands that we mourn for 13 days, and some of the jobs are firing people because they have taken 13 days off. So that's sad that people are being fired just because they want to follow their culture; they want to mourn for 13 days. (Sam, personal interview).

Interview participants described different forms of discrimination and racism that they had faced. One form, as mentioned earlier, is the imposition of language barriers. A second form is cultural: Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees came from cultures and religions that differ, both within their own population, and between them and other Canadians. The neoliberalism that has been popularized in Canadian political culture emphasizes individual equality, but that equality is also understood in abstract and context-free ways as applicable to all in the same way. But implicit in neoliberalism is an unacknowledged standard of comparison: the middle-class, white male. These factors make finding jobs a challenging task for this group of refugees. They have developed the resilience to tolerate workplace discrimination, but not as a matter of choice: "Where should we go for finding another job if they fire us?". Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees do not "dare to report about workplace harassment, due to the fear they have", Sean says. Rita confirms this:

> Discrimination and racism may be seen at [an] extreme level. People from different parts of the world have come and [have] got jobs, but at the same time, there is discrimination in terms of their promotion—their 5/10 years' work experience in the same place, and the same level puts restrictions on their promotion. The fear factor also works here because they are afraid of losing what they have got if they complain and raise their voices for their rights. (Rita, personal interview).

Race is a social construct concerning alleged biological differences between people such as skin colour or facial features, regardless of a person's ability or the diversity within communities. Race signifies defining people in in terms of supposedly-inherent group characteristics that are valued positively or negatively, and in modern political practices, these differences become the basis for discrimination against marginalized peoples as threats to national "purity," to a "way of

life" designated as normative, or (as Foucault notes) as a generalized threat to "society." The term "race" was first used to describe peoples and societies similarly to how we now understand ethnicity or national identity. Later, in the 17th and 18th centuries, as Europeans encountered non-European civilizations, Enlightenment scientists and philosophers gave "race" a biological meaning, using the term to distinguish between types of plants, animals, and humans as taxonomic sub-classifications within a species (Clair & Denis, 2015). However, "race" quickly became popular as a supposedly "scientific" and thus un-political way to justify forced labour regimes by subsuming differential evaluations of intelligence, motivation, physical strength, and level of "civilization" under the category of race. The race issue today intersects with gender and sex distinctions, immigration status, class, and status marginalization in the modern political-economic apparatus (Thobani, 2007). Together with mass migration and displacement, racialization and racism have become essential subjects of study since neoliberal Western nation-states practice and rely on forms of racism to entrench the exploitation of labour and to divide and control labour movements.

Modern political practices of classifying people and politicizing differences in order to restrict freedoms and exploit labour are characteristic but "deniable" features of modern racism (Mostov, 2007). Depriving refugees of equitable rights to recognition and representation and designating them as a social threat are two indicators of the potential development of modern forms of political displacement of people. Refugees are racialized and misrepresented if "opportunities for representation through the politics of identity are abused" and "when group identities are externally imposed and other avenues for political association or expression of interests and rights are discounted" (Mostov, 2007, p. 139). This accurately describes what happened to Bhutanese refugees. The government of Bhutan began to develop and impose both

dividing narratives and dividing practices (Foucault, 1982) on its Nepali-speaking population as a group *before* moving to displace and exile them. They and their culture were declared to be a threat to the nation, and a pollution of its purity, which exemplifies a necropoliticized form of modern ethnic genocide: the *differential and population-based* exercise of a right to exile and kill.

To understand state racism, we must examine the exercise of racism and discrimination as forms of control and domination of refugees and forced immigrants that begins *in* the country of their displacement. Experience of racist and discriminatory policies and practices are embedded in the histories, narratives, and psychologies of refugees and displaced people and affect their ability to negotiate their transnational identities with confidence in the countries of their resettlement. Workplace racism is tangible and real, and Bhutanese refugees in Canada have faced it both in seeking employment and in their working lives. Grant noted that "there is a lot of harassment and domination in our workplace, there is also indirect discrimination against us in the workplace." "I had discussions many times with white people in my workplace. We face discrimination here [that] is dangerous." Marley agreed: "I feel discrimination in the workplace in many forms, even though Canada is the best country for human rights". Participants even reported that they were prevented from volunteering in Canada. They wanted to volunteer, thinking that it might help them find a new job, but they were asked for a "certain level of language for volunteering" (Sam, personal interview). Sam also reported that it was indicated to them that they had to be a "particular gender, and you have to be Canadian citizens only, or stuff like that, that sometimes restricts [you from going to] volunteer at different places" (Sam, personal interview).

Another discriminatory policy and an indicator that impacted these refugees' lives is admission into higher education. Refugeeness is constructed in terms of various signifiers, such as vulnerability, disqualification, needing improvement, non-citizenship, nomadism, and "lack of" education. These indicators have been universalized and used to develop and impose policies. Often, these policies are represented as non-political, but just as often the ways in which they are formulated and allied are politicized. The admission of refugees to third-country resettlement processes is represented as an inclusive strategy for the excluded but as Espiritu's (2014) notion of absent presence indicates, such policies are formulated and implemented in ways that make racism appear "absent" (because it is not explicitly promoted), while putting in place a web of restrictions, qualification criteria, and prohibitions that keep refugees from accessing the resources that Canadian law grants. The experiences of this interview participant indicate how forms of exclusion encountered by Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. can intersect.

> I have difficulties in different sectors. The first difficulty was with my language when I went to school. I struggled with my language. I struggled to make friends that time, but even after that phase, I had to struggle to get university as well because they had weird rules just for the second language speakers. Even today, finding a job [is] sometimes tricky with the name that does not sound familiar here. I have seen some people who had directly changed their names because they would not be called for an interview when their name does not sound like the name, the common name here. (Sam, personal interview).

Sam's narrative highlights the way in which an "Asian" name can make it difficult for refugees to get hired. Neoliberal biopolitics is a mixture or a multiple mode of biopolitical power that creates barriers for those tagged as refugees and visible minorities. These are subjectivities that the neoliberal biopolitics produce that stealthily exclude people in various ways.

> Yes, they did require English Language proficiency for university admission, even if I did high school here. I don't know about this policy; why should one need to demonstrate additional English proficiency if he/she already has their years of study in Canadian

> schools? It is because of my name, and it requires extra English language proficiency, which is not fair. You have met their requirements; they still want more because you are an immigrant or refugee. (Sean, personal interview).

It is your refugee profile. Profiling is a method of neoliberal individualistic political system that might *seem* to involve the development of non-political or non-partisan criteria and their impartial implementation, but its *actual* function excludes by ignoring context and specificity.

Another way in which international refugee regimes and Canadian refugee settlement policies discriminate and exploit refugees is in calculating the airfare they spent on these refugees as a loan when admitting them to the country. Neoliberal biopower not only calculates its population, as Foucault (2007) states, but it also calculates and seeks to recoup the "costs" of admitting refugee bodies, pushing them into financial dilemmas.

Most of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees had to live almost a month in a hotel upon their arrival, and they were deemed *personally* responsible for looking for either an apartment or a basement suite. For instance, Sam has four people in his family, and his family would collect $1426 in total per month from the government. However, they had to pay $950 per month for the two-bedroom apartment they found, in addition to the cost of groceries, phone and internet access, and bus passes, all of which was necessary for them. At the same time, Sam's family had to pay a $10,640 immigration travel loan back in installments. This situation indicates that while the neoliberal biopolitical management of refugees' lives can involve provision of aid, its emphasis on personal responsibility for finding housing, paying for necessities, and paying back exposes refugees to the possibility of financial crisis or homelessness, both of which can increase risk of various forms of illness, exposure to violence, and physical harm. As Kotsko (2018) argues, neoliberal biopolitics involves a "victim-blaming dynamics" that appropriates refugees' labour while making them vulnerable to the experience of various forms of

discrimination, racism, violence, and death. As Mbembe (2003) notes, necropolitics encompasses more than active killing. It also refers to having the capacity of deciding who must live and who should die – or be left on their own to die. It is neoliberal biopolitics that blames refugees for lack of success while at the same time it tactically displays the bright face of individual freedom, in terms of individual success in education, health, and economic activity, while hiding the dark face of disadvantage under the cloak of individual 'failure'. Listening to all the participants' responses during interviews, and going through them again in the transcripts, led me to recall my own experiences. In the questions and responses that related to their experiences of neoliberal biopolitics, I found that participants were hesitant to speak against the system. The system of blame that Kotsko identifies in neoliberal individualism has stopped them from criticizing or complaining because it has provided them with the status of citizen." For this status, they are expected to be grateful, and to demonstrate gratefulness – and the Bhutanese citizens in Alberta do demonstrate that gratitude: they are very polite, even in their criticisms of their new situation. But they speak of citizenship as creating the space in which they wanted to be governed, fairly, consistently, and properly. But from a neoliberal standpoint, that space of citizenship is one of *individual choice* and individual *self*-governance; a space in which discrimination may have no *legal* status, but that makes its *actual* occurrence deniable, or something that individual refugees/new citizens "should" simply have the individual fortitude to endure. Thus, the unofficial but pervasive message of neoliberalism to the new arrival is to "shut up, be grateful, deal with it yourself". This stealth mode of subjugation is a political trap that neoliberal biopolitics is increasingly producing, along with a damage-centred perception of problems faced by refugees that represents those problems as consequences of refugees' own flawed lives. Thus, paradoxically, a neoliberal emphasis on (abstract) freedom and equality

actually becomes an influential contributing factor to the production of refugeeness among refugees.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Summaries of Chapters' Analysis and Discussions

This research project investigated biopolitical priorities and interventions, imposed on Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in different ways as they were displaced from Bhutan, placed in camps in Nepal, and finally resettled in Canada. It used a qualitative and multi-methods approach to understand this imposition from the perspective of these refugees utilizing in-depth interviews with a sample of their population now living in Lethbridge, Canada, and focusing on their own narrated experience. It examines the ways in which the biopolitics of nationalism and of refugee management led to their being enclosed within an un-political space in the camps and their eventual resettlement, under the umbrella of supposedly non-political international refugee agencies, in Canada. It took note of how the politics of neoliberalism in the Canadian context "responsibilized" resettled Bhutanese refugees as individuals or families in a way that individualized their political agency and put barriers in the way of their full integration into Canadian society; barriers that racialized them in ways unacknowledged by the Canadian state.

Chapter one situated the study in terms of a brief history and present-day description of global refugee politics, outlining the production of the refugee and "refugeeness" as categories in the course of managing refugees as individuals and populations, and introduced the idea of a biopolitical study of refugee management in the case of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees.

In chapter two, I situated myself in relation to the project, as someone of Nepali origin who moved to Canada in the last decade and who has been actively involved in aiding and socializing with Bhutanese residents in Lethbridge. I also noted how my own subject-formation as well as my social positioning oriented me to this project, and how my relations with the

Bhutanese community in Lethbridge initially inhibited and then facilitated the progress of this project. I described the multi-methodological approach that I employed in the project, and also began to introduce the way in which I would attempt to develop a synthetic theoretical framework, derived from the work of Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Achille Mbembe, and feminist and postcolonial writers, appropriate to interpretation of the data gathered through literature and documentary searches, and through a discourse and narrative analysis of qualitative interviews.

In chapter three, I discussed theoretical debates over the treatment of the concepts of sovereignty, disciplinarity, governmentality, biopolitics, and biopower, as developed by Foucault, Agamben, and their critics. Here, I indicated a criticism of Agamben, who, unlike Foucault, seems to forsake a genealogical approach to the study of politics and power for a more abstract and static philosophical conception closely tied to the concept of sovereignty. At the same time, I noted that Agamben rightly stresses that modern biopolitics and biopower do not supplant sovereignty but in fact rely on its continued existence. This point is important to my discussion of the nationalist politics of Bhutan that led to the expulsion of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese. I also appreciated Agamben's discussion of the way in which modern definitions of displaced peoples, and the international interventions that define them as refugees in terms of "refugee regimes" of encampment and resettlement, seek to designate refugees as occupying "unpolitical" spaces and to reduce them to "bare life" without the political rights of citizens. However, I pointed out that this de-politicizing of refugees depends on a *biopolitical* move: their expulsion from citizenship in terms of a national politics of ethnic purity promoted by the Bhutanese state. Further, I introduced the work of Achille Mbembe to set the stage for an argument that the *practical exercise* of refugee management during their displacement, in the

camps, and even extending to the resettlement process, was *not* entirely un-political, for two reasons: First, it was subject to political interventions by the Bhutanese, Indian, and Nepali states around borders, repatriation, and other issues. Second, it met resistance from the Bhutanese refugees. This resistance may have been indirect and non-confrontational at times, but it indicated a resistant political subjectivity on the part of the refugees that was organized around a claim for the right to be governed. In relation to this, I also argued that the management of the camps was not a clear example of biopower in Foucault's sense of the term (a set of strategies and social technologies defined as non-political, operating "to make live and let die"), because the neglect of refugees' embodied and cultural needs amounted to a weaker emphasis on "making live" and a stronger emphasis on "letting die" – and that, in fact, the camps were systems in which the withdrawal of necessities for personal and cultural survival amounted to what Mbembe calls "necropolitics" – an active "letting die;" an actively devaluing not only of refugees' political and cultural identities, but also their *lives*.

Chapters four through seven present the substantive results of the research carried out for this thesis and are based on the empirical data derived from interviews and documentary research, strengthened by an ethnographic sensitivity to my own extensive interactions with Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees and my own background as an immigrant from Nepal to Canada. Chapter four dealt with the various political scenarios and power exercises that forcefully push people from political into non-political zones. Chapters five and six discussed the biopolitical governance of the refugee camps and the production of refugeeness as a series of interconnected discursive labels and associated practices of managerial biopower that produce "the refugee" as homeless, lacking a political subjectivity, and as both "in need" of care and responsible for self-care. In chapters five and six, I challenge the discourse of refugeeness by

noting that refugees are better described as having a political subjectivity that was suppressed, rather than as *lacking* in political subjectivity. I argue that various individual and collective acts by refugees in the camps, and the memories narrated by Nepali-speaking Bhutanese interviewees in Lethbridge recalling their camp experiences, do express a political subjectivity that claims a right to be governed by law, as citizens. Further, I argue that we should revise our notions of resistance to take into account what actions were *possible* for people in the process of displacement or were interned in the camps. If we do so, we can see, in the narrated memories of the interviewees, actions that might appear to be co-operative with or co-opted by camp authorities as resistive. For example, those housed in the camp described participating in policing the camp. They did this in terms of what could be called a biopolitical priority of "making live" – of keeping themselves safe, alive, and resilient. Given that the provision of many kinds of material and cultural resources in the camps did not adequately support the shared *cultural life* of Nepalese-speaking Bhutanese, nor their shared *political subjectivity*, and that this neglect led to the *physical deaths* of many, as interviewees noted, it can be argued that the camps were organized in terms of a kind of necropolitics. In that context, simply remaining resilient and actively trying keep themselves and their culture alive in the camps could be called a form of anti-necropolitical resistance. Further, interviewees noted that people they knew in the camp came to see only two options left to them: suicide or self-harm. Outside of the camp context, it is easy to think of such actions as self-defeating, but that neglects the fact that self-harm *asserts control over one's body* and suicide *asserts control over one's life*. Thus, I proposed that such actions to be understood as a form of *necrobiopolitical resistance,* and thus expressing a persisting *political* subjectivity.

In chapters four through seven, I develop and substantiate this argument, showing, through an examination of the camp structure and of international refugee regimes, how "letting die" was displaced by an active *and* politicized "making die" that was operative even before the expulsion of Nepali-speaking people from Bhutan. It began when their dispossession from citizenship was enacted through a *sovereign* act of constitutional change in the name of national purity (an act "beyond" or "above" the law", which *withdrew* the protections offered by the law to citizens from Nepali-speaking Bhutanese by defining them as not full citizens and eventually as non-citizens). This made them available to be tortured and killed *outside* the law, and available to arbitrary and differing forms of treatment at the Bhutanese border and at the borders of India and Nepal. Later, in the camps, the inadequate provision of resources to "make live" shaded off into a negligence that more resembled an active "making die;" that is, neglect became a mode of *reducing* "costs" or "problems" by *reducing* the size of a population. This too was politically-inflected, as eventually was the process of resettlement itself. I point out how the 1951 Convention covering refugees was limited in protecting refugee rights not only because of its historical Eurocentrism but also because it *did not recognize* refugees as having origins as citizens with a claim to a homeland, and *a right to be governed* as citizens.

In short, "refugees" were not defined as citizens whose rights to citizenship and national origin had been *stolen* from them *by* national states. Rather, the developing modern discourse of refugeeness came to designate them as *stateless*, and thereby, as *inherently lacking* in citizenship skills. The refugee-camp system, and the formation of an international refugee regime, came to be organized around a *de-contextualized re-definition* of displaced populations in a discourse that re-named them as "refugees" or later as "migrants." This discourse also ascribed to them certain *inherent qualities* that made them problematic: they were "migratory" or "nomadic;" they were

"costly" because they needed to be fed, clothed, and housed; they were "dependent," and thus a *problem* because the international order had to find ways to engage in their biopolitical *management* through new *de-politicizing* techniques of *biopower*. Thereby, the discourse of refugeeness also sought (unsuccessfully) to deprive refugees of a political subjectivity, making them instead *objects* of power (the mixture of "barely making live" and passively or actively "making die" that I named "necrobiopower") and reducing their subjectivity to a state of "neediness."

Partly because of the spread of an exclusionary politics of national purity that became tied into a racialized politics of security (as Foucault noted), and partly because refugees were not treated in the UN Convention primarily in terms of having rights to a national origin and to citizenship, it soon became evident that repatriation as a solution to the international "problem" they posed was not going to work in most cases. Thus, repatriation was eclipsed by third-country resettlement. In that context, refugees came to be characterized as "lacking" in citizenship "skills" and also linguistic and cultural skills, which meant that the discursive characteristics of "refugeeness" also came to include an additional notion of "neediness" – of being "in need" of "training" in order to "qualify" for "standards" of citizenship and employability in the destination country.

In chapter seven, I presented the experiences, challenges, and opportunities of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees in dealing with Canada's neoliberal politics and its administrative practice of setting standards and qualifications that must be met by resettled people seeking citizenship, higher education, and employment. I point out that interviewees strongly asserted that their primary attraction to Canada was not about "need." Instead, they expressed their wish to be citizens again; to be governed *and* to contribute to the country as citizens. Nor did they see

becoming citizens as giving up their attachment to their homeland. But interviewees reported that the standards and qualifications set for them often ignored the realities of their struggles to establish themselves in a society very different from anything in their past experience, taking up what ware now defined as their "personal" responsibilities. I also note that some interviewees found that their existing qualifications were ignored and that everyday responses to their efforts to find work or to otherwise integrate with the host society were at times met by a selectivity and arbitrariness that they described as racialized.

Central Arguments and, Theoretical and Empirical Contributions

This research project focuses on how the modern power dynamics described by Foucault are central to understanding the narratives of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees who were shaped into a "population" (an object of biopolitical management) in the camp, and eventually resettled in a new country, as (neoliberal) self-responsible "individuals" and families. This was done through the efforts of humanitarian regimes, but through an assemblage approach. But in their narratives, based on their experiences during displacement, in the camp, and in the country where they now live, my interviewees demonstrated that, while Foucault (1978) says that "power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (p, 93), in actuality, power emerges, diffracts, diffuses, and merges together in the refugee camps in multifaceted ways. In this thesis, I have sought to demonstrate how Foucault's discussion of the distinction between and the practical interconnection of biopower and biopolitics still can help to generate new understandings of existing refugee discourses and the practices that embody them in both Western and non-Western contexts (Legg, 2005; Legg & Heath, 2018). At the same time, however, these new understandings require modification in order to be applied effectively to an

investigation of the nuances of political practices and power relations in particular human social settings. As Mbembe (2019) argues, I have endeavored to develop a new mode of biopolitical investigation regarding the production of so-called refugees and of the various discursive labels that constitute refugeeness, and also of refugees' persisting political subjectivity. I have tried to situate this process in the social organization of the camp and in the politics of refugee regimes, to think through some critical questions: In what ways are the powers that confront and co-opt refugees productive and in what other ways are they deductive, and in what ways or to what extent are refugees' responses to these powers resistive, subversive, or liberative in the context of the camp? Moreover, what powers do resettled refugees face in the country of resettlement, and how differently do they function? Through a careful analysis of the concept of the biopolitical and terms associated with it in the work of Foucault, Arendt, Agamben, and Mbembe, and by bringing into this discussion the lived experiences of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees with biopolitical and necropolitical discourses and practices, I hope to have made a case for seeing that the management of refugees and their acceptance within resettlement programs involves biopolitical strategies that grew out of and still reflect the racialized politics of national "purity" but now also a globalized neoliberal political apparatus. I also hope to have shown that perpetuating the status of the "refugee" in terms of a "refugeeness" somehow inherent to their being also generates a *new* form of refugeeness in the necropolitical practices of states and international coalitions seeking to limit "migration." Recalling these practices reminds Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees of their past suffering under the imposition of statelessness that made them into noncitizens. The seeming death of refugee social and political subjectivity, and the actual deaths of some in the process of their displacement from the country of their birth were the consequences of a form of necropolitics which became in the camps the necro-

biopolitical management (and managed neglect) of supposedly unpolitical refugee bodies by governments and international organizations. The coexistence and interpenetration of these forms of power is a paradox of living and dying in the modern biopolitics of refugee and migration management. Thus, I hope that my research has contributed to scholarship both theoretically and empirically underscoring a new theoretical approach to the biopolitics of refugee-making applicable to the actions of states, to forced displacement and the reproduction of borders, to the organization of camps and the labelling of refugees, and to the relations of refugees to neighbouring and host communities. Through the interview data generated for this project, I hope also to have shown how important it is to pay attention to the lived experiences of refugees as *they themselves* recall and make sense of those experiences in their own narrations, placing them in the descriptions of physical, political, and moral geographies that make sense to them. To signal that wish, I have used the term "Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugee" often throughout this thesis to signal a need to unsettle and deconstruct the bureaucratic tag 'refugee".

Hannah Arendt, despite being forced to leave Germany and being deprived of her German citizenship, rejected being called a refugee. Instead, she insisted on identifying as a newcomer to the places into which she moved, in an effort to take emphasis away from the term "refugee" and to place it on the arbitrary Nazi brutality in exiling hundreds of thousands of Jews for no rational reason (Arendt, 1943). The Nazis had practised sovereign power as defined by the Nazi theorist Carl Schmitt, instituting from *beyond* the law and in the name of the purity of "the race" a power that German law was then bent to serve -- the right of the state to kill Jews and other "races" defined as "degenerate," as well as those who were physically and mentally disabled, and also the right to *exercise cruelty* on those defined as enemies of the state.

Refugees were normally considered at the time (1930s) as having been exiled for expressing some political opinion or demand, but the Jews had not, as a group, expressed or demonstrated any form of radical politics; nonetheless, they were compelled to accept being called refugees, which meant having to accept the connotations of refugeeness as it was then defined (Arendt, 1943). Arendt also insisted that Jews had moved from Germany to other countries of their own free will. For this reason, Arendt and those who thought like her tried to convince other people to think of them as newcomers who were optimistic about their lives and had nothing to do with the so-called "Jewish problem" as defined by antisemites, despite being helped by refugee agencies and communities (Arendt, 1943). However, Arendt articulated how Jewish exiles forfeited their solidarities with the outbreak of the war: they lost their relatives, their language, and their homes, and their friends were killed in the extermination camps (Arendt, 1943).

> We were told to forget; and we forgot quicker than anybody ever could imagine. In a friendly way we were reminded that the new country would become a new home; and after four weeks in France or six weeks in America, they pretended to be Frenchmen and Americans. (Arendt, 1943, p. 265).

Arendt's narrative communicates both a kind of optimism and a sense of the horrible times she and others had to endure. Her statements seem quite simple, but they reveal the existence of a power that made German Jewish exiles forget their claims to German citizenship, their history there, and the solidarity of the persecuted, tortured, and killed. A Jewish solidarity re-emerged after the war, but around a different politics: the establishment of the State of Israel.

The ability to create, remember, and pass on narratives is essential to a people's sense of belonging, their longing to be identified from and by their own home; to maintain a sense of affiliation to home and a web of affection encompassing it and those who remember it (Wood & Young, 2016). Arendt's stories speak about unspoken and unheard experiences, as well as the

forms of international co-ordination that protected their lives and provided them with a new home. She finds herself nowhere in the new land; being defined as refugees, stateless, and helpless did not create a space that would fit them (Arendt, 1943). To make people forget about their histories, culture, faith, and family is also to create fear. This is a form of necropolitical intervention that is today evident, if in a different way, in the neoliberal politics which calls on those admitted to a country of resettlement to *become competitive individuals* and to give up communal affiliations. This has also had, to some degree, a fear-inducing and silencing effect on the remembrance and communication of lived experiences and solidarities among Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees. While Arendt sought to present herself and her fellow exiles as optimistic, the underlying logic of her articulation signifies a sense of fear.

My point here is that the intervention of international protection agencies, however benevolent, is always also political and thereby, whether intentionally or not, can construct a sense of threat among refugees. The regimes constructed by modern nation-states and international organizations, from the EU to the UN, increasingly construct refugees as a threat to social and political order —and ethnic orders—presuming the existence of a threat in the refugees to the order of the political system and, as Foucault asserts in his discussion of state racism, to the "safety" of "society." Rather than addressing or acknowledging the political right to resistance as a human right, or the creative and liberating potential of resistance to name and address existing political systems, these systems all too often construct and reconstruct refugeeness as a source of threat and thus a target of power. The very notion of threat produces fear in two ways. First, the threat-subject created within the modern state or in refugee or migration-management regimes produces fear among those designated as "refugees" or "migrants." That fear may lead them into silence, forgetting, or some sort of compromise: for

example, an unequal negotiation with international refugee regimes, or an acceptance (or at least performance) of a compromised and subaltern identity in terms of imposed categories of refugeeness. The problem is that such compromises disable refugee options and futures as often as they enable them: compromise does not grant autonomy or freedom from unrealistic standards and requirements.

Conversely, the fear of "refugees" and "migrants" that is created by states, nationalist movements, and refugee regimes can also *further* increase and reproduce fear *within* these very same states and regimes as they try to manage or neutralize the "threat" of refugee populations. That is why they seek a "lasting solution" through but also beyond refugee management. However, one is not yet possible, precisely because the present form and order of national states and ethnic nationalism, and the international political and economic order, reproduces displacement, as now does also climate change.

Refugees or exiled people are strangers both to the state from which they are displaced and to the state where they seek asylum. This notion of the stranger produces fear within the mechanisms of modern politics (Thobani, 2007). Fear created among refugees is also a factor that germinates a sense of otherness in terms of the political categories used to divide people by the modern nation-state and by humanitarian regimes (which divide "host societies" and "agencies" from "refugees)." The production of fear is folded into a biopolitical manifold of refugee management, whether in the process of barring the way of "migrants" at borders, funnelling them into camps, repatriating them, or resettling them in a temporary country of asylum or a "permanent" third-country settlement destination. This is not sole creation of an absolute and sovereign right of exception. It is the consequence of a complex system of politics and exceptions from politics, of the non-political and the political, or biopower and necropower,

of the genealogy of *specific* powers and resistances that have developed and transformed over time.

Giorgio Agamben was influenced by Arendt and borrowed some of her ideas to develop his application of a biopolitical theory of sovereignty to the lives of refugees and to identify that nexus as pivotal to political history. According to Espiritu (2014), Agamben's and Arendt's theorization of the experiences of refugee populations and of the various political practices that exile and designate them, identifies the limits of a liberal attempt to integrate multifaceted indicators of refugee politics into a theory of the nation-state (Espiritu, 2014). The normative political system was unsuccessful in grasping the actual problems faced by refugees themselves because it sought only to reform current forms of sovereignty and administration; it thereby advocated policies that arguably would contribute to the making of refugees (Espiritu, 2014; Bui, 2016). The normative political system refers to a theoretical claim that the possibility of a "durable solution" for the "problem" posed by refugee populations can be found by assimilating them into the liberal nation-state's political systems. Espiritu argues that the political system of the modern nation-state *itself* produces refugees instead of a permanent solution (Espiritu, 2014). The humanitarian intervention to assist refugees employs intergovernmental strategies that reinforce the existing categorizations of citizen, nation, state, and international "humanitarianism," which are now challenged by critical refugee studies, as Espiritu (2014) and Nyers (2006) point out. In the existing system constituted by these entities, the relations between the identities imposed on refugees and their own political subjectivity is a resistive but not always an opposing one, since this very relationship can be analyzed in terms of mechanisms of "inclusive exclusion" (Nyers, 2006). The notion of inclusive exclusion designates ways in which the personal and collective subjectivities of refugees are subdued by policies and political

mechanisms that create spaces in which refugees can be re-subjectified; that is, made into docile and pacified examples of refugeeness by incorporating them (through "participation" or "responsibility") into mechanisms of social control such as helping to police camps against "violence", and thereby rendering them helpless and speechless. However, as has been discussed in this thesis, such processes of co-optation never entirely work as intended. Thus, while refugees are never fully autonomous, neither are they ever fully incorporated into systems of control.

The everyday picture of global displacement given in mainstream refugee studies demonstrates that, in terms of knowledge production, refugee studies is a "self-delimiting field" largely composed of anthropologists and political scientists drawn to the study of forced migration because it constitutes a set of unique situations in terms of historical and political consequences (Malkki, 1995, 1996). Malkki suggests that anthropologists tend to produce knowledge of human displacement by self-categorizing it as their specific area of investigation. However, other scholars today have been paying attention to this field, taking it itself as an object of study, examining it as a specific and situated form of knowledge production. Some of these scholars also are advocating an understanding of refugee experience and subjectivity in itself and situating the phenomena of displacement, migration and the production of refugees in historical and transhistorical perspectives. Refugeeness and fear are associated with each other because both are produced through practices of exclusion, displacement, and genocide. My interviewees identified ways in which refugeeness, and fear are produced and reproduced through a politics of persecution on one hand and a politics of humanitarian protection and management from the initial identification and expulsion of "non-citizens" to the labelling of

exiled persons as “migrants” or “refugees” through to the resettlement process with its conditional offer of citizenship and mandatory responsibilization.

I agree with Malkki’s (1995) and Nyers’ (2006) accounts of how fear and refugeeness are created through the operations of modern governments and humanitarian organizations – and also, one must add, through modern economic arrangements and also climate change. However, these authors emphasize one dimension of the production of refugeeness by focusing on intergovernmental and humanitarian agency interventions. I agree with them that refugeeness is created and produced. On one hand, it is created by the biopolitical intervention of modern governments and international organizations in defining, verifying, categorizing, and politicizing differences, establishing a structural dichotomy of refugee and citizen. However, I would argue that refugeeness is also produced *within* refugee subjectivities, not only through co-optation by refugee regimes but also, for example, through their sense of homesickness and through the ontological location of their collective political identity as *from Bhutan* and as having a right, even if unrecognized, to citizenship within it. These mingle, in the consciousness and discourse of refugees, with the labels that are imposed on them, even if they resist some of them. Refugeeness thereby merges (not always neatly) with elements of homesickness and resistance in a mental space in which refugees can develop new practical knowledge by politically surviving a supposedly non-political zone of refugee biopolitics, finding shared ways to care for their individual and collective selves even when that biopolitics turns necropolitical. After being exiled both from their homeland and from citizenship, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees found ways to engage in self-care and mutual care within the broader picture of the biopolitical management of the refugee “population” which is both beyond the politics of modern nation-states and yet is also still shaped by the political priorities of those states. The biopolitical

management undertaken by international refuge regimes seeks to intervene in the emergent biopolitics of refugee self-care and mutual care, but the emergence and practice of this self-caring biopolitics produces new elements of refugee political subjectivity that emerge *between* (on one hand) a sense of homesickness or the desire to have citizenship there once again, and (on the other) a refugeeness created by governments and international organizations to manage displaced bodies and subjectivities. In the process, between self-care and confrontation by predetermined options, a refugee sense of homesickness may be transformed into an orientation to a future home rather than to the country of displacement. My interviewees' discussions of "home" identify homesickness as having a potential beyond a backward-looking nostalgia; the potential to animate and shape how people orient to the future—a way of making a sense of where they are in the present and where they are going.

The refugee population's political agency emerges from an ontological sense of collective political subjectivity grounded in a felt right to citizenship and to be (properly) governed, in their ethnopolitical roots, and in an ethos of hospitality they may seek or find in the country of their displacement. Viriasova (2016) argues that this ethos of hospitality is produced in two ways: by the political community outside the refugee camp, and by the refugees' own practices of self-care. My interviewees' accounts also identify these two sources of an emergent ethos of hospitality; one developing "outside" the camp through the so-called political community characteristic of modern nation-states and the other within the refugee population mediated by their memories of their political and ontological past. The interaction of these two orientations to hospitality can perpetuate or undermine discourses of refugeeness depending on how they handle distinctions between refugees and citizens. The ethnopolitical belongingness and ethos of hospitality that develops within the refugee population provides an imaginary bridge

between refugees' situations in the camp and their sense of social and political affiliation to the country of their birth. It may also provide a fragile bridge to the hospitality offered from the political community outside the camp. This bridge, it must be said, is political, and may provoke politics, because it threatens the division between camp and host country and between the political and the unpolitical.

But if the political use of law manufactures refugees and introduces human displacement, then how are refugees *not* political subjects? This question identifies that modern political categories and borders possess capacities that allow authorized institutions and organizations to expand and contract categories and borders, even on occasion at the same time if in different ways. This notion of political power signifies the paradoxical nature of modern biopolitics in addressing refugee problems. I see a problem in the term 'refugee management' because national and international governmental and non-governmental organizations focus their engagement in managing refugees within the parameters of established policies that do not address and thus may end up helping to perpetuate the reproduction of refugeeness. These organizations fail to delve into the genealogical dimensions of displacement and genocide in terms of Foucault's Nietzschean definition of genealogy as an exploration of "how we became the *problem* that we are." The existing top-down model of defining refugees employed by present refugee regimes, which uses the UN convention but uncritically accepts the interplay of nation-state power and politics needs to be revisited and analyzed in terms of a new model of critical refugee studies, which would emplace refugees and displaced populations *within* the broad spectrum of political agency and rights to access the same powers of representation and access to resources as so-called citizens do without a bureaucratic tag.

Future Direction

As refugee crises constitute a growing global set of political problems and confront us all with the prospect not only of being *impacted by* global population displacements but also of becoming part of it, we must come to understand how nation states have evaded responsibility for their role in the production of refugees by diverting attention to so-called problems of "refugee management directions." The national and international impact of the global refugee crisis will be negative and responses to it will be reactive as long as borders continue to be seen as walls that define and protect "society" in the name of nation states, and as long as border policies continue to produce violence and violations of rights. Refugees are increasingly being produced in zones occupied by countries that have not signed on to the 1951 Convention, such as Nepal, or that have signed on to it, but treat it as an abstraction. The production of various types of refugees, especially from the Global South, is now influencing the politics governing geographical territories within the West causing movements to fortify national territories and expand the role of borders in removing or denying the rights of displaced people. In an era in which we now face immediate threats to liveability and to the world food supply because of climate change, and also the increased possibility of global geopolitical conflict, is it not the case that the continued existence and future viability of nation states is more threatened by such fortifying and excluding reactions than by any number of displaced persons at their borders? These issues have become centrally important to the future direction of research and policy but addressing them honestly is also urgent and vital to rebuilding a sustainable and equitable human community across territorial interests and differences.

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Appendix A: Email Recruitment Invitation

Email Subject Line: Univ. of Lethbridge Study – Biopolitics and Governmentality: From Camps in Nepal to Community in Canada

Hello,

My name is Rabindra Chaulagain. I am a PhD student in the Cultural, Social and Political Thought program at the University of Lethbridge. I am inviting members of the Bhutanese community in southern Alberta to be in my study. If you agree to participate, I will ask you questions during a one-on-one interview about how you articulate biopolitical experience from the displacement in Bhutan to your resettlement in Canada. The interview time will be approximately an hour. I will also be seeking permission to observe some community activities.

I will be attentive to and mindful of the privacy of participants. You will have the choice to have your real name used or you may choose to have an alternate name used. If you choose an alternate name that will be used in place of your real name, there is a possibility that other people who are present during the community activities may be aware that you are participating in my research.

There are no anticipated risks to participating. You will be able to withdraw from my study by letting me know that you no longer wish to participate. If you do, I will ask you to decide how you want to handle the information that has been shared. You may ask for you information to be destroyed, returned to you, or you can choose to allow me to continue to use your information in my research. Participation is voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate.

If you have questions about the study or are interested in participating, please contact me at rabindra.chaulagain@uleth.ca or 226-505-2491. You may also contact my supervisors Dr. William Ramp and Dr. Glenda Bonifacio, at 403 329 2347 (ramp@uleth.ca) and 403 380 1897 (glenda.bonifacio@uleth.ca) respectively. You may also contact the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Lethbridge at research.services@uleth.ca or 403-329-2747 if you have questions about your rights as a participant. This research has been reviewed for ethical acceptability and approved by the University of Lethbridge Human Participant Research Committee.

Thank you,

Rabindra Chaulagain

Appendix B: Consent Form for the Participants

Biopolitics and Governmentality: From Camps in Nepal to Community in Canada

Dear Participant:

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study on biopolitical experiences of Canadian Bhutanese population in Southern Alberta. The purpose of my research is to examine on how Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees articulate biopolitical experiences during the time of their displacement from Bhutan to their resettlement in Canada. I am a Doctoral student at the University of Lethbridge, Canada. The information collected from this investigation will be obtainable in a Doctoral thesis; in addition, I plan to publish the findings in a journal (no personal identification will be disclosed).

This study will require your participation in a one-on-one interview at a time and location of mutual agreement between the researcher and the participant. During this time, you will be interviewed about your experiences from past to the present. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded by assuring of personal encryption. I will jot down with your permission during the interview if you do not wish to be recorded. Your participation will involve two consecutive sessions; the initial interview which will last 90 minutes followed by the second follow-up interview will last 60 minutes.

There are no anticipated risks or discomforts related to this research project. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent; you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. You may choose to not answer any question, or you may withdraw from the study at any time for any reason about your rights as a participant in this research. If you do this, all information from you will be destroyed.

In order to protect your anonymity and confidentiality, several steps will be taken. The people who will have access to the listing of your real names will be me, and my supervisors at the University of Lethbridge. The written notes during the data collections will be scanned into my electronic device (laptop) which is only accessible through a password only known to me.

An audio-recorder will be used to record all the interviews that you have consented to. All the recorded narratives will carefully be uploaded to my laptop, my email, and Google drive that are only accessible through a password encryption. The original narratives on the recorder will be deleted after the data collection is completed, while those uploaded in the email, and Google drive will be deleted after the project is completed.

All the original notes taken and the signed consent forms, will be kept safely in my office desk which is under lock and key. I will transcribe the data by myself. The data and the transcribed interviews will be destroyed soon after five years. The thesis and any other presentations and

publications will not contain any mention of your name and pseudonyms will be used for any quotations.

I hope to publish the findings as a book once I complete my PhD program. At no time, however, will your name be used, or any identifying information revealed in publications or presentations. You may contact me at rabindra.chaulagain@uleth.ca, If you wish to get a summary of the findings in electronic copy from this investigation.

You may as well contact my supervisors, Dr. Glenda Bonifacio and Dr. William Ramp, at 403 380 1897 and 403 329 2347 respectively. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Office of Research Ethics, University of Lethbridge (Phone: 403-329-2747 or Email: research.services@uleth.ca).

This research project has been reviewed for ethical acceptability and approved by the University of Lethbridge Human Subject Research Committee. Thank you for your consideration.

I agree to the audio-recording of the interview. ☐ Yes ☐ No

I agree quotations to be used with pseudonyms. ☐ Yes ☐ No

_____ (Printed Name of Participant)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

I have read (or have been read) the above information regarding this research study on identities and social integration of Canadian Bhutanese population residing in Southern Alberta and consent to participate in this study.

_____ (Printed Name of Participant)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

_____ (Printed Name of Researcher)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

Rabindra Chaulagain
PhD Student
University of Lethbridge
2265052491
rabindra.chaulagain@uleth.ca
A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.