

UNEMBankING HABITATIONS AND IMAGINATIONS: THE POLITICS OF LIFE AMIDST THE EBBS AND FLOWS OF THE SUNDARBANS FORESTS OF WEST BENGAL

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Dedicated to a sublime *joon* storm.⁰¹

Introduction

This essay focuses on the embankments surrounding inhabited islands in the Sundarbans Delta of West Bengal, and the politics of life surrounding them. In the process, I propose how the methodology of participant observation can animate design by attuning it to the minutiae of inequality, the geography of poverty and local politics around livelihoods and land. In turn, and as crucially, I lay out the ways in which design can influence anthropology by urging it towards more speculative and imaginative thought, decolonising knowledge, and rerouting it through other histories, toward both literal and metaphorical unembanked possibilities.

Shifting rivers, shifting forests

The Sundarbans are a tidally active mangrove forest with 52 inhabited islands and a population of 4.5 million. The majority of these inhabitants are political and ecological refugees from Bangladesh or other parts of West Bengal, as well as *adivasis* (indigenous communities) who were brought by the British for the cultivation of rice paddy. In addition to people, the forests and river creeks are home to a large number of tigers, crocodiles, sharks, snakes, and numerous species of birds and fish. It is a unique landscape. The forest is a river. Every few hours the forest cover swells and shrivels with the ebbs and flows of twice-daily tides. Bali Island, with population of 40,000 people, where I conducted 22 months of fieldwork, along with its neighbouring islands on the southern delta, experiences the daily erosion and accretion of soil. Aerial images show the shifting of land, but one doesn't need GIS mapping to see these changes. Sitting on the edges of the island, one can experience the river inching closer. As the water retreats, the gnarled pneumatophoric roots of the mangroves are exposed in their convolutions, only to disappear again in a few hours. It is no surprise that it is on these terrains that



Fig.01 A newly constructed concrete wall in a shifting landscape of high tide and low tide, Bali Island, Sundarbans. Megnaa Mehta.

mudskippers - fish that are part terrestrial - flourish. New mudflats appear, while others disappear. The landscape changes every season, every two weeks with the spring tide and neap tide, and every six hours with the high tide and low tide. Amid such churning, what is land and what is water, what is river and what is sea, what is salty and what is sweet are in constant flux, and ultimately false distinctions.

It was the month of June, the period known as *kal baisakhi* where days and nights are beset with thunder, lightning and rain, in anticipation of the monsoons of the Bay of Bengal delta. The wind had picked up pace. Trees swayed as if drunk. The color of the sky changed to an ominous ash grey. With the menacing vibrations of construction machines, punctuated by the sound of an approaching thunderstorm, Prashanjit was barely audible. Yet, raising his voice, adamant to tell me as much as he could, he said with pride, 'This is nothing like you've seen before, this is based on designs from the Netherlands. This is a modern embankment, not like the usual mud embankments (*bandhs*).' He was the *Up-Pradhan*, a senior official of the local village government of Bali Island.

At the time that I was conducting fieldwork, the first concrete embankments were being built on Bali Island. For the *Up-pradhan* and

his various contractor friends these walls represented the arc of progress, and he had been keen to show off this work to me. We stood on top of the half-finished embankment, which he described by repeatedly using the English word 'modern' and the Bengali word *notun* meaning new. He spoke at length about the budget, the costs, the dimensions and materials of this particular construction project. He regarded himself as one of the more successful local government leaders for having transported such huge machinery, massive earthmovers and concrete mixers, to an area with barely any roads, no electricity or hospitals. He continued, 'Do you know....in the Netherlands half their country would sink if they didn't build their embankments? We here in the Sundarbans need to build like them.'"

There is an assumption that embankments are absolutely essential for the Sundarbans inhabitants to survive. The ideology of embankments as lifelines has only been strengthened as climate change has become one of the most urgent issues of our times. Concepts such as resilience, adaptation and the plight of ecological refugees have moved centre stage, especially in internationally funded development projects and money allotted toward resilience research. As a direct consequence, the Sundarbans Embankment Reconstruction Project has recently allocated a colossal Rs 5,032 crore (GBP 562 million) (Bera, 2012) to build what are referred to as modern cement and block embankments. The embankments will be five metres high and 30-40 metres wide. Their surfaces will be covered by polypropylene sheets. They will cover 3,500 kilometres of island perimeters, in an attempt to replace older and what are considered weaker *bandhs* (mud embankments).

As we walked along inspecting the wall, Prasanjit introduced me to someone named Jatin, who worked for the company that had been contracted to build this embankment. From their body language I gathered the two were good friends. After a long handshake and friendly slaps on the back, the two lit cigarettes and started chatting with each other. I noticed that they both had on very similar black patent leather shoes. The shiny shoes were almost as incongruous to the marshy riverbed as the embankment felt to the surrounding landscape. In a village where homes are made of mud and hay and the landscape is dotted with rice fields and ponds, these imposing and imposed concrete walls looked alien. I listened to the two of them exchange pleasantries. Contractors and local village officials, it is known, have a symbiotic relationship when it comes to the work of 'development.' **According to Bera (2012), for every kilometre of embankment built in the Sundarbans the contractor gets between 5-18 crores (GBP 0.6-2 million). It is a well-known fact that some part of this massive amount is shared with local village officials.**

I asked Jatin if he had worked on many other embankment projects in the region. What followed was a long list of projects his company had been contracted to build: big highways, bigger bridges, a power plant,

and even a floating 'VIP' hotel. He boasted that in comparison with the engineering marvels he had worked on in the past, this embankment was small fry. In the end of a long monologue, the answer to my question was that not only had the company never built an embankment before, but also Jatin and his team had never set foot in the Sundarbans until the previous year when their company won the bid for this project. Taken aback, I wondered to myself how the company would be able to design the embankment keeping in mind the particular ecological specificities of this region.

Almost as a premonition of greater storms to come, or as an answer from elsewhere to my question, a few large drops of rain fell to the ground. A purple bolt of lightening shot through the sky. The three of us looked up in unison. I zipped my bag, worried about my field notes getting wet. Jatin moved his Samsung smartphone from his breast pocket to his trouser pocket. Prasanjit insisted we set off for our respective homes. Keen to know more about the company that had been contracted to build the embankment, I tried to pursue our conversation but by this point the *Up-Pradhan* was satisfied that he had shown me the 'modern' construction his office was undertaking. He warned, all knowingly, 'You don't understand....these are not ordinary storms, you must get back home. It takes a second in these parts for everything to go into the belly of the river (*nodir gorbey*).' With a few other words of caution, the two whizzed off on Prasanjit's motorbike to his house in the center of the island. I cycled back to the neighbouring village where I was based, passing several kilometres of mud embankments. Having just heard the timeline for construction from Jatin, I realised that in a year's time or possibly less all of these homes hugging the embankment would be displaced and their land would be acquired to build a much broader, wider and supposedly modern embankment.

It was almost uncanny, and certainly ironic, that just as they waxed eloquent about the strength of this wall they were building, the force of the typical *kal baisakhi* storm about to unfurl sent the two scurrying off into the island's interior. As the trees trembled around me and lightening bolts illuminated the otherwise dark expanse of forests stretching ahead, I had the sense that everything could indeed, in a matter of seconds, wash away into the belly of the river. The rain was coming down hard and the wind was so strong that I could barely move forward. Soaking wet, concentrating hard on the path on which I was cycling along the river's edge, the storm - as storms often have the power to do - made me feel at once insignificant and in awe of the force of the wetness around me, the sky, the air, the river, the road. Unsurprisingly perhaps, it is in experiencing such storms, definitions of the sublime come to mind. Edmund Burke (1998:24) defines the sublime in oxymoronic terms: a 'delightful horror,' a 'sort of tranquility tinged with terror,' for him it was 'the strongest emotion the mind is capable of feeling;' similarly for Kant

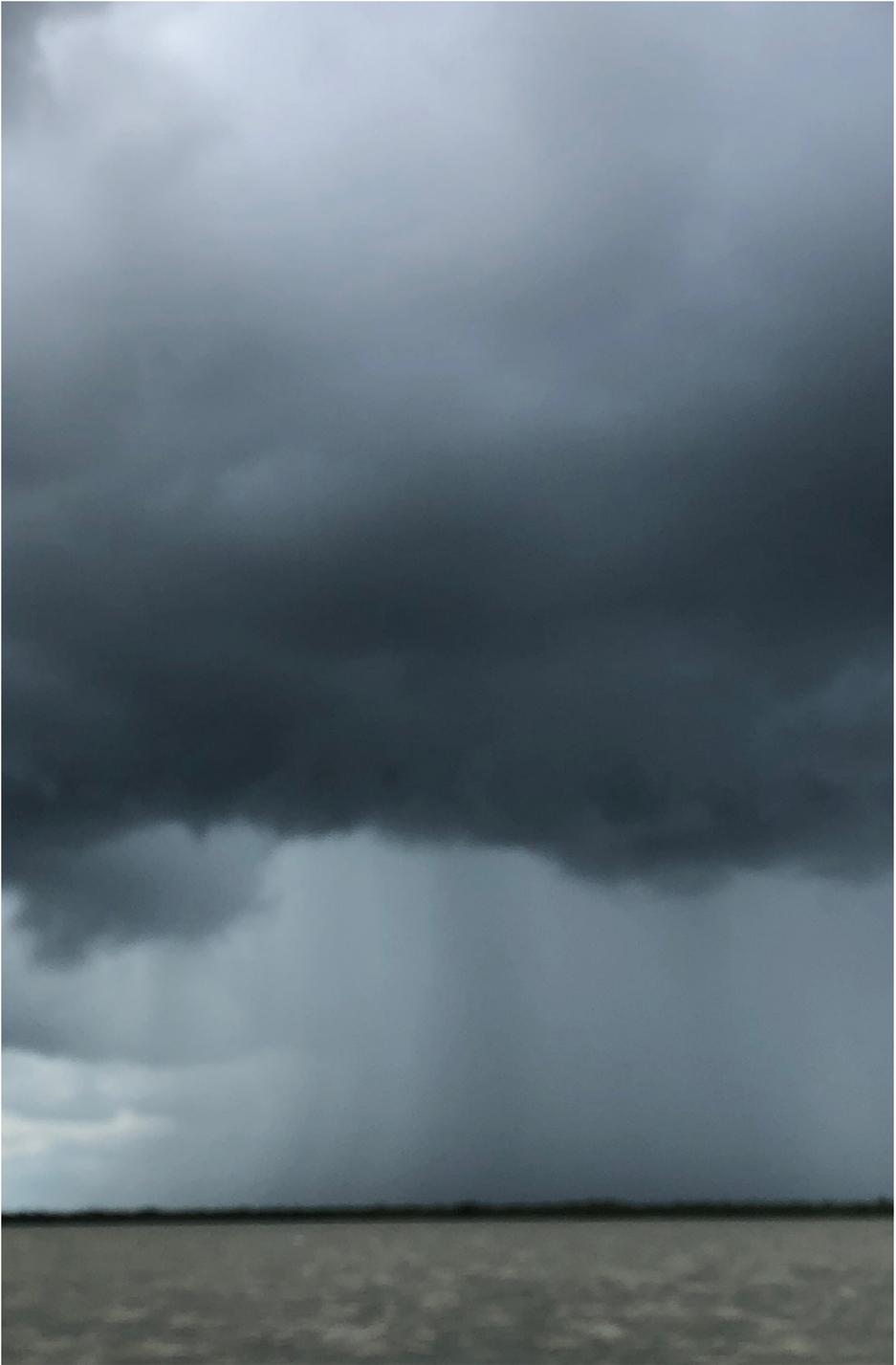


Fig.02 A kalbaisakhi storm, Bali Island, Sundarbans. Megnaa Mehta.

(1987) the sublime was a combination of pain and pleasure.

Kal baisakhi storms, overwhelming aesthetic experiences, which are sublime in their vitality, simultaneously wreck unfathomable sorrow. Not too long ago, in May of 2009, Cyclone Aila had destroyed the homes and property of many thousands. With a death toll of over 200 people, the cyclone damaged over 700 kilometres of embankments. Many of these were concrete embankments just like the modern embankments being built on Bali Island. Even individuals like Prasanjit who champion the progress of Dutch-style dikes, in the face of heavy winds, thunder and lightning, and the living memory of cyclones such as Aila, acknowledge that little if anything can keep out the storms. This awareness of the strength of natural forces and the desire to conquer them is part of a longer history of doomed infrastructural megaprojects in the region. In the 19th century, Port Canning - the closest small town to the Sundarbans - was built despite many warnings against its construction. Named after Lord Canning, it was designed to rival Singapore's port and replace Kolkata. This huge investment came to naught when the Matla river surged and everything was ruined (Mukhopadhyay, 2016). The design imagination of the British, based on European riparian systems, failed to adapt to the assertive rivers, monsoon and cyclonic winds of the Bay of Bengal delta. It seems as if modern day stakeholders pushing for concrete embankments are motivated, much like the British were, by a combination of factors: hubris, denialism and self-interested profit.



Fig. 03 Modern embankments, Bali Island, Sundarbans. Megnaa Mehtta.

Hunter, a colonial administrator who authored the statistical account of Bengal, wrote in 1875: 'The inundation works cruel havoc among [the] low-lying isolated villages ... the more the forest is cleared away, the smaller the barrier placed between the cultivator and the devouring wave' (Hunter, 1973: 55-56). In the 19th century, as island reclamation projects were being expanded, there was an acute awareness that clearing the forests would generate incalculable risks. However, the main motivation was to generate revenue, and so despite the tragedies that might befall both human and animal inhabitants, the forests were cleared at such a speed that the Sundarbans were reduced to half their original size.

Analogous logic informs the actions of people like Prasanjit and Jatin, extending upward to their enablers in government, engineering firms, contractors, international NGOs, and climate change adaptation funding bodies, all of whom have a stake, albeit of a different kind, in the building of embankments. For development funds to flow, or for vote banks to deliver, embankments - the more modern the better - must be built.

The geographic minutiae of inequality

Monsoons punctuate everyday life, rhythms of work, sleep and song. The *malhar* - the atmosphere created by torrential rains - takes over both moods and movements, of people, birds, animals and the branches of trees. On Bali Island during the monsoon months, rice fields completely submerge with just the tiny green tips of paddy visible from afar. Ponds (*pukkurs*) and lakes (*khaal*) customarily overflow. It is impossible to tell water bodies from territories of land. Wetness seeps into every crevice. Clothes never dry in such dampness and new life sprouts from the strangest of places. Farming requires one to wade knee-deep in mud. Roads become rivers and so getting around via the dirt paths requires that one claw the earth with one's nails, like a crab, so as not to slip.

This is the season when snakes and snakebites abound. In these months, every household experiences a degree of illness. Children fall sick with bad stomachs and entire neighborhoods of women and men complain of fevers and headaches. Bali Island, home to 40,000 people, doesn't have a hospital or even a primary healthcare center. During the monsoons the chances of small illnesses turning into fatalities is much higher because it is impossible to travel too far too quickly. The death toll due to venomous snakebites is highest during these months.

Long before the global alarm around climate change began, the Bay of Bengal experienced some of the country's strongest storms, tidal surges and cyclones at this time of the year. But while it is undeniably a dangerous time of the year, it is also the most vital period for Sundarban

residents who obtain their largest source of fresh water for the year. The rainwater-fed ponds surrounding every house are used for agriculture, for farming fish, and for daily household activities like washing and bathing. More so than anywhere else, the monsoons here embody the fragile balance between scarcity and abundance, salt water and fresh water, death and regeneration.

Crucial to the relationship of fear and hope with regard to the monsoons is that it does not play out uniformly in every part of the Sundarbans, or even within one island. I first noticed this sometime in September 2017 when it had been raining for four days continuously. Alpana di and I had just rearranged the pots placed in strategic locations to catch the rivulets running down the mud walls of our house. Despite these pots, there were several puddles inside our home. An acquaintance, a man named Mrinal, whose house is located in the interior of the island adjacent to the village bazaar had stopped by for a chat. He was praising the rains. We listened to Mrinal, sharing with much excitement, how he had planted the most expensive variety of rice this year, a variety called *Gobindo Bhog*. In preparation for cultivating a second crop he had also deepened his ponds so as to have a bigger catchment for rainwater. The plan was to use a water pump, powered by a generator - for the island has no electricity - to pump water from the pond for a winter harvest of paddy. For most people living on the river's edge, the unabated rain in the past few days had been a cause for deep concern, not something to celebrate. All I had heard, until Mrinal had visited us, were complaints. Neighbors lamented the dampness, the mud walls that were so wet that moss had begun to grow on them, and how their hay roofs were close to caving in because of the sheer force of the rain. As Mrinal left our house, Alpana explained with a tone tinged with slight bitterness that not only did he live in a brick house (*paccka baadi*), but was also the owner of a clothing store in the village bazaar. In addition, he had a sizeable amount of agricultural land. She then said reflecting on our conversation much of which had centered on the theme of the monsoons, 'I'd hate to be the rain, it is constantly blamed (*shobh samay dosh diya jaye*) of being either too little or too much, too late or too early... but it can never be right.' Alpana and all her neighbours on the river's edge had no land and so the rains were not a concern in relation to the cultivation of paddy. However, with their homes so close to the river, there was always the much more pressing anxiety of a breach, a tidal surge or a devastating cyclone during this time of the year.

An important aspect of the geography of each Sundarbans Island is that the poorest, often belonging to the lowest caste groups, live on the river's edge. These people are frequently landless and depend on the forest, known colloquially as 'doing the jungle', for their livelihoods. They are fishers, crab collectors and honey collectors. For those who 'do the jungle,' these months bring a standstill to their work. The monsoon also

brings with it more extreme anxieties. The homes of the poor on the river's edge, or *nodir dharey*, are often the first to swim away during excessive rain, while those who own land - the shopkeepers, schoolteachers, and local politicians like Mrinal and the *Up-pradhan* - live in the interiors of the island next to the village bazaar (see Jalais, 2014). For interior households with land, and therefore relatively bigger ponds, it was in anticipation of the monsoon that ponds were dug even deeper to harvest more rainwater. They would act as a catchment for excess rainwater, prevent flooding and feed a second crop of paddy. Customarily, it is only these households that have the material access to generator-powered water-pumps. There is therefore a huge divide, socio-economically, between those who live on the peripheries, by the river's edge and those that live in the interiors of the island and the monsoon months only exacerbated this divide within the same island.

The rains create gradients of joy and grief which are by no means homogenous, and which map onto local geographies, **one's proximity to the embankment and the river's edge, relationships to certain kinds of labour - fishing versus farming or being a shop owner, and ultimately also to one's material conditions - brick homes or mud homes, or homes with raised platforms. These are minute details, yet crucial, and are obtained from participant-observation, the work of learning about the lives of others by embedding oneself in those lives, and this knowledge has implications for design - enriching it or at times creating challenges to the ease with which transformations might be actualised.**

The wrong side of the embankment

Land acquisition and compensation is one of the more contested issues of embankment construction (Mukhopadhyay, 2015). Families quoted promised compensation between 1-5 lakhs [1000-5000GBP] supposedly reflecting the value of the land, but many had not received anything near the amounts promised. The unanimously held viewpoint was that the compensation received was woefully insufficient to buy land in the interior parts of the island. Real estate in the interiors of the island commands a safety premium, just as further 'up' islands, referring to the villages and towns towards Kolkata, are safer and more expensive than the 'down' islands of the delta (Jalais, 2014). While new tourist lodges with river views are defying this pattern, it still holds for Sundarbans residents.

For the majority of those who live on the river's edge who depend on the forest for their living, the adequacy of the compensation amount is beside the point since they have no land in their name. The really vulnerable of Sundarban residents have their homesteads on *khaas jameen*, government land that they don't own and to which they only have squatter rights. On visits to the modern embankment during fieldwork,



Fig. 04 A village colony on the wrong side of the embankment, Bali Island, Sundarbans. Megnaa Mehta.

I noticed that an entire village colony had formed on the wrong side of the embankment a few months into its construction. Several homes were not behind the protective wall but in front of it, literally beside the river. This meant that the most vulnerable households of the island were being rendered even more vulnerable because of a wall for the supposed benefit of the entire village.

Bimal and Parimal Mondol are two brothers whose homestead was on *khaas jameen*. When asked about having to shift their homes even closer to the river, they expressed their fear and hopelessness. Bimal said, 'Yes we are scared, but what will we do. Fear won't help us. Where will we go?....There is nowhere to go.' For many people in the Sundarbans, this is the fourth time that they are rebuilding their homes from scratch in their lifetime. On the west side of Bali Island, where work on the modern embankment hasn't yet begun, an equally bleak scenario presents itself. Mrithunjay Das and his wife Shanti Das belong to the Moochi caste community, one of lowest caste communities of India formerly known as 'untouchables.' As Mrithunjay and Shanti's household is on the side of the island facing heavy erosion, they have witnessed several embankment breaches and collapses. As one embankment collapses, the government irrigation department acquire land to build another ring of embankments. At the time that I did fieldwork the fourth ring embankment had collapsed and sacks of sand had been stacked as a temporary measure to prevent



Fig. 05 'Into the belly of the river,' land accretion and erosion, Bali Island, Sundarbans. Megnaa Mehta.

the salt water from coming in. For this particular household all their land has been eaten up by the devouring tide. They and families like them have received no compensation and have no legal recourse.

The extended Das community, composed of several brothers, their wives, children and grandchildren, have been pushed out of the Sundarbans and are now living in impermanent settlements in towns along the train line between Canning and Kolkata. Those who remain - Mrithunjay and Shanti - are pushed into the belly of the river not by natural disasters, but by disasters of development.

Mud vs. concrete / nature vs. technology

The best window into the intricate politics of embankment making and breaking in the Sundarbans is Mukhopadhyay's book *Living with Disaster: Communities and Development in the Indian Sundarbans* (2015). Mukhopadhyay traces the dynamics of complicity, cooperation, and cooption that play out in the highest rungs of government and locally. While his work is seminal to our understanding of both development projects in the Sundarbans and the discourses that require and perpetuate under-development, it is a line of thinking that still holds embankments to be lifelines of the Sundarbans.



Fig. 06 A mud embankment or 'bandh,' Bali Island, Sundarbans.. Megnaa Mehtta
Soon 3,500 kilometers of island peripheries will be replaced by concrete, cement and cinder blocks.

In addition to the scholarly work of Mukhopadhyay, today the loudest criticism of modern embankments comes from certain environmentalists who cite the ecological destruction that concrete embankments will cause. They perceive a threat to the pristine nature and wildlife of the Sundarbans. Anurag Danda, head of Sundarbans and Climate Adaptation programme of WWF India, writes that the concretisation of the river's edge will inhibit the use of the space for a thriving birdlife that also inhabits the area (Bureau, 2012). Other editorialists take issue with the fact that polypropylene is non-biodegradable, or that the use of heavy materials and heavy technology might harm the riverbed.

What is so curious about the terms of this debate, whether it is the politics of embankment construction or the one between weak mud embankments and supposedly stronger concrete embankments is its narrowness. No one seems to be considering a scenario where both human and non-human life can be best protected by doing away with embankments altogether. Instead of weighing mud against concrete, pitting humans against nature, birdlife against people's lives, my challenge to these embankments stems from **questions around whether these dividing lines will genuinely aid in protecting the lives and lands of the people for whom they are ostensibly being built.**

Other histories

In offering the provocation of Sundarbans embankments as imposed lines rather than lifelines, I take inspiration from the groundbreaking, or, more appropriately, overflowing work, of Anuradha Mathur and Dilip da Cunha (da Cunha, 2018; Mathur and da Cunha, 2016; Mathur and da Cunha, 2001). **These scholars and landscape architects have argued that rivers on maps are false** lines, created by the act of freezing the frame of the hydraulic cycle and ignoring the myriad other possibilities of thinking about water, such as air, moisture, and monsoons. Da Cunha's writings resonate for the Sundarbans, where boundaries are fluid and the forest is a river. Describing the flooding of the Mississippi River in the USA, Mathur and de Cunha (2001) argue that these cannot be considered natural disasters, but are disasters by design. Perhaps the Mississippi's former Native American inhabitants hold some lessons for the Sundarbans in that 'their habitation was not necessarily on riverbanks exposed to the flows and floods of an entity limited by a line; it was rather in an open field of wetness that rose and fell' (da Cunha, 2018: 2). **Monsoon waters in the Sundarbans, like the mighty Mississippi, defy containment.**

The possibilities of an unembanked Sundarbans are grounded in a past and a future imaginary where embankments were not considered indispensable to life in the region. Sources during the colonial period described the Sundarbans as **extremely fertile, with a flourishing rice crop.** Rainey (1891: 271) stated 'the Sundarbans contains the finest rice-fields, not only in Bengal, but in the whole of India.' He wrote that rice flourished in the Sundarbans compared with any other part of British India because **it did not depend on the rainfall as much.** Crucially, Rainey's account emphasised buffalo and wild boar, not salt water, as the main threats to the ripening rice. Embankments are nowhere to be seen. This destabilises the narrative that agriculture in the Sundarbans cannot flourish without embankments.

Another alternative historical antecedent lies in the several salt-resistant varieties of rice known to have flourished in the Sundarbans. These salt-resistant varieties were destroyed precisely because of the construction of embankments, which led to increasing reliance on freshwater agriculture. Some NGOs such as the **Society of Environment and Development** are trying to bring back these varieties to the region. In neighboring Bangladesh 'climate change reductionism' – the idea that any kind of flooding must be caused by climate change and the subsequent need to prevent all forms of flooding is hugely problematic. Camelia Dewan (forthcoming) shows us that there are three different kinds of floods - *borsha* (annual monsoon rains), *bonna* (irregular destructive floods in the wake of cyclones and storms) and *jalabaddho* (waterlogging). Each of these has a separate role to play in the local ecology and Dewan

argues that the narrative that all floods are destructive is incorrect. Climate change resilience and programs to prevent floods in the Indian and Bangladesh Sundarbans need to delve deeper into ecological and agricultural histories so as to understand the different conditions in which the landscape has thrived and can continue to do so in the future.

Historical records for the region are few but the archeological evidence of ruins, brick homes, tanks and religious buildings establish the fact that there were flourishing settlements and kingdoms before the colonial period. There is no evidence to suggest that they depended on embankments rather than floodplains. It might have been the case that houses were constructed differently, possibly on higher ground and further inland. Ralph Fitch, a European traveler, who journeyed through this area in 1586 described the region as fertile and with houses that were firm and lofty, doubtless to withstand cyclones and storm-waves (Fitch as cited in Rainey, 1891: 279). Perhaps what he implied by the use of the word 'lofty' is that they were built on stilts, as is the case in neighbouring Myanmar, a region with which there was much more movement of people and commodities than can be conceived of today. Besides the fabulously rich account of the spread of Islam through agriculture in the region documented by Eaton (1993), written evidence of how settlements were built in the pre-colonial period is thin. It is also true that there are several differences that need to be taken into account from what existed a few centuries ago to the current times. These include geological shifts in the delta tilting eastward and several anthropogenic changes. But perhaps, what we need along with a little more information for inspiration toward more attuned designs is in fact a lot more imagination.

Unbanking imaginations

In this essay I have tried to show what can be gained by tethering design to participant observation, a long-term commitment to learn and understand peoples' imaginations, politics, and expectations (Ingold, 2015), which reveals the minutiae of inequality, the geographies of poverty and those that are rendered on the wrong side of embankments. I also take seriously the call by da Cunha and Mathur (2001) and da Cunha (2018) to imagine different possibilities. In doing so, this paper wonders, and asks in wonderment, if it is possible to think of embankments not as lifelines but as mere lines. Perhaps not all that mere, as they do the vicious work of creating false separations between salt and sweet, land and water, forest and river in a delta which refuses such puny dissections and distinctions. But perhaps first, we need to unbank our imaginations, decolonise them from certain histories and re-navigate through other pasts and presents and, while doing so, be cognizant of the thought-worlds, lived realities and material conditions of those for whom designs are proposed. What could be a politics of life better attuned to that which brings rain? Maybe it is thinking in and through storms, acknowledging

that the sublime is always a combination of pain and pleasure, ceding to the passions of rivers, rain and their accompanying vortexes, and celebrating, instead of constraining the more mundane ebbs and flows of life. If an ontology of the monsoon is always and only both life threatening and life giving, perhaps we must not forget to remember the answer to the shattering question of who benefits, who hurts, and which lives, human and non-human, suffer from certain kinds of vitality. This may lead to an alternative future of design but also, and as crucially, a more imaginative anthropology inspired by design thinking. Ultimately, this essay is an attempt to coalesce the speculative with the empirical, to have our head in the clouds while also knowing the ground upon which the rain drops fall.

NOTES

01 A *malhar* accompaniment to this essay (Gaud Malhar by Mallikarjun Mansur) is available at: https://www.parrikar.org/music/malhar/mansur_gaudm.mp3

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