Rajatar: Chintaguda, Becoming

Socio-ecological Processes in a Village in Northern Andhra Pradesh

by

Lakshman Kalasapudi

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Anthropology
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Canada

Copyright © 2015 by Lakshman Kalasapudi

Abstract

Starting from the overall Revitalizing Small Millets in South Asia (RESMISA) project objective and question, how to increase millet production and consumption, I will use the same to enter Chintaguda and understand how that can be accomplished in the village. As millets do not occupy a significant aspect of the lives of people in Chintaguda, I essentially sought to understand the general decision-making logics that operate therein. This objective will help me understand which factors and their interactions influence activities around socio-ecological engagements. I aim to devise a framework to comprehend these logics and the complexities found in Chintaguda by using social theories. These will help me stitch together a narrative for Chintaguda that will contextualize the people's relationship to millets. This study will show the various ways people can and do relate to millets.

Recognition & Remembering

At every single stage of this learning process, I have received some form of support from my friends and elders who are strewn across many physical and discursive positions around the world. Because our writing is a formation of ecological interactions (Pandian 2015), each interaction especially on the human level becomes extremely significant.

My friends have helped me be grounded, sane, and got me through the worst parts of this process. Suri who was my first friend in Chintaguda and helped me find a good place to go to the toilet. Joga who took me seriously and taught me Savara. Sesi who not only washed my clothes and cleaned the house but also offered witty quips. Jammayya who lead me through the thickets of the forests and shouldered some of heavier items I could not. Lakshmi who cooked many meals for me and always laughed at whatever I said. Narayana who told me secrets, joked around with me and took me to Allthi. Minnarao for letting me stay in his house and giving me rides when I needed them. Mat who kept me sane in Winnipeg during the months leading up to the research phase. Heba who took real care of me by feeding me and encouraging me to complete my thesis more than any person in my life. Katharina who kept me intellectually and philosophically stimulated with laughter in moments of stagnation. Friends in Chintaguda number more than I can qualify but they are in no particular order: Suhasini, Lakshman, Murali, Sundari, Ammadamma, Kasamma, Kamala, Revathi, Ramesh, Sambamurthy Anna, Usha, Sumburu, Chalapathi, Saraswati, Balu, Chinna Suri, Jayanthi Akka, Varalakshmi, and many more. Friends from New York – Manav, Chaitanya, Amarnath, Ava, Nasim, Alaine, Xander – have continually encouraged me to finish my thesis, which has greatly strengthened my resolve.

I am equally indebted to my elders whose guidance, encouragement, and words in general have shaped my trajectory. This project started out under the supervision of Derek Johnson, who has given me unlimited freedom in pursuing whichever direction of inquiry I please. Professor Johnson has given me thoughtful and measured commentary such that I can clarify my research objectives and argument. I am also grateful for the stipend he provided me through the International Development & Research Centre's Revitalizing Small Millets in South Asia project, which supported this research financially. The path to Chintaguda was initially facilitated by Sanyasi Rao of WASSAN. Bhudevi Akka and Kailash Anna introduced me to Chintaguda and took care of me like one of their own while I was doing my research. In Chintaguda, Gopalanna helped me in all and any aspects of daily living as well as giving me broad overviews of life in Chintaguda. Bapanna, Chinnammi and Subhadramma Yuyung fed me too many times to count and always looked out for my wellbeing, making sure I was eating enough. Jaggarao Anna and Sumbaramma Yayang were especially receptive to me and took me around the hills and showed me innovative and novel things. Binjayya Anna came to my porch to tell me stories many a night, which helped me understand the village better. Udumuluraju Anna and Bhudevi Atta were the first people to invite me over for dinner and always wanted to sit on a mat and talk as the darkness fell. Kovvari Anna and Bugalamma Atta took a lot of time to talk to me and made sure I would stay in touch after I left. Lastly, Varalahamma Yuyung and late Rajulu Thatha who treated me like their own son. And there are many more: Bhudamma, Pedda Appalswamy, Jammamma, Dudhamma, Jan Appalswamy, Chilakamma, Lakshmi Yayang, Tavitamma, Bogesh Anna, Harischandrudu Anna, Bhudamma, Neelakantu Thatha, Anjali Thatha, Sanai Anna, Sitamma, Jammamma Yuyung, Adamma Yuyung, Balraj Anna, Tavitamma, Jayalakshmi Yayang, Meena Akka, Lakshman, and many more.

My sister and brother-in-law, Bharati and Ajar Kochar have asked me critical and insightful questions that prodded me in directions I would not have previously considered. Many, many family members in India and the USA have helped me throughout this entire process. Just to name and recognize a select few: the Pemmaraju joint family and Eswari Penta & Giri Jagarapu. Taking a note from my maternal grandfather's acknowledgements in his book, Gandheya Charitam, I want to first list and remember (to the extent possible) my ancestors: my father's maternal grandparents, Ayyagari Narayanamurthy and Venkataratnam, my mother's maternal grandparents, Allu Appalaswamy and Ammanamma, my father's paternal grandparents, Kalasapudi Subbarao and Sarada, my mother's paternal grandparents, Vangapandu Appalanaidu and Kurmamma, my paternal grandfather, Kalasapudi Rajanna, and my maternal grandparents, Vangapandu Lakshmi Naidu or Thathayya and Arundhati Devi or Ammamma. I need recognize my paternal grandmother or Bamma, Kalasapudi Mahalakshmi, who has raised me since I was little and taught me the Telugu and culture without which I would not have been able to conduct this research. Finally, I wish I recognize my parents, Kalasapudi Srinivasa Rao and Vasundhara Devi not only for their support but for their "dynamic coupling", very much a "repetition with difference" (Ingold 2011: 60), resulting in life for me and my ideas. In addition to lifelong the values, skills, and philosophies they have instilled in me, our conversations about rural India, development, food, caste, agriculture, and more have helped me tremendously in this project.

Dedication

To everyone in "Chintaguda"* who supported my endeavors

*Chintaguda and all names used in this document are pseudonyms to protect the identities of those people I have researched with.

Table of Contents

1 1 Introduction

3 Chintaguda
5 IDRC Project
7 Milieu
9 Objective & Argument
12 Proceeding Pages

2 14 Approach

14 Millets: the Science & the Social
21 Development Programs
26 The Setting
31 Being "With People"
37 The Secret of Strength
39 Attempts to Abide

3 49 Engagements of Everyday Life

49 Mediated Meshwork as Medium
51 Reworking Pani
56 Animals, Cooking & Tools
63 Aesthetics, Emotions & Bodies
67 Caste: Fields of "Enabling Constraints"
84 Into the Fields
89 Weaving Threads, Developing Texture

4 93 Dialectical Infusions

93 From Post-structuralism to Dialectics
96 Becoming an Instituted Activity
99 A Brief Review of Smallholder Agriculture
103 Cash Crops of Forest & Field
109 Entangled in Loans

113 ‘Rithmetic, Roofs, Road & Reservoir
116 Social Capital & Cultural Reproduction
123 Gendered Activities through Capital
129 Capital in Motion

5 132 Why We Need “And”

132 Development as Machine
135 Recalibrations in Capital Circulations
141 Violations
147 Productions & Logics

6 150 Dark Nooks & Distant Memories

150 Finding Millets
151 A Straightforward Narrative
155 A Matter of Taste
160 Intervention & Incorporation
167 Cultural Logics
169 Millets in the Meshwork

7 172 Chintaguda Saagu

172 Place
174 Theory
178 Learnings
181 Abiding

185 Glossary

186 References

194 Appendices

List of Tables & Figures

Tables

15 Table 1: Nutrient Composition of Select Grains
15 Table 2: Mineral & Vitamin Composition of Select Grains

Figures

2 Figure 1: Rajatar tree
26 Figure 2: Location of Srikakulam
64 Figure 3: Leaf aesthetic
121 Figure 4: Imagine the water
145 Figure 5: Exchange value & use value
155 Figure 6: Dust & cobwebs
162 Figure 7: Field of finger millet

Chapter 1
Introduction

Whenever I used to check my email in Chintaguda, I would go to the daakojagbar[1] and sit in the company of the rajatar trees and its flower petals. The rajatar is a beautiful, bare tree that produces small white or red flowers. In petals of five that come out from each other, the flowers are delicately attached to the tree. Somehow, it always seemed to me that there were more flowers on the ground around the tree than the tree itself. The trees are bare, angular, and generally smaller than other trees. With a lack of large leaves and a minimal branch structure, the rajatar flowers are always in prominent display from the tree. On closer inspection, the flowers have a pleasant and subtle smell. Like Rajamma, who you will meet later, I have decided to place the tree in my title just like that.

Becoming as a term, particularly as a way of thinking was much like the rajatar to me in Chintaguda. I found it littered across the literature and streams of thought that created a meshwork in my mind. While I stayed in Chintaguda, there was a daakojagbar in my mind: a place where authors like Butler and Ingold and Gidwani and Ramamurthy and Shah and Kohn would sit amongst the wrinkles of my brain and discuss. Inevitably, these discussions were about their theories, their ideas, their commentaries on the human condition.[2]

Becoming helped me understand some of the nuances of change. Becoming, in some sense, can be understood as a social science cop out. A cursory understanding of becoming and

[1] Translates to "place to sit and discuss" in Savara.

[2] I use an anthropocentric term here because an honest reflection of my methodology will prove that I have devoted most (if not all) of my time to understanding the human condition. My discussion will include some non-human aspects but it will not be as rich as the human aspects.

how it operates would let people think that becoming, a never-ending process, is continually unfolding, so it is difficult to say anything substantive about it. It is not about the infinitesimal point of time or intersection that I am looking to investigate; indeed, pinning such a point down would be impossible, impractical, and pretty useless. Nor is becoming simply an endless narrative; understanding becoming is understanding *how* that becoming happens/ed (tenses are difficult for this). It is creating an understanding of the sequence each of those seemingly infinitesimal points and how each of those instances diverges or converges in expected and unexpected ways.

Between the aesthetic placement of rajatar and the abstract placement of becoming, Chintaguda is the central feature of this thesis. Chintaguda is not the connection to the empirical; rather, it is the substance and source from which the aesthetic, the abstractions, and the thesis come to life. I have tried to balance the needs and objective of the study with the roundabout or abstract thinking that I have employed to address the same. As such, I have used becoming to understand millets, as I was tasked to do. Like the crazy, mixed up meshwork that we perceive as the world we inhabit, not everything is easily discernible into neat categories of empirical or theoretical, functional and non-functional. In this thesis, I will try to convey how they come together and how I understood them to be so in Chintaguda.

Figure 1: Rajatar tree in the daakojagbar

Chintaguda

Chintaguda is a small hamlet in South India. In many ways, it is an unremarkable little settlement situated in Srikakulam District in northern Andhra Pradesh. Nestled at the midriff of the mountainside, it consists of 102 people all of whom are related. They are of the Savara ethnic group, who are part of the Scheduled Tribe (ST) government category. Everyone in Chintaguda is fluent in the eponymous language; the language is unique because it is one of the few from the Austro-Asiatic language family in the Indian subcontinent. In addition to their language, most people speak Telugu (in the local Srikakulam dialect). Despite the fact that my familial roots in the nearby, neighboring district, my introduction to Chintaguda happened through a number of

connections: from a university to a large NGO to a grassroots NGO. After taking a flight, train, bus, and auto, I finally came to Chintaguda by foot on a warm day in late January 2014 to commence four months of fieldwork.

Immediately upon my arrival, I gathered that Chintaguda has been undergoing a number of major changes. I will provide a brief sketch here of the major ones from the past two to three decades, but the intricacies and entanglements of the same will come out later as I discuss the narratives. Rice was introduced a staple in their diets in the 1980s through the Public Distribution System (PDS) (henceforth also referred to as "quota"). The Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act was also passed in the late 1980s, which led to greater accountability in inter-caste relations. Andhra Pradesh Government Tribal Welfare Schools increased dramatically in the area resulting in an increased level of education access and attainment by ST (as Savara and general adivasi people are known) children. The Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) was created in nine districts around Andhra Pradesh in 1975 to specifically address the needs of the tribal/adivasi people in the state through various state-led development schemes. Aside from these, people in Chintaguda in particular, but representative of the larger northern or uttara Andhra area, have gradually converted to Christianity through the Uphold Assembly of God Church. Ecologically, the local landscape has changed dramatically over the past two to three decades with the advent of development programs. These are just a few of the many changes that Chintaguda is undergoing at the moment. The significance of these and their relevance to millets will be elucidated in the following chapters.[3]

[3] Obviously, Chintaguda experienced changes even before the 1980s. I only take the 1980s to present as a frame of reference in my research because of the salient transitions that started from this period.

IDRC Project: Revitalizing Small Millets in South Asia (RESMISA)

This research, theoretical and applied in nature, was funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of the Government of Canada. The basic project goal was to increase millet production and consumption through a variety of means. It uniquely wove together the natural and social sciences to work on six objectives to address its goals. Set in the context of larger agrarian change in South Asia, the RESMISA project sought to make policy change, create sustainable agricultural kits, improve post-harvest technologies, understand the sociocultural and indigenous knowledge on the ground, create a public relations (PR) campaign, and document and promote agrobiodiversity. These were all conducted to varying degrees through the NGO partners in India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.

My focus branches out from Objective 4, which is "to revitalize indigenous knowledge and sociocultural practices that augment cultivation, processing, storage, and utilization of small millets" (Karthikeyan et al 2010: 22). The primary methodology of Objective 4 is ethnography and its grounding was in environmental anthropological theory. Specifically, the project sought to use the theory of ecology of practice as proposed by E. Andre Nyerges (1997). His objective is to understand the interrelated practices that have to do with the socio-ecological context; he wants "to prod ecological anthropology back in a direction that will once again place research on the mundane activities of natural resource management, viewed in appropriate local and regional ethnographic and cultural historical contexts" (ibid: 14). This focus on practice, the mundane, and socio-ecological dynamics are the reoccurring themes that ground this thesis.

The IDRC project was proposed as a joint venture between Canadian academics and South Asian NGOs under the broad umbrella of food security. Therefore, this engagement in

social theory is a roundabout attempt to actually address food security. By focusing on marginalized and underutilized foodcrops, the RESMISA project aimed to intervene in a very direct way to promote food security. The RESMISA project focused on a number of different varieties of small millets but, for the Chintaguda location, the variety in question is ragi or finger millet. Finger millet is well known and one the more popular millets in the Andhra region. I will also look at foxtail millet in a historical/cultural context.

RESMISA worked with a number of grassroots partners. Of these, I was introduced to Chintaguda by Chinnayya Adivasi Vikas Sangham (CAVS), a local adivasi rights and empowerment community-based organization (CBO) based in Heeramandalam, Srikakulam District. I was introduced to CAVS by Watershed Support Services and Activities Network (WASSAN), a policy-oriented NGO based in Hyderabad and a main RESMISA project partner.

Both these groups are a part of a larger focus on small millest in South Asia. Since the Green Revolution from the 1960s and 1970s, much funding and research focus in agriculture has gone towards rice and wheat production. There have been a number of critiques of the Green Revolution in the ensuing years ranging from radical environmental activists at the time (Shiva 1991) to mainstream scientists nowadays (Nagaraj et al 2013). To counteract this balance there have been a number of NGO and government efforts across India to promote millets in the past ten years. For example, the Karnataka state government has created incentives for millet production by offering Rs. 5,000 to any farmer cultivating millets. The National Food Security Bill introduced in 2013 aims to distribute millets at more competitive rates than rice or wheat in welfare schemes. Concerned that many do not know how to cook millets, NGOs such as WASSAN and CAVS, government agencies, and indeed the project itself have promoted millet recipe contests, books, and cooking lessons. The private sector is doing its part, too, by

responding to middle and upper middle class market demands for processed millet products. As such, the RESMISA project is a part of a larger movement to promote millets in India.

Milieu

A brief sketch of this project can start in two ways. One can be to elaborate on the ecology of practice concept that is central to the social science aspect of the RESMISA project. Another is to give an overview of my time in Chintaguda. My understanding of both is derived from the interplay between the two. Before leaving to Chintaguda, I did some preparatory work and advanced readings for the research project. I did not fully understand any of these concepts until I reached Chintaguda where I was consciously attuned to life as it unfolds. I will attempt to simultaneously explain both to set the setting for the explanation of my argument and the thesis that follows.

The ecology of practice can be broken up into two concepts: ecology and practice. Ecology is usually understood as the environmental conditions but in this case, it is much more. Ecology is the interface of the socio-cultural and the environmental and all the entities in it: plants, rocks, non-human sentient beings, humans, the terrain, and much more. Ecology is also how these entities interact. I will term this the meshwork, a concept I will explain later. The ecology in the ecology of practice also refers to how practices interact with one and another. Practice, then, is the myriad of activities that compose life. I initially approached these in a preliminary sense: a vague definition of "what people do." After arriving in Chintaguda, I realized practice needs to be expanded to so much more. Because life is more than just a discrete actions acting upon something, practice needs to be reworked as really any activity. These activities, mundane as they are, can be emotional, aesthetic preferences, daily work routines, the

way we talk or walk, and so on. This expanded understanding of practice allows me to see the various interrelations of how practices and entities become together or grow apart.

The setting is riddled with overarching socio-ecological factors that shape and are shaped by these practices. This is evident in the transitions I mentioned previously. Obviously, the entrenchment of capital and capitalist logic is a salient feature and one that is changing what people do and how they do it. Caste and gender have been important organizing structures in Chintaguda that have continued to be reworked in the recent years. Caste and gender are easily discernible because there are multiple references made to each, especially to caste, on a daily basis in the village. While capitalist modes of thinking are still being set in and calibrating to the local socio-ecological landscape, notions of caste and gender have informed practices in this area for centuries. The terrain itself is both hilly and plains land which people in Chintaguda simultaneously engage during cultivation practices or other activities. It is through these factors and various disparate activities that the ecology or meshwork comes together.

The reason to abstract and theorize life in Chintaguda is to create one (of many possible) narrative that does justice to the complicated life that people in Chintaguda (or really, anywhere) experience. In the four months I was there, I principally did village ethnography in Chintaguda. Village ethnographies of yesteryear documented village life in great detail with an enormous amount of data both qualitative and quantitive. They focused typically on structural issues (Mencher 1978) and may have missed some of the nuances of life. I would like to think that my brief orientation to post-structural thinking in college and in graduate school has helped me understand the really mundane activities of life in Chintaguda. Nevertheless, the structural features are important as well. Therefore, I have approached this thesis from both perspectives. This is not to say that any of the schools I have engaged are staunchly one or the other; and there

is quite a bit of overlap among them. The neo-Marxists draw on post-structural ideas and the post-structuralists draw on Marxist or structural ideas in ways that make the cross pollination of ideas obvious and exciting.

The overlap really begins with practice or activity. Scholars across the spectrum I considered are concerned with, as I mentioned previously, what people do and how they do it; their modus operandi. Because I took this as a fundamental point of inquiry, I was able to put different scholars and orientations in conversation. There are indeed many commonalities between these scholars through notions of becoming, repetition, mediation, activity, power, and more. By finding these common points, I have tried to work towards creating a varied understanding of life in Chintaguda in one document.

Objective & Argument

The objective for this project starts out from the fourth objective in the RESMISA project and the ecology of practice framework as mentioned previously. Within this focus, there are three main objectives for my project. Initially, the first objective is to document the everyday practices in the village. Documenting everyday practices means looking to the mundane activities that occur all over the village. I aimed to document these practices with a critical lens of gender and caste, i.e. dominant local structures, and how these practices are situated in the large context of the village.

The second objective is to then flesh out how things happen in Chintaguda through an expanded conceptual framework of the ecology of practice. This is important to because the village is a microcosm of what is going on in agricultural production in rainfed regions of South India. To do this, I need to develop a framework to understand the socio-ecological context and

life in Chintaguda. This framework would help me bring together the seemingly disparate activities in the village that may not have originally been understood together. It is important to note that I will not be presenting a singular framework model that is to be replicated. Rather, I will develop a framework for the purposes of Chintaguda specific to the village through the ethnographic research.

The third and last objective is to to contextualize the production and consumption of millets in this framework that I will develop. The RESMISA project wants to know how knowledge is formed and negotiated with regards to millets. As I will discuss, millets are not a singular item around which there is extensive knowledge. In fact, after arriving in Chintaguda I found out that minor millets no longer played a major role in people's lives. I will look for cultural logics that inform engagements with millets.

The argument is as follows. The meshwork is this all-encompassing medium that we, as life forms, grow and develop through various engagements or activities. The repetition of these everyday activities over a period of time in certain ways allows logics to develop as well; these can be thought of as lines in the entangled mess that this the meshwork wherein various logics or lines intersect, diverge, converge, or never meet (Ingold 2011: 70). Everyday activities, however, can be apprehended by or grow into certain dominant logics that form precipitates or congeal in parts of the meshwork. In this case, I mean, some engagements in life such as the emotional or aesthetic ones can be apprehended and inform capitalist logic. Such logic, predicated on dialectical and dualist oppositions, then becomes a part of the meshwork, too. As capitalist logics pervades life, previous notions of caste or gender are also changed. Development, as seen as an incarnation of capital, is like a machine with unintended and varied effects (Gidwani 2008). The various entangled logics of the meshwork within the socio-ecological context will, as I will show

with evidence from Chintaguda, result in capitalist logic being briefly interrupted or, at times, thwarted by points of cultural production. These ecological interactions then produce the very entangelements that complicate life. Repetitions of these cultural productions then become cultural logics, a systematic way of doing activities or moving about life. Cultural logics may not always be present in everything and they may be hard to spot, but they are nevertheless important features of life.

I have come to mostly document engagements with millets in mostly a straightforward political economic narrative. This is because millets were so hard to find to begin with. But there are still traces of a more nuanced and integrated understanding of millets in the dark nooks and distant memories of people. Aside from that, people in Chintaguda have largely responded positively to one millets development intervention there by achieving the goal of millets promotion. But on a deeper level, the question remains: to what extent are these fully embodied and experienced as millets were before? As such, understanding local cultural logics means that the revitalization of millets, a RESMISA project goal, cannot be understood as a straightforward development scheme.

Lastly, this document is an argument and a description of life in Chintaguda. I hope to take some seemingly random and mundane slices to piece them together and create a nuanced understanding of life in the village to not only grant life in Chintaguda the basic decency of being humans and non-human living things as opposed to mere research subjects. It is also an attempt to understand how various, seemingly disparate aspects of life come together in unexpected ways – in fact, just the way life works!

Proceeding Pages

In the proceeding pages, I will limit my chapters to large topics that have emerged from my analysis. It is my hope that they flow together as a narrative. However, in exploring the theory and narratives of Chintaguda, I realize that disjuncture and rupture are just as significant as cohesion and convergence. I will try to bring out both convergence and divergence throughout the thesis. At times, I will intentionally position parts to be cacophonous to reflect life – not just in Chintaguda but also in general.

The second chapter will discuss the existing landscape of millets from both social science and natural science perspectives, development programs relevant to Chintaguda, Chintaguda itself, and methods and methodology. While the first half of the chapter will largely be a review, the second half, especially the methodology, will be a critical reflection on this research project and my position. I will discuss Talal Asad, Qadri Ismail, and Kamala Viswesaran to elucidate how I approach the project and what it means to do equitable ethnography.

Chapters 3 and 4 will be the bulk of my theoretical discussion. While I will include various thinkers and their ideas, I will do so only in the context of Chintaguda; indeed I was only able to comprehend, rework, and relate their ideas by being in Chintaguda. Without thinking critically and deeply about everyday life in Chintaguda (on a daily basis when I was there), the theories don't hold weight in my mind. By the same token, it was not until I actively engaged the theoreticians that my sense of purpose and understanding of everyday life in Chintaguda became clear. Chapter 3 will focus on questions of life and semiotics. It will ultimately focus on the very mundanities of life in Chintaguda; these can be seen out of the context of power in seemingly benign concepts such as the meshwork and activity. I will scrutinize everyday acts with these theories to begin the foundation for developing the context of the cultural logics. These theories

will be integral to highlighting and underscoring the otherwise seemingly irrelevant aspects of life. In this chapter, I will mostly draw on the ideas of Eduardo Kohn, Tim Ingold, and Judith Butler. I will also engage other scholars to a lesser extent such as Alpa Shah and Sara Ahmed. Chapter 4 will introduce and hopefully rework the Marxist and neo-Marxist theorists who have so deeply influenced my thinking from the beginning. This chapter will be a general Marxist Political Economic narrative about change in Chintaguda. This is the set up for a macro-level narrative about capitalism and its associated manifestations in village life. For this chapter, I will mostly work with Vinay Gidwani, Pierre Bourdieu, and Priti Ramamurthy. To a lesser extent, I engage Karl Polanyi and Karl Marx.

In Chapter 5, I will bring together the ideas from Chapters 3 and 4 to show activities should be seen from post-structural and structural perspectives in order to understand life in Chintaguda. Chapter 5 will argue for using an "and" perspective so we can see the many activities of life concurrently and ecologically.

In Chapter 6, I will embark on a general discussion and focus more acutely on millets and the IDRC project. This chapter will not be as theoretical as previous ones and will cater to a more development-oriented perspective. I will document the various practices surrounding millet production and consumption. But I will also highlight references to millets in unexpected places to show that engagements with them can be points of cultural production and a cultural logics of millets is indeed possible.

I will conclude in Chapter 7 by tying together the various strands of inquiry I have tried to grapple with over the course of this document. I will also indicate how I plan to abide by Chintaguda going forward.

Chapter 2
Approach

Millets: the Science & the Social

Small millets or minor millets have been a quiet but ubiquitous part of South Asian culinary history. Generally referred to as a poor man's food, millets have sustained people for centuries. Millets have been known to grow in arduous conditions with little attention and labor inputs. In addition, their nutritional benefits by way of their high protein, mineral, crude fiber, and iron contents is well known (Geervani and Eggum 1989; Ravindran 1992; Barbeau and Hilu 1993; Gull et al 2014). More recently, with the advent of allopathic medicine in millet-consuming parts of the world, millet consumption has been seen as a preventative or therapeutic measure to control various diseases such as diabetes, anemia, and gastric problems (Malleshi 1983; Singh and Raghuvanshi 2012; Devi et al 2014).

Small millets have been relatively understudied. Prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia as staple meals, these course grains have received little academic and critical attention. Of the research that has been conducted, it has been thus far produced by agricultural research entities either universities and government institutions or international development organizations. The focus and orientation of this research has been about the nutritionally rich content and the agicultural aspects of production. For the purposes of this thesis, I will discuss finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*) and foxtail millet (*Seteria italica*) in detail.

In the South Indian context, rice has been traditionally viewed and promoted as a staple. During the Green Revolution, varieties of rice were promoted not only in India, but also in many developing countries in the world. As such, it has become a standard if it was not already. While there are a number of varieties of rice that grown in the Andhra region (1,001, Surya, etc.) and

correspondingly, a number of finger and foxtail millet varieties grown, I will compare the nutritional benefits of each generalized category to sketch a picture of why millets are now in the spotlight. The average finger and foxtail millets are superior to the average rice variety in a number of different ways. Reproduced below are tables of nutritional and vitamin content:

Table 1: Nutrient composition of select grains

Cereal	Protein %*	Fat %*	Crude Fiber %*	Starch %*	Total Dietary Fiber %*
Rice	7.5	2.4	10.2	77.2	3.7
Finger Millet	7.3	1.3	3.6	59.0	19.1
Foxtail Millet	11.7	3.9	7.0	59.1	19.11

(Saldivar 2003 in Devi et al 2014)

Table 2: Mineral and vitamin composition of select grains

Cereal	Ca %*	P %*	K %*	Na %*	Mg %*	Fe %*	Mn %*	Zn %*
Rice	0.02	0.12	0.10	0.00	0.03	19.0	12.0	10.0
Finger Millet	0.33	0.24	0.43	0.02	0.11	46.0	7.5	15.0
Foxtail Millet	0.01	0.31	0.27	0.01	0.13	32.6	21.9	21.9

(Saldivar 2003 in Devi et al 2014) * = Percent of total composition

On the whole, Devi et al (2014: 1022) assert that vitamin and nutritional content of millets "are comparable to the popular cereals like rice, wheat, barley or bajra". However, upon closer inspection of each species, millets are superior in a number of instances as shown above in Tables 1 and 2. Lower levels of starch and higher iron and potassium content are just three of the outstanding factors of both millet species while foxtail millet has higher protein content and finger millet has higher calcium content. Aside from superior nutritional content to varying levels, especially with regards to fiber content, finger and foxtail millet are also on par and in some cases superior to rice in their essential amino acid content (Ravindran 1992). Consistent nutritional analysis on millet varieties is sporadic and the secondary health effects of millet consumption have been understudied. Despite the scientific evidence pointing towards super

nutritional content, even people's instincts and word of mouth anecdotes indicate the same as I will discuss in later chapters.

Agronomically, minor millets are easier to cultivate than rice. This is one reason the RESMISA project has focused on rainfed regions of South Asia. Even before the Green Revolution developed high yielding rice varieties that were more input intensive, socially coveted varieties of rice were grown on the plains farms. On hilly terrain, foxtail millet in particular but other species such as barnyard, pearl, and finger were cultivated in a mixed polycropping fashion (Shiva 1991: 82; Sharma 1992: 111). While shifting cultivation is found in hilly regions, especially where adivasis live, millets, in particular finger millet, have been cultivated on plains lands as well in tandem with rice cultivation (Vidyasagar 2012: 108). In both settings, millets require less water among other inputs such as fertilizer and pesticide than rice varieties (Ninan & Chandrashekar 1993; Shiva 1991). In addition to millets, pulses such as red gram / pigeon pea (*Cajanus cajan*) are also grown in the polycropping fashion (Sharma 1992). As Shiva demonstrates in The Violence of the Green Revolution (1991), intensive research and development spending on rice has had a direct impact on the increase in area under rice cultivation and, conversely, on the decrease in area under cultivation of minor millets and coarse cereals in general. While improved rice yields depended much on increased inputs and increased area under cultivation as the Green Revolution progressed (from 1960s to 1980s), finger or foxtail received no such attention. The Green Revolution thus impacted cultivation in three major ways all to the detriment of millets: change from polycropping to monocropping, reduction in area under cultivation of coarse cereals, and increased use of external inputs in cultivation.

While the basic scientific aspects of millets have been studied, the socio-cultural aspects, either on the African continent or in South Asia, have been relatively understudied. Socio-

culturally, the significance and position of millets is still unclear. Anecdotal and fleeting discussions of small millets on a linear trajectory (e.g. a poor man's food that is experiencing a revalorization among elites) is a start but unsatisfactory in creating complexity and nuance that is required around food consumption and taste. There are two bodies of literature – development and anthropological – that cover this linear trajectory, which I will detail here.

The development literature is broadly from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and local, grassroots Indian NGOs. This literature is largely scientific due to the overwhelming economic rationale driving the research. Thus many of the studies catalog the nutritive values of millets and the associated technical aspects of production for improved production, breeding, and processing. One striking commonality is that scientists and development professionals who have composed these reports have continuously bemoaned the marginalized position of millets in the agronomic and development research agenda. Attached to this discursive position of millets is the urgency "to keep pace with expanding demand [to grow more food]" (FAO 1980: v). Compared to research on rice, wheat, and other grains, millets research on this end is undoubtedly small. However, this discursive thread e.g. millets as marginalized and a possible solution to food security has continued through the past three decades into the very underpinnings of the RESMISA project. Nevertheless, a key progression is moving the focus from sorghum and pearl millet, larger millet grains, to minor or small millets such as finger and foxtail millets (among many others).

There are socio-cultural inflections in the development literature about small millets. In this regard, they are very much a bridge between the scientifically sterile studies about millets regarding the nutrition or biochemical compositions and the socio-cultural studies. The FAO literature points to the pivotal role of millets in marginalized communities throughout Africa and

Asia (FAO 1995, FAO & ICRISAT 1996; FAO 2001). These reports generally focus on indigenous knowledge by including the traditional methods of processing and consumption and contain oblique references to preferences and practices. Missing from these reports are the socio-cultural aspects of production.

Over 85% of millets produced are used as food in India with other uses being feed for animals, beer, seed storage and exchange, and other manufacturing purposes (FAO 1996: 39). In general, finger millet is prepared as sangati (a stiff porridge), roti (unleavened bread), mudde (paste), and ambali (thin porridge) and foxtail millet is prepared as both sangati and roti and also prepared as ariselu (deep fried) and eaten like rice e.g. as an accompaniment to curries (FAO 1995: 111). The beers and malted drinks are alcoholic but they are also a vital source of nutrients because of the different processing methods (FAO 1995: 97). Lastly, millets and their post-processed waste matter are used in animal feeds both on an industrial scale as well as a household scale. One salient sociological theme throughout the literature is the attention to women's labor. As is common knowledge, women disproportionately shoulder a large chunk of the processing and preparation time. While both men and women partake in the threshing of millets, women are traditionally exclusively associated with the responsibility of de-husking and milling the millets, generally with mortar and pestle (FAO 1995; FAO 2001).

One of the leading NGOs on millets in India is DDS, which has worked for many years in the Medak District of Telangana state on agrarian livelihoods. It has been instrumental in pushing millets as an agenda item for large-scale development actors such as CGIAR groups as well as creating a nation-wide network of grassroots NGOs working on millets. DDS posits millets as a catchall solution to many issues facing India today: food and nutritional insecurity, sustainable livelihoods, low-input agriculture, climate change, and harsh environmental

conditions (DDS 2009). In particular, DDS takes an indigeneity approach to millets by pointing to the socio-cultural importance of millets in the traditional diets and livelihoods of millions of people across India. Indeed, India accounts for the largest share of millet consumers in the world (DDS 2009: 3). While DDS reports are macro-level in nature, Deb et al. (2014) have included participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and participant observation with regards to indigenous and traditional diets. Of the development literature, Deb et al., by using an anthropological method, grapple with the realities of the on-the-ground attitudes towards and presence or absence of millets.

While the method in the development research by Deb et al (2014) sheds a little light on a sociocultural understanding of millets, anthropological literature, too, remains just as sparse on the subject. References to millets can be found occasionally in ethnographic case studies about a certain population and their dietary patterns or in oblique references to broader food consumption or nutritional trends. Of the scholars who may have written about millets in an anthropological context in South Asia, only the work of Elizabeth Finnis on the political ecology of parts of Kerala stands out; she has the only comprehensive anthropological research focus on these small grains. Finnis takes a standard political economy approach to understand a dietary, agricultural, and ecological transition with a focus on women's labour. In this approach, too, the focus is on marginalized or "lower status foods" – in this case – millets and the notions of development and linear, progressive improvement. Finnis grapples with the various changes occurring in her region of study – the change from subsistence production to cash crop production, dietary changes from a millets-based to rice-based diets, lifestyle preferences, and technological change (Finnis 2006; Finnis 2008; Finnis 2008).

The ethnographic approach that Finnis takes to her research allows her to juxtapose cash crop production and subsistence production in the lived experiences of people she worked with. In the context of market relations, the Green Revolution along with other development factors have engendered the growth of cash crops. Finnis teases out seemingly innocuous parallel factors such as roads, a desired to be developed, and status commodities (Finnis 2006). Lastly, she points to the growing inclusion into a cash economy where "money is now classified by most villagers as paramount" (Finnis 2007: 349). While the market is not a unilateral force, millets have been intimately affected by the rise of markets in agrarian settings and in the context of nationally liberalized markets connected to global supply chains. One study in Andhra Pradesh noted that only 1-2% of farmers sold the millets they produced in the 1980s (Pushpamma 1986: 321). This shift marks yet another transition in millet growing areas. In the context of the changing political ecology, Finnis's most compelling contribution is contradictions she alludes to with the people she worked with preferring millets to the rice they buy with cash income (Finnis 2008; Finnis 2009); there were serious claims of better taste and strengthening qualities that were still strongly associated with a millets-based diet. This is in direct contrast to the ease of household labor for women as a result of decreased processing time. The contradictions and desires Finnis highlights serve as narratives of how "global processes of agricultural commercialization are played out on the local level, affecting notions of identity and moral economies" (Finnis 2008: 464). This brings much-needed nuance to the entire body of literature on millets that is broadly engaged in macro-level shifts.

Common to both strains – Elizabeth Finnis's work and the socioculturally inflected development literature – is the cry for marginalized crops. Despite the multiple uses and significances they have around the world, small millets have been caught in the wayside of the

larger “development machine” (Gidwani 2008). The discursively and materially marginalized position of millets and their surrounding ecologies (i.e. social, caste, terrain) nevertheless lends itself to a fairly teleological narrative in which they will ascend to social acceptability from this low position in the name of progress. The Green Revolution undoubtedly had an effect on the reduction of millet production and consumption, but viewing millets simply in the shadow of the Green Revolution would be reductive. There are more reasons for the decline of millets. As I will discuss later on, millets are caught in a complex meshwork where they appear in seemingly disparate contexts that cannot entirely fit a teleological narrative.

Development Programs

International development and state-led development programs therefore play a large role in agrarian life in the Global South. This is particularly true in India and even more relevant for Chintaguda itself. Development comes in a variety of forms that impact the village – laws, schemes, constitutional protections, aid, and more. Development programs and the legal structure affecting land, agriculture, and indigenity are complex and have many interrelations. There is an entire history of complex developments that would require a separate thesis unto itself. I will only go over the ones that are relatively salient in Chintaguda.

Aside from the Green Revolution, The Fifth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, a pervasive and far reaching state social protection, has had a great impact on people in Chintaguda. The Fifth Schedule is actually a section of the Indian Constitution intended to safeguard the rights of people who were classified by the colonial government as tribals. These people then became official known as “Scheduled Tribes” (ST) to correspond to their schedule in the constitution. One main objective of this part of the constitution was to prevent the transfer or

allotment of land from ST people to non-ST people. This is in recognition of the fact that the question of land and land tenure have been central to ST people for centuries. But the Fifth Schedule also safeguards some social protections to everyone who is so classified as ST:

> "The object of the Fifth Schedule and the Regulation is to preserve tribal autonomy, their culture and economic empowerment to ensure social, economic and political justice for preservation of peace and good Government in the scheduled area." (Samata v. State of Andhra Pradesh and others 1997: 1)

The vague wording of this section of the constitution and other laws to follow leaves much interpretation to those enforcing the law. Regulation and management of these Scheduled Areas (and concerned people) is delegated to individual states. Each Indian state has a Tribal Advisory Committee (TAC) that oversees tribal affairs. The TAC, however, is only a government body; it does not have executive functions. In Andhra Pradesh, the executive government entity for tribal development is the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), which was created in 1975. One was created per district that had a significant tribal population resulting in nine in total. The task of the ITDA is to integrate "all welfare and developmental programs for tribal development, and their schemes have included irrigation, soil conservation, horticulture, fisheries, sericulture, health and social service infrastructure" (Reddy et al 2010: 20). The ITDA uses and distributes funds and development measures that are covered in the Tribal Sub-Plan, a state-wide policy and budget that is created on the state-wide level. The ITDA in Srikakulam District is headquartered in Seethamapeta, a town on the other side of the Garlapadu Forest Block from Chintaguda. The local ITDA has since introduced a number development projects such as increased cashew tree planting and production, banana tree plantings, and now most recently, millet production with organic agricultural inputs. It is a central point for receiving the Sub-Plan benefits (Donthi 2014).

The Scheduled Areas also fall under Forest Department jurisdiction. The Forest Department, a department present in state governments around India, is a relic of the colonial

governance system that oversees the management of the forests of India. The Forest Department generally follows a conservationist principle with regards to natural resource and ecosystem management in both the reserve and protected forest areas. This mean they generally are at odds with people who live in the reserve forests i.e. tribals whose livelihoods and lives are based on engagements with the forest (Reddy et al 2010: 51). As such, the Forest Department's policies and actions have resulted in tensions over hunting and shifting cultivation, mainstays of traditional tribal life. Although this is not a development program per se, the Forest Department plays a major role in the lives of people in Chintaguda like these other government programs and legal structures.

Questions of land use and tenure have always been a central point of concern for tribal people because of the Forest Department's jurisdiction over the forests and the concurrent designation of Scheduled Areas as areas that are for Scheduled Tribes. There have been general moves to secure land for tribal people and prevent the transfer of land to non-tribals over the years on national and state levels. These have not always worked out (Ramachandraiah and Venkateswarulu 2011). The most recent landmark legislation to this end was the passage of the Forest Rights Act in 2006. This was a major step in land rights for people living in Reserved Forest areas. Fully known as The Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, this act addresses the question of ownership directly. The act grants 2.5 acres for each family if the family proves their residence in the forest for a number of decades. In addition to individual land titles, the act also provides for community land titles wherein a village can draw its collective boundaries. These titles, however, are not full legal titles as they would be for revenue land i.e. non-Reserve Forest land; it is not an actual transfer of land from the government to the people. Nevertheless, the people are supposed to be granted

some modicum of protection for their land through this provision. Another shortcoming of the FRA is that forest produce rights are not ensured and basic necessities such as fueld wood, stones, and more cannot techincally be freely consumed (Bhullar 2008; Aggarwal 2011).

Chintaguda is at an awkward nexus in all of this. It is one of the 845 villages in Andhra Pradesh that is not directly included in the Fifth Schedule Area. Nevertheless, Chintaguda still derives some benefit from ITDA programs but not all. Job training and placement programs, market opportunities, and other development schemes are not always available to its inhabitants. However, through the advocacy of local NGOs like CAVS, Chintaguda and the nearby non-Schedule villages are able to receive some extended benefits. Despite this juridical liminality, people in Chintaguda do have caste certificates which certifies their ST and in particular, Primitive Tribal Group (PTG) status.[4] These are useful for two main things: educational purposes and their monthly government rations. Children in Chintaguda are able to take advantage of the Andhra Pradesh Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions, which are grade schools until 12th standard or Intermediate/Junior colleges, and qualify for the reservation categories of college entrance exams and qualifying tests.

Monthly food rations are a part of the Public Distribution System (PDS), the nation-wide rationing scheme in India. The PDS system has been in place for over sixty years through central government subsidies to rice, wheat, and other basic necessities. For a long time surplus grains of the increased production of the Green Revolution have been purchased by the state to supply the PDS system. Generally, the grain supply to families has been fifteen kilograms per month. Distribution and operation of the PDS, however, is at the state level and has undergone a lot of changes. Primarily, the biggest impact in Andhra Pradesh is the Telugu Desam Party (TDP)

[4] PTG denotes a tribal group that is particularly underdevelopment per the government standards.

promise of providing rice for Rs. 2 per kilogram through the PDS system. This propelled the TDP, the first major opposition party to the Indian National Congress (INC) Party in Andhra Pradesh, and its leader, Nandamuri Taraka Ramarao (NTR), to power in 1983. Since then the state government has been providing a significant subsidies in addition to the central government subsidy to maintain this price for people in the ration system. Even after the market liberalization reforms in 1991 and the reduction of universial PDS to targeted programs for economically marginalized communities, this welfare scheme remained a vital source of food for socio-economically marginalized people. In 2000, the central government introduced the Anthyodaya Anna Yojana, an even more targeted PDS scheme that allows thirty-five kilograms of grains per month per family to benefit the "poorest of the poor". People in Chintaguda qualify for this scheme and refer to the rice and rations as "quota". On the whole, this program has had significant impacts on the dietary and nutritional patterns of socio-economically marginalized households (Dutta and Ramaswami 2001).

There are more recent development schemes that hold particular importance in Chintaguda. These three schemes were initiated and implemented by the Congress Party at the national and state levels. One is the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) that guarantees 100 days of work at Rs. 100 per day for any adult in rural areas. These are locally determined public works that result in some infrastructural improvements. Work generally is conducted in the agricultural off-season. Legislated in and implemented since 2005, this government program is the world's largest public works scheme. Participation in this scheme is highest in Andhra Pradesh out of all the Indian states (Pellissery and Jalan 2011). Another is the Integrated Novel Development in Rural Areas and Model Municipal Areas (INDIRAMMA) scheme that was introduced by the Congress Party Chief Minister, Y.S.

Rajasekhar Reddy in 2006. This scheme reimburses ST people up to Rs. 1,20,000 for the construction of concrete houses. The people qualifying for this scheme must first build the houses with their own cash and then receive reimbursements through the scheme. The last important one is the aadhaar card. It is a 12-digit unique identification number that the Unique Identification Authority of India issues in principle to all citizens of India. This identity card is important because the government at all levels is trying to integrate welfare schemes and other interactions with the government through the use of this card. Without it, engaging government bureaucracy would be very difficult.

The Setting

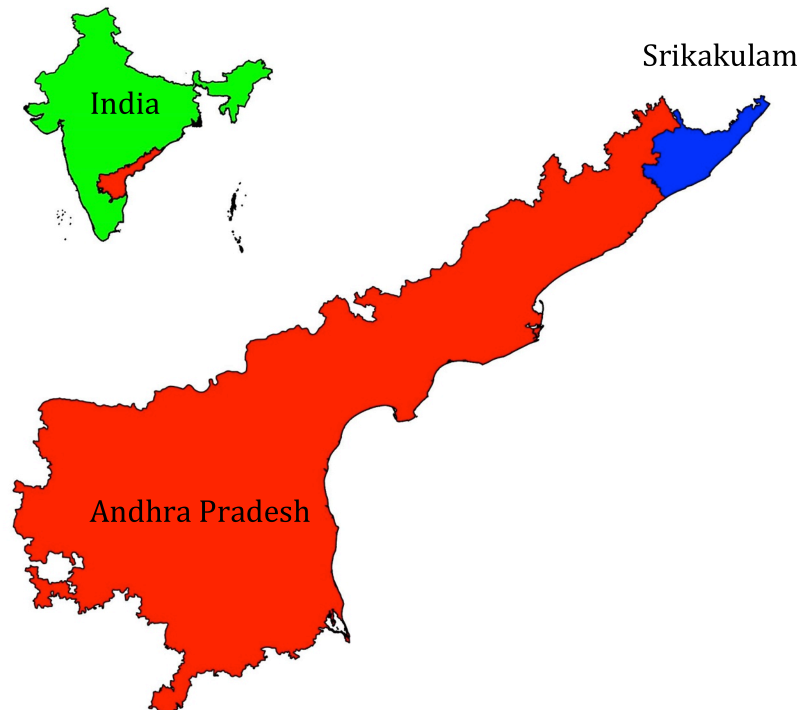

Figure 2: Location of Srikakulam

Chintaguda is in the Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. Srikakulam district borders Odisha, which is just to the north of it and Chintaguda itself is not more than an hour's bus ride away from the neighboring state. Chintaguda is on the edge of the Garlapadu Forest Block, in reserved forestlands, which means it is under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department. This forest block is at the edge of the larger Palakonda Forest Block. Chintaguda is in the Badakipeta panchayat in the Heeramandalam Mandal. In this panchayat, there are three villages: Badakipeta, Chintaguda, and Palempalle. Badakipeta is a large multi-caste village of 2,000-3,000 people. It is mainly dominated politically and socially by people from the Toorpu Kapu caste. In addition to the Kapus, there are Scheduled Caste (SC) Malas, Backward Caste (BC) Chakalis, SC Jaggilis, upper caste Komatis, and more. Badakipeta is about ten kilometers away from Heeramandalam and is accessible on a recently created dirt road. From Badakipeta, which has four main streets, Palempalle is another four kilometers away on a similar dirt road, which is in much worse condition. Palempalle is at the foot of Buddhalva. Palempalle is an ST village with people of the Jathapu caste. It is slightly larger than Chintaguda with about forty doorsteps.[5]

The village is located midway up a hill, about 100 meters above sea level and fifty meters above the plains. When I first came to Chintaguda, there was a two-kilometer footpath that led from the end of the one street in Palempalle to the front entrance of Chintaguda. Later, 1.1 kilometers of this stretch starting from Palempalle, going past the lake, until the mango tree was paved over to be a dirt road. There is about 0.8 kilometers on a steep slope left to be made into a road. The last few meters leading up to the village was made into a flat road in 2007 by the government when it came to pour a concrete road in the middle of the village. This small stretch of road is adorned with overhanging cashew trees that form a tunnel as the village comes slowly

[5] Doorstep is interchangeable for household and this is how households are talked about in Chintaguda.

into sight. Until 2007, however, the main entrance to the village was on the south side, which is now known as the back entrance. This path starts on a slow incline from a stony outcrop of the mountain. It leads through a series of terrace farms, which are revenue land, past a natural spring, and up a fairly steep series of stone steps arranged by the ancestors of people in Chintaguda.

Chintaguda is a small village – a hamlet really – that is nestled in the mountain. The village is small compared to plains land villages, which often have numbers in the thousands. As the village is surrounded by reserved forest, there are no other official paths, but informal paths that are well trodden exist across the mountainside. These lead to other, higher or farther mountainside villages. On the other side of the mountain, some paths lead to Marriguda, another Jathapu village. While Chintaguda and Marriguda share a boundary, much of the land on this boundary is forested with few fields of cultivation. Chintaguda's plots of cultivation however extend to high points of the Buddalva mountain. These plots abut the plots of Cheepurupalli, the neighboring village. This village is comprised entirely of Savaras and indeed there are some close kin relations between the two villages. Heading north in this direction leads deeper into the forest block. On south side of the village, three kilometers away from the beginning of the back entrance lies Borrapuram. Borrapuram is a SC Pydi village and is part of the Tobavalasa panchayat; Tobavalasa is a large village similar to Badakipeta that is located between Borrapuram and Heeramandalam. Like Badakipeta, Tobavalasa is a mixed caste village with Kapus, Rellis (SC), Velamas (BC), Karnams (BC), Brahmins (OC), and more. This proximity to many different plays a significant role in social relations in Chintaguda; it is unlike other Savara villages that are exclusively enmeshed with other Savara settlements.

The landscape around the village to the untrained eye will appear to be a mass of ostensibly green forest on the front side of Buddalva mountain. It is, in fact, covered in large

swathes of cashew trees with some very large, tall, and distinct mango and tamarind trees spotting the landscape. Gaps in the tree cover make way for shifting cultivation plots where red gram and other crops are grown. Banana trees are also visible but by the time I had arrived, the leaves were blown away by Cyclone Phailin four months before. At this point in its ecological history, the forest block is considered degraded deciduous forest. The immediate vicinity of the village is surrounded by terrace farm plots. Many of them have fallen out of use and nearly none are in use during the off / rabi season.

Chintaguda, as previously mentioned, is an entirely Savara settlement. Of the 102 people in Chintaguda, 54 are females and 48 are males. Chintaguda is reflective of India as a whole because its population skews younger with very few truly older people. Most people in Chintaguda cannot pin point their age because of a lack of birth records and date-keeping practices. Of the 54 females and 48 males, only seven people are in an elderly generation age bracket (by my judgment). Twenty people from the village officially live in the village and are counted as such, but are of school going age and attend various residential schools and colleges outside of Chintaguda. In the census, I did not count those people who were born in the village but moved away after marriage. There are twenty-three physical doorsteps in the village with nineteen households occupying them in various sizes and configurations. Most of the families in the village are descended from the same patrilineal ancestor. Only three families are cross cousins. This means that they are not descended from the singular patrilineage that I will discuss later. When a family is descended through one of the daughters, who marry into another patrilineage, they are called varsa relations.

There is one paved concrete main street in the village and a smaller perpendicular one that is also paved. The intersection of these two roads is where a tall tamarind tree stands in an

imposing manner. Behind the houses that line the main street are coconut trees providing shade and a typically rustic village aesthetic. Aside from the roads and electricity poles, there are eight livestock sheds that surround the village, situated behind the houses and between the coconut trees. All but five of the twenty-three houses are built on concrete foundations reimbursed by the Indiramma government scheme. Around the village, there are a number of two or three room house foundations laid about still waiting to be built upon. Meanwhile, three two-room extensions were built to existing houses while I was in Chintaguda. There are still a few families living in entirely mud huts, but they are waiting for their own Indiramma schemes to kick in. Of the twenty-three houses, eight have flat concrete slab roofs, two have sloping metal roofs, and the rest have thatched roofs.

Other features of the village include one large well on the south side. On the west, on ground about a meter higher is a small church building with a thatched roof.[6] The clearing is spacious and covered generously by a large tamarind tree. At the west end of the village, just before the climb to the church clearing, is the church cookhouse and storage place. This is where the pastor comes to rest and eat and where they cook for church functions. Two families have detached structures behind their houses. One is Lakkai's family kitchen that he built separately behind his house. Next to the kitchen is a small garden that his eldest daughter, Aruna, planted. Veeranna, Lakkai's neighbor has a thatched storage space behind his house. Behind the storage space is a kitchen that has walls of bamboo shoots and a covering of a snake gourd vine trellis. The school in the village is at the entrance and was built by the government. The school is filled with colorful markings but due to the small number of children in the village, the teacher position for Chintaguda was cancelled. Primary school children now walk to Palempalle to

---

[6] Upon my return visit in March 2015, this church had been destroyed by rogue elephants. The cookhouse then became the church space.

attend school there. Now the school is used as a television room, especially in the evening time by women, and as a storage space. On the sidewall of the school, there is a painting of a EU-funded PRA exercise. These paintings have been generally ignored. Next to the school stand the two latrines; these are filled with sand used for house constructions.

Being "With People": Methods

In Chintaguda, I lived in the nicest house. It is owned by Venkatarao, the most educated person from the village. Venkatarao completed two Master's degrees and went on to secure a post as a government teacher for 9th and 10th grades in Narsammapeta, a town close to the district headquarters. He built the house having received a cash transfer through the Indiramma scheme. A two-bedroom house with a wide porch, the construction was entirely in concrete including the roof. I lived in the front, larger room. Because he did not live in Chintaguda fulltime, I was able to stay in his house. Usually, it was occupied by and tended to his younger, unmarried sister; however, she moved across the street with her other brothers during the period of my stay.

I was introduced to Chintaguda by Bhudevi Akka, the coordinator for CAVS. Upon my arrival in Chintaguda, Masayya, a village man around my age, was assigned to me as my research assistant with the duties of following me and making sure I had everything I needed. The first three weeks of my stay in Chintaguda were lukewarm and awkward and chill of the winter did not help. I knew I came to do ethnography in this village, but I was unsure of how to proceed with my research objectives and collect and record data. I chose ethnography as the main method for this project at a primary level because it is the method of choice for Objective 4 of the RESMISA project. Gradually, people in Chintaguda and I warmed up to each other as we spent more time together. After a brief trip to Sri Lanka to attend a RESMISA project meeting, I

came to Chintaguda re-energized and started engaging some of the theoretical works I have used in my project proposal as well as throughout my academic career.[7] Retrospectively, I considered this time and period of brief separation a way for me to build rapport with people in Chintaguda as I noticed they visibly appreciated my return.

I spent four months collectively in Chintaguda. During this time, there were about two and a half solid months of immersive ethnography. I was “with people” (Madden 2010: 8) in Chintaguda in the deepest sense. Participant observation was the biggest step to not only building rapport but to really understand daily life in Chintaguda. I went out of the village two to three times a day to the mountain (as they would say when referring to agricultural/environmental work/activity), I was mistaken multiple times as a family member by outsiders (brother or son), and I had carefree interactions with everyone – the kids, the grandmas, the vendors who would come sell their wares in the village. When I engaged in any sort of work that my friends performed, they were surprised, and this allowed a greater degree of interpersonal interaction.

Partaking in the daily activities of the village became, as my emotional connection with everyone in the village grew, nearly expected as demanded by the people of the village. One such example follows. Of all the activities throughout my stay in Chintaguda, I initially did not go to the Sunday morning church service for a variety of reasons. It was entirely in Savara, I did not necessarily agree politically with Christian proselytizing practices, and I simply wanted a morning to sleep in and rest. Nevertheless, one day Balayya Anna told me I must come to Sunday church service in April (with very little room for me to say no) and go I did. Towards the end of my stay, I was actively delegated tasks in the village by other people.

[7] A lack of unlimited Internet connection proved to be useful as PDFs of academic articles and book and just one Italian movie, Saturno Contro, were the only reprieve stimulants I had in Chintaguda.

As a result of my extensive participant observation, I became comfortable with going around the mountainside on my own despite warnings and admonishments that I should not, especially during the summer sun. These wanderings developed into some sort of being with the forest or forest participant observation. Having read some of the more ecologically oriented theorists, I decided to spend a few hours every three or four weeks with the forest in solitude just observing various aspects of it. During both forms of participant observation, I maintained field notes regularly.

It was in these participant observation "sessions" that I was able to create the most dialogue with people in the hamlet. Initially, I tried to administer the interview questions to various members around the village during the time. It quickly became clear that most of the village emptied out during the day, which is one reason why I was forced at the very least to do extensive participant observation. In this way, my source of data was not just formal interviews. Indeed, they are some but very few formal interviews: ones with set questions, appointments, and scrutiny. In general, I left the village with a group of people doing work on the various plots of cultivation such as red gram, finger millet, or cashew harvesting. While I engaged in some rudimentary form of work (generally transplanting work or harvesting work), I created conversation. In these exchanges, I inserted some of my pre-formulated questions but I also allowed the conversation to meander such that I could catch glimpses of things that are significant to their lives. I especially looked for casual, offhand, and seemingly mundane or irrelevant remarks.

I started to learn about millets in Chintaguda in unexpected places and people. In addition to interviewing residents of Chintaguda, I interviewed several other people present in their daily lives such as SC and BC people from neighboring villages. In addition, I left Chintaguda four

times to visit various relatives of people in Chintaguda. In these interviews, like the ones with their other caste neighbors, I probed for notions and knowledges about millets and cultural logics more broadly. My interviewing didn't stop just within the limits of Srikakulam. When I went to visit my family in neighboring districts of Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam, conversations about my research, living in an adivasi village, and millets also became learning experiences. In these conversations, I was acutely aware of what was included or excluded. On my father's side, I am Niyogi Brahmin (OC)[8] and on my mother's side, I am Koppula Velama (BC). Finding brief and fleeting references to millets from both OC and BC castes helped create a larger if anecdotal context to understand millets. From conversations with my mother's family, I was able to make a connection with one interview from the local Velamas[9] around the Chintaguda area. In addition to the absence and presence of small millets, their discussions on cultivation practices – many relatives on my mother's side are landowners – and dietary practices – a stereotype for Brahmins – were illuminating. These gave me a discursive field to play with while I was in Chintaguda. Not only was the cross caste perspective important, my family members are a part of dominant social group of people in India (e.g. upper caste, upper class, traditionally Hindu, professional, English speaking, heteropatriarchical) and in that sense, I used discussions with them to connect the IDRC project themes with on the ground sentiments of everyday Indians.

Logistically, ethnography was generally easy except it was not applicable to all my interactions in the village. Narasimhulu Anna, Parvathakka's husband, is deaf and mute. Therefore, he was the only person in the entire village that I did not communicate well with.

---

[8] OC = Other Category i.e. non-Reserved castes. These are typically forward or dominant castes. BC = Backwards Caste, a type of Reserved caste.

[9] My mother's family is Koppula Velama whereas the local Velamas to Chintaguda were Polinatu Velamas. Nevertheless, they are sub-castes of the same caste in the same region and have *some* shared heritage, history, and cultural practices.

There is no local sign language and therefore, I could only briefly make sense of and record my interactions with him. This is definitely a shortcoming of ethnography and for me, raised the question of how to do ethnography with differently abled people.

I spent considerable time with CAVS and their advocacy and policy initiatives because they introduced me to Chintaguda. Through them, I was able to understand the larger policy and politics around millet promotion. I helped them with minor campaigns they were running. I was able to meet and understand stakeholders in the local millets and development arena. In addition to partially fulfilling my debt to the organizers of CAVS, Bhudevi Akka and Kailash Anna, I was also able to observe the larger socio-political structures around Chintaguda.

On a more quantitative note, I attempted conduct a number of brief surveys as I realized which issues were salient in Chintaguda. Initially, I conducted a village census to know everyone and their relations to each other. A larger effort to quantify and categorize the various foodstuffs produced in the village by each family was unsuccessful due to the quantitative nature of it. A second survey was a food basket survey where I selected five families and documented what they ate throughout the day for seven days. I conducted this survey twice. I later documented the educational trajectories of everyone in the village by documenting where they went to school and what the high level of educational attainment was. One last questionnaire was about the circular migration labor experiences of whoever left the village. There was a participatory aspect to all these surveys because when I asked broad questions, people gave me varying answers and clues as to what other information I should collect from other survey participants. Unfortunately, not all the results of these surveys have found their way into this thesis because of space constraints.

In an attempt to give back something tangible to people in Chintaguda and continue in the vein of my original research proposal, I shouldered the task of trying to create a village

boundary map so that people in Chintaguda can submit it to the Forest Department for recognition under the FRA. This entailed walking around the village boundaries with Apparao Anna and Masayya collecting GPS waypoints.

Finally, a note on time. When I first arrived in Chintaguda I was unused to doing research in places outside of normative or dominant conceptions of time. Chintaguda is one of those places. Originally planning to get a historical perspective, I asked several older residents about history but it was very difficult to determine the chronology of events and the corresponding socio-political events because so few people recorded dates or years of events. By late April, I figured out a benchmark to use for time. The concrete enclosing of the pool of spring water at the back entrance of the village was poured in 1988 – as marked in the concrete. Unfortunately, this discovery was too late in my learning process to be of use in this research.

While these methods constitute just the formal data collection aspects of my time in Chintaguda, my other activities were wide and varied: I helped with wedding preparations, I taught basic English and Telugu to the little children, I contributed to making a dirt road part way up to the village, and many more activities. Many people unfamiliar with anthropology questioned why I had to stay in the village fulltime. My response to this question became clear the more time I spent in Chintaguda. Had I gone in to simply ask questions and collect discrete bits of data, I would not have learned much about millets; indeed, my initial formal interviews regarding millets proved less informative than my later conversations. By simply being there, I found millets in unexpected places: in conversations about protection from wild animals, in offerings to the church, in exchanges between family members. In evenings, I would sit around and various people – generally men – would come to the porch of my house and talk to me.

The Secret of Strength

During one of these evenings, the conversation meandered to a more nuanced explanation of kin relations. Only seven weeks in, I was still a little unclear as to the intricate kin network that existed in Chintaguda although I undoubtedly knew it was significant for everyday life. While the origin of most of the male members of Chintaguda was fairly clear – through their patriline – I was unclear about the origins of the female members. Apparao Anna started explaining to me the concept of baagaarlu, which could be loosely translated as patrilineal kin-brethren. As I questioned further the concept of baagaarlu, Apparao Anna narrated to me a story of how Chintaguda came to be.

Kumpi Bennadu was the original man to come and settle Chintaguda. His son, Anjali, had seven sons and two daughters. From Kumpi Bennadu to these nine grandchildren, the family here in Chintaguda earned the name Peddinti, which means in Telugu "big house" (a more accurate translation would mean "big family" referring to the large size of the clan). Kumpi Bennadu came from another village in the region called Chintaguda and thus named this newly settled village Chintaguda as well. Like his brethren, Kumpi Bennadu left his original village in search of green pastures. However, the original dispersal of the clan came when his forefather was forced out of Parlakimidi:

> We're originally from the Odisha border. I mean we're essentially from Andhra but on the border. When our ancestors were there [in Parlakimidi], they had money, strength, and comfort. Our ancestors were in opposition to the king [of Parlakimidi] who ruled the entire land. They showed off their pride unconcerned about how the king would react. Back then they were very strong. Generally, the king would carry around guns but our ancestors would carry around bows and arrows.
>
> There was a great big wild boar that roamed the land. It would cross humans, bullock carts – anything and it would even kill people! Everyone was afraid of it and no one could hunt it down. Our ancestor then said to the king, "If you can't even put a boar in its place, then why are you even ruling a kingdom? How are you even going to catch it?" He [brazenly] competed with the king. So both the king and their ancestor set out to

catch the boar in a competitive spirit. The king gave our ancestor a big sword – like the ones you see in movies.

The king also said they should take guns with them, but then our ancestor retorted, "With guns and so many weapons, how can you call yourself a true king?"

"That fucking Savara; he dares provokes me?" thought the king. In an attempt to make sure our ancestor would die by the boar, the king put our ancestor in a path that is frequented by the wild boar. The king thought he would be finished.

But in a twist, our ancestor caught the boar by its legs and lifted it up still alive. As a rule, we weren't supposed to kill the boar; only the king had that privilege at the time. This boar was huge; it must have been 2-3 quintals.

Our ancestor came up to the king and asked, "King, are you going to kill the boar or do I have to kill you?" Trembling and shaking, the king timidly approached and killed the boar. Through this, the king came to know of the strength of the Savara and questioned how he became so strong. The king wondered how he can become as strong as the Savara: "What food was he eating? How was he eating it? Why was he able to become so strong?"

Like you came to our house, the king sent soldiers. "We have to stay in your house as per the king's command," said the soldier to our ancestor. They flattered him by telling him that they need to protect him because he recently killed the big boar and that they would listen to whatever he [our ancestor] said. They found out which foods he was eating and how he got so strong. Just like you came here for research, they went to our ancestor's house for research.

After 2-3 months, the king came and visited our ancestor. He discovered that the soldiers had become strong like the Savara. It's because they took the same food as our ancestor and in particular, they prepared a special oil that contributed greatly to their strength. My mother says it is Endra, but even I'm not sure what it is. I know only about its name. It is something grown in the mountains. The soldier then demanded that the king receive at least 1-2 liters of this special oil that he requested. Our ancestor complied and gave the king the special oil.

The king, emboldened, said to our ancestor, "We are both equally strong now. Are you going to give us the oil every year or do we have to kill you?" How can he give the oil? He didn't even have enough to eat. How can he prepare the oil every year? So our ancestor took the king to court. In the court, the king made sure he made the Savara forfeit all he had. Still, our ancestor came up Rs. 50 or Rs. 100 short. Nowadays it's all in thousands but back then it was in rupees and half rupees. Because of this, our ancestor had to leave the 20-30 acres of land he had on the mountains and fled the Parlakimidi kingdom. From there, he came to an area close to Sembham by Palakonda. There, his family grew to a few members. Nevertheless, there was still one member of his clan that hid out in Parlakimidi. This person distanced himself from our original ancestor and continued living there unknown to the king. So our baagaarlu are there in Sembham, Punjoda, Parlakimidi. And even though it is far, we still visit each other.

Attempts to Abide: A Note on Methodology

A pivotal aspect of this story is Apparao Anna's implicating me into it. Such reflexivity and reflection references the complexities of my encounter with Chintaguda and its people. Even before leaving to the "field site," in my proposal, I was concerned with the ecology of practice that led to questions of everyday life and theorists who theorized that in the context of the anthropology of life (Ingold 2000; Ingold 2011; Kohn 2013). Like the king who was interested in the life force of the ancestor, I am, too, in some sense, interested in the makings of life in Chintaguda. There are a number of methodological points that this story and the reference to me bring up: the purpose anthropology and its association to a sociocultural account of life, the uneven and colonial power terrain that is part and parcel of its epistemology, considerations and possibility to overcome the same, and an explanation of my relationship to this research project.

The anthropological aspect of this project was concerned about indigenous knowledge and more broadly, daily practice around millets. I have taken a broader perspective on that after realizing the insignificant position of millets in Chintaguda. Through that turn, this project really became a newer version of a typical 20th century anthropological project: village ethnography. Rather than describing people, their cultures, and documenting dying practices and languages, post-structural critiques in anthropology and interdisciplinary turns in academia have led way to deeper questions about the workings of life. By moving from the theory of meshwork to the methodology that informs it, Ingold asserts that we should continue "to *open up* the world, rather than to seek closure" (Ingold 2011: 239). He chooses to go about this study of life in a comparative method, which unfortunately rests on largely second hand interpretations of cultures with brief forays into his own life or hypotheticals.[10] Closely tied to principles of the ecology of

---

[10] It is almost a new-fangled justification for armchair anthropology.

practice, this view of anthropological practice seeks to contextualize and understand practices, thoughts, interactions, emotions, choices, logics among the myriad of constituents of life. Ingold teeters on the edge of an anthropocentric approach to study and worldview. Kohn, on the other hand, pushes past it to investigate how life forms are unique and distinguishable from non-life forms.[11] *How* engagements in life coalesce is of particular importance to Kohn and therefore, he broadens the engagements humans have with life forms like animals in the forest. But this piercing of the anthropocene helps elucidate what are traditionally classified as ecological aspects. This view was particularly important to me in Chintaguda because I could not simply enter the village, detail the absence and attitudes towards millets, and end the research project. It would not do the research endeavor nor the village itself justice in terms of producing a narrative about the complexities at hand.

The idea of doing justice through anthropology has been debated extensively since scholars have questioned the colonial and exploitative roots and facets of anthropology (and social science research generally). The descriptive and classificatory or taxonomical roots of anthropology are rooted in the

> "unequal power encounter between the West and Third World which goes back to the emergence of bourgeois Europe, an encounter in which colonialism is merely one historical moment. It is this encounter that gives the West access to cultural and historical information about the societies it has progressively dominated, and thus not only generates a certain kind of universal understanding, but also re-enforces the inequalities in capacity between the European and the non-European worlds (and derivatively, between the Europeanized elites and the 'traditional' masses in the Third World)." (Asad 1973: 16-17)

As post-colonial subjects and anthropology developed in the later part of the 20th century, the colonial turns in anthropology became clearer. The anthropometric and cultural documentation projects of anthropology were clearly used as methods of subjugation and control in the colonial encounter (Asad 1973). In a typically dialectical power struggle, this pitted the white colonizer

[11] He uses stones as an example (Kohn 2013: 99)

against in the Indian (in this context) colonial subject. The cultural secrets, practices, and values are extracted and commoditized on an epistemological level (Ramanujan 1992). Here it is important to discuss the homogenized dichotomy that this power struggle presents. Despite being in a seemingly disadvantaged position in this power struggle, postcolonial subjects such as me can be easily tempted to present an undifferentiated postcolonial argument and subjectivity. One reason is that perpetrators of colonialism gave similar treatments to colonial subjects in many regards including in epistemological endeavors.[12] Nevertheless, this indivisible colonial subject position is actually false. Compounded to the colonial problematics is the dynamic of the "theoretical Brahmin and empirical shudra" (Guru 2002) also present in my research project (and that Asad briefly mentions). This means that very often, upper caste researchers such as me expropriate the experiences of marginalized castes such as dalits or adivasis for our own academic endeavors. We do this by representing the empirical lives of marginalized people in an academic format (e.g. thesis or dissertation) and then draw theoretical frameworks from it. Just like white colonial administrators, in postcolonial settings upper-caste academics, too, control the epistemological modes of production.

One method of extraction is found in the interaction between the king of Parlakimidi and the ancestor of the people in Chintaguda when the king sent the soldiers to learn the secret of the Savara strength. And by extension and extrapolation, the reference to me during the recounting of the story could mean that I, too, am looking for the secret of their strength. This, then, leaves the potential for the residents of Chintaguda to be robbed of this strength. What is most coincidental about this story is that the king sent his soldiers to research the eating habits of their

[12] Here, in the colonial context, I am referring to works such as Castes and Tribes of Southern India by Edgar Thurston (1909) where all the castes and tribes of India are classified similarly in one work. As I was looking up entries on Savaras, I also came across entries for Koppula Velamas and Niyogi Brahmins.

ancestor and I did the same as well. Such a narrative undoubtedly fits the trope of colonialism: both materially and epistemologically. Not only has such a relation been filled with exploitation and expropriation, it exacerbates the contours of power that it is predicated on. Indeed, Qadri Ismail levels a serious critique of anthropology: "Structurally, anthropology has been unable to displace its emergence within, its intimate implication with, a colonialist mode of knowing. It always represents, speaks for; it cannot abide by…" (Ismail 2005: 7-8).

From nearly the beginning of my time in Chintaguda, it was clear for both people in Chintaguda, especially those closer to me such as Apparao Anna, Masayya, or Gopi that my stay in the village would disproportionately benefit me. Indeed, Totayya Anna said that after I leave, they will all only remember the happy memories we've had together. At another point, Apparao Anna said my stay felt like a dream to both them and me in the sense that it was a little unreal. Materially, anthropology is more than just ethnography and writing (Ismail 2005: 10); I was able to continue my livelihood as a graduate student researcher because of the time and help I received in Chintaguda.

In the context of the IDRC research project, it is not enough to discuss the colonial roots of anthropology and make a transitive argument to a similar dynamic between upper-castes and marginalized peoples in India. As a cog in the machinations of international aid, I have been tasked to finding out the ecology of practice in Chintaguda for a specific reason. Despite broadening the objective of the study to a more nuanced and critical project of an anthropology of life, the beholden nature of my study (i.e. my graduate student stipend and research expenses paid for by the IDRC) requires that precipitates from my research have at least some part in elucidating indigenous knowledge as a means to confront problems wrought by modernism or capitalism e.g. climate change, soil degradation, nutritional insecurity, etc. Essentially, this is an

expropriation of indigenous practices for their pure use-values. This is also complicit in a dynamic that inserts upper-caste people such as me as meditators or distributors of aid that is earmarked by foreign – generally white – agencies to the marginalized peoples of the "Third World". In this dynamic, as meditators, the power position of the upper-caste development person is reinforced (Navayan 2015).

This begs the question how to better do anthropological research. Engaging in this method of knowledge production forced me to confront my own – and later, my meshwork's – position as the "Europeanized elites" (Asad 1973: 16) of the same place I am trying to reroot myself into. It was awkward and at times agonizing knowing that I am the conduit that can help bridge the gap between the West and "the traditional masses of the Third World". Feminist ethnographers especially have contended with this issue because of the politics of solidarity endemic to feminism. In looking for feminist ethnography, scholars are essentially trying to look for non-exploitative ethnography. The inherently vulnerable position that the ethnographic research method places the informant in leads Judith Stacey to proclaim, "there cannot be a fully feminist ethnography" (Stacey 1988: 26).

The best possible way for me to contend with this is to draw from another hyphenated anthropologist, Kamala Visweswaran. In Fictions of Feminist Ethnography (1994), Visweswaran also grapples with the issue of doing feminist ethnography and makes a number of possible suggestions through a rhizomatic essay-like format. Foremost to this methodology is the concept of "home work" that Visweswaran introduces. This concept comes layered with a postcolonial-type argument that moves to decolonization to some extent. When the field of fieldwork fails, Visweswaran advises us to turn to home, engage in "home-making". Home making is creating a sense of home in the "field site" as well as critically interrogating previous notions of home that

the anthropologist comes with to the project. This turn is an epistemological one that deconstructs the dichotomy between the faraway field and close home. Visweswaran advises we open up the field to destabilize our own position. While I cannot claim typically native informant status as the power differential between even my own roots as a Brahmin-Velama person and Savara people is too great, the turn to home-making is where I can find some mitigation for issues of exploitative knowledge production.

I initially elected to apply to this graduate program because I knew the research would be conducted in a site close to where my parents and family is from in Andhra Pradesh. The research sites were either in Visakhapatnam district, or later, as I found out, in Srikakulam districts. In between these two lies Vizianagaram district – itself a hub for millet production and research in Andhra Pradesh and formerly a part of Srikakulam district – where my parents were born and raised. I have and have had family members who lived their lives across these three districts. In this case, home making was first a physical reterritorialization for me.

When I realized that millets were generally absent in Chintaguda, I looked to understand how and why they were absent in my own family history as well. Millets have been a part of my history too; incidentally, their absence in my history is just as indicative as their presence and then disappearance in Chintaguda. Coming from a dual-caste background, I was able to cursorily piece together and then later attempt to verify a cross-caste and class history of millets in peoples' diets, in particular, and production practices less so. Essentially, with the indirect and unintentional help of my family, I was able to engage sediments of comparison strewn about in my thinking that in small ways helped me frame my own questions when I was in Chintaguda. In that way, learning where millets are and where millets aren't is integral to this study. Of course,

finding out everywhere they are not is very difficult. Therefore, I limited my personal connection to millets to guiding questions rather than any defined structures or parameters.

After all, my family and I come from very similar environmental/socio-political conditions – the small towns and villages of northern Andhra Pradesh – despite our obvious caste and class privilege. To that end, there are strikingly similarities between what I found in Chintaguda and my own family. During much of my childhood, I would spend family trips in these rural, agrarian settings with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Much of the daily activities I did in Chintaguda were not entirely alien to me – drawing water from the well, living without electricity for periods of time, walking in mud and dirt, and other aspects of village life. However, as members of my family became proper, globalized citizens of liberalized India and left the countryside, we have been fully ripped from this ecology.

As such, I was able to use my own set of indigenous knowledge and skills. In addition to practicing various aspects of village life I learned as a kid or helping with cooking preparation in rare occasions, most importantly, I was able to use Telugu, my mother tongue for my livelihood e.g. academic research. Not only was I able to use it, I was able to improve it and improve in a regional culturally specific manner – unique to the uttara Andhra region where my family comes from. I was taught to speak, read, and write Telugu primarily by my paternal grandmother, my mother, and my father since I was a toddler. In addition to this, I took one formal three-month course in 2011 to sharpen my reading and writing skills. After a few weeks in Chintaguda, my relatives noted that I even developed a touch of the Srikakulam accent in my Telugu.

The act of doing research and fitting in on material terms was not too difficult for me. When I first came to the village, I learned early on that I was the third Lakshman in the village (of only 100 people). At 5’ 8”, I was taller than most people in the village, but definitely not the

tallest; there were two other men taller than me and two or three around my height. My skin tone, too, was not out of the ordinary.[13] Most importantly, when people in Chintaguda talked about non-villagers visiting Chintaguda, on multiple occasions, they mentioned how big and fat these visitors were. To that end, even though I was not entirely in good physical shape compared to everyone else in Chintaguda my body structure also helped me blend in. All of these factors coalesced in multiple instances. During the wedding season, when various relatives from other villages came to Chintaguda, people speculated whose cousin (in Chintaguda) I was. In one particular instance, when I was in Kotturu accompanying Rajaswamy Anna when he was buying greens, the vendor asked him if I was Rajaswamy Anna's son. We said I was and lied about what I was studying and said I was visiting for a few days.

I have used brief glimpses from my own trajectory as another growth experience to flesh out this meshwork, this investigation that I was to conduct in Chintaguda. Phenomena such as moving away from millets to rice, from smallholder agriculture to government teaching posts, from engaging in livelihoods and learning within the meshwork to formalized Western education – these are all present in Chintaguda as well as among my own relatives. When Subhamma said that educated girls don't know transplanting work, it rung true not only for her own daughter who studied up to 10th grade but also for my own sister-in-law. When Venkatarao said that he doesn't feel connected to his relations because he grew up outside of the village while he received his formal education, the same follows for my mother who cannot identify the full network of her extended family. She, and by extension we, has very little knowledge of the entire villages in Vizianagaram district that we are related to. When I had difficulty explaining where I came from, the United States, to elderly people in Chintaguda, I suddenly wondered what my

---

[13] I mention skin tone because it is immediately a factor of identification in India. The skin tone variation in India is great and had I had much lighter skin, I would have stood out significantly.

own deceased maternal grandmother, my Ammamma, knew about America or how she conceptualized it.

In this sense, I am turning to home making and home work not only to understand the various absences of millets but to do some comparative work that leads me towards Ingold's preferred method of an anthropology of life. In my daily life from the comforts of upper middle class life in the cosmopolitan center of New York City, it is possible to ignore our own common roots and break from our home meshwork in Vizianagaram. Despite this break from a meshwork that I'm not entirely even familiar with, I am forever grateful that my parents immigrated to the West and I was born and raised in such privilege. Drawing from this experience is also one reason that I have been able to integrate myself deeper into the arguments I deploy later on (e.g. working against eco-incarceration, advocating for English language education, etc.) despite recognizing the potential pitfalls of doing so.

Visweswaran's argument for failure in ethnography is also necessary for this project. Just as she entered the home of an interviewee and found little to no interview, I too came to Chintaguda and found little to no millets. On first glance, superficially, the project then became a failure: I was tasked to find out about millets and found very little. Visweswaran, however, sees opportunity in failed accounts stating that they "occasion new kinds of positionings" which are generally partial and incomplete (Visweswaran 1994: 100-101). This new positioning is exactly what I have turned to during my time in Chintaguda. I have pursued and questioned themes in people's lives that are salient to them such as loans, education, and development in a way that – at times – did and did not connect to millets. These positionings – which constitute the bulk of the discussion in this thesis – are my attempt to abide by Chintaguda. A partial definition of abide, per Ismail, is "to display a commitment to attending to its concerns, to intervening within

its debates, to taking a stand" (Ismail 2005: xxx). All of these – my interventions and stances – may not entirely come out in this thesis; I will try to present the important seemingly contradictory or bewildering concerns that people face in Chintaguda to the best of my ability. I have engaged in some amount of home making in Chintaguda, which means being invested in the local realities and meshwork. It is not a touch and go, exploitative scenario but one that continues into the future, past this project. We are now bound together in ways that are important: they cared for me as one of their own. In many ways, abiding takes a deeper form for me in my engagement with Chintaguda that does not need to be encompassed in this thesis.[14]

These are concerns that halfie anthropologists (Narayan 1993) have already tackled. These debates have been hashed and rehashed. What I am trying to draw forth from this discussion is that this research not only has significance for the IDRC RESMISA project, but it helped me understand more acutely the cultural logics of my genealogical roots. I hope this then leads to a destabilization of the ethnographic authority, which opens up new ways to reconsider the exploitative aspects of this research. While this still places the "objects" of the study at the disadvantage in that they still do not "receive" anything in the material or even almost epistemological sense, it is my hope that in interrogating my own meshwork and drawing parallels, I am able to abide by Chintaguda. By doing so, I hope not to take from the nectar of their metaphoric strength. As such, while the roots are in development anthropology, I hope to have appropriated some aspects of this project to more humanistic ideals of solidarity and growing together.

[14] At some point, my engagement with Chintaguda became almost not nonbinding which hints that I have to take care of some of Masayya's wedding expenses, requests for job placements, and more. One joke was that I marry a Brahmin girl from the nearby Tobavalasa village. The meaning behind this is that I would be indefinitely bound to their meshwork as a result. (Obviously, marrying a Savara girl would be out of the question for me.)

Chapter 3
Engagements of Everyday Life

Mediated Meshwork as Medium

> "…the focus on the mundane and repetitive aspects of daily life, which also constitute the foci for resource use, and its emphasis on hierarchy, both in terms of how hierarchy is institutionalized and maintained in practice and how hierarchy in social life affects individual practice and resource use." (Nyerges 1997: 9)

As the guiding social theorist for the RESMISA project, Nyerges provides a succinct guide to the ecology of practice in the short excerpt above. This, then, naturally lays out the strategy for Chapters 3 and 4. In piecing together the various theorists in this chapter for an understanding of how everyday life happens, I will see how that life is negotiated in chapter four with special emphasis on mechanisms around capital. Looking for the modus operandi means, in the broadest sense, understanding how life works. This is simply because there is more to people's lives in Chintaguda than millet cultivation – indeed, they don't even identify themselves as farmers (rythu) in the typical sense.

Nyerges's brief sketch of the everyday and mundane may be a fine place to start. However, his theorization is insufficiently elaborated: it does not give us a means to understand how the seemingly disparate mundane events, observations, and narratives in Chintaguda can come together for a meaningful understanding of everyday life. In an attempt to better understand the ecology of everyday life, I have drawn from various sources that engage Chintaguda's material and embodied mundanities. These various theorists have helped me better understand casual turns of phrases, gestures, or actions in Chintaguda. One principle commitment they all have is to the idea of practice, which is evidently central to Nyerges's idea. They are also committed to understanding the world in an ecological sense or with an ecological

perspective to see how the inter-relations come together and are bound together through practices. Because practice is so central to human life, I draw on theorists who have varying theoretical alliances to craft a richer ecology of practice.

In this chapter, I am working towards two conceptual positions that are inextricable. One goal is to try to start to flesh out a concept of meshwork and how it happens in Chintaguda. This will be carried on throughout the thesis. The second goal is to understand a version of practice broadened from that of Nyerges, as I will review in the following subsection. These two formulations need to be viewed together and as mutually co-constitutive. The end goal of this chapter is to show, using the foundational concepts of meshwork and practice, how some practices, at times, come together in particular ways within the context of the meshwork.

The meshwork is a metaphorical trick that Ingold and other academics have engaged in to provide a clearer sense of how sentient beings move through the world. A meshwork can be thought of as "a tangle of interlaced trails, continually raveling here and unraveling there, that beings grow or 'issue forth' along the lines of their relationships…and contribute to its ever-evolving weave." (Ingold 2011: 71). Ingold abstracts the medium we move in to break down structural barriers between nature-culture and really fine tune an understanding of how we live and grow together with sentient beings and the physical, material world around us. Key to this concept is an attribute of continuation, movement, growing, or developing. Meshwork is also useful because it explicitly states the importance of the physical, material world or the landscape or what we normatively know as the environment. As such, it is the entire medium through which we move: the air, land, built infrastructures (writ large), human and non-human relations and interactions – really anything in our world. Ingold's use of lines as constituents of the meshwork is a good way to examine how, specifically, we move through life. While Ingold

invokes the images of lines by way of Deleuze (Ingold 2011: 83), these can take any trajectory or have multiple meanings. Attention to the mundane will first help us understand the various logics that underpin them and then find room for multiple meanings.

Life is not just a random set of movements or growing but structured along and through lines. From Ingold, I will make a conceptual jump of my own to state these lines that he discusses can be seen as logics. Logics are systematic ways of thinking or reasoning with an associated set of values. I am trying to develop attempts to understand cultural logics for a number of reasons. One reason to simply find out what is intentionally and unintentionally salient in the lives of people in Chintaguda. Another reason is to see which logics operate in Chintaguda to understand how they interact with other, more dominant or pervasive power-laden logics. A third reason is to tie into the project's objective of finding out how natural resources and labor or engagements or activity relate in Chintaguda – this is specific rather than general. Cultural logics is a term initially used in Gidwani as a way to circumvent the more dominant logics of economic models such as Marxist Political Economy or New Institutional Economics (Gidwani 2008: 143). Competing mediations of various logics (e.g. forest, capitalist, patriarchal, etc.) constitute cultural logics that operate together in the disparate assemblages of people's lives. It is along these lines and through and past their intersections that we can connect the interpretative and communicative dances we do in life.

Reworking Pani

Of all the ways to name "doing something," I will start from practice. While I characterize this method as participant observation for research purposes, really, I was living in Chintaguda with an attentive and ethnographic gaze. Practice becomes easy to work with initially

for three chronological reasons. This development project is heavily invested in understanding the livelihood practices of people in the context of millet production and consumption. From a sociocultural perspective, this necessarily means focused attention on their daily activities. Before leaving to India, I engaged Vinay Gidwani's Capital, Interrupted (2008) which is a commentary and theorization of the politics of work. Along with Gidwani, other heterodox Marxists place notions of labor or practice as a central point of analysis (Bourdieu 1977; Willis 1977; de Certeau 1984). However, the final and most salient reason is because the frequent reoccurrence of the word pani in conversations in Chintaguda.

Pani can be directly translated as work. Native Telugu speakers who directly translate their thoughts into English always say "I have one work to do" when they mean to translate "Naaku oka pani undhi" or say "I have a small work to do" when they mean "Naaku chinna pani undhi". Discussions with my advisor helped me solidify this translation because in Hindi and other Indian languages, there is a differentiation between kaam, which means work, and naukri, which means job. I could have stopped here and continued using the idea of work to carry forward Gidwani's analysis of politics of work in Chintaguda.

Keeping with this emic translation of pani does little for my analysis and the realities of (life in) Chintaguda. Gidwani himself offers a better explanation of rethinking labor by citing Marx's dialectic of labor from the Grundrisse (Gidwani 2008: 195-196). Opening labor's dialectical tension, Marx formulates a negation of labor to include labor as an activity that is a "living source of value" (Marx 1973: 296). Having established that such activity exists without mediation and "not separated from the person," Marx adds that this subjective existence of labor is a positive, creative (ibid: 614) activity with which a person has emotional relations (ibid: 613). Opening labor up to this so-called immediate form helps create a working definition of practice

in the Chintaguda context. Pani is not just work with productive ends. I want to use a temporary redefinition to mean any sort of activity. This broadening and Marx's call to the inclusion of a life force can resonate with many other thinkers.

Most thinkers I engage are concerned with the modus operandi of everyday life, the practical actions and activities that happen on a daily basis. Each one gives their own explanation as to how this actually transpires. In that sense, I will review these explanations to assemble a working definition for methodological purposes. Iterations of activity and engagements can be described as manners of speech, dwelling, moving, cooking (de Certeau 1984) and gestures (Giard 1998: 203) as well as "manners, dress, building, and other similar forms of social life" (Williams 1977: 131). Willams also alludes to feelings as engagements with structures or life in general but Sara Amhed most clearly states that emotions are "social and cultural practices" (Ahmed 2014: 9). Crucially, these can also be stylized performances (Butler 1990: 33) and interpretation of movements with moments of anticipation and error (Kohn 2013: 99-100). Activities also bind us into the meshwork as Anna Tsing points: "…I emphasize again the *practices* that link humans and nonhumans in creating the social-natural landscape" (Tsing 2005: 200). Throughout all these descriptions, the themes of creativity, difference, and possibility carry through. Another commonality between those interested in modus operandi is their recognition of process, movement, and becoming – that activities and life courses are processual. I use activities and engagements interchangeably from this point onwards because both are not very deeply burdened with loaded meanings in academic or social theory literature.

These activities or engagements generally are not one-off instances in time. To be a part of a continued iteration of engagements, they are thus developed and carried forward through

repetitions,[15] which is a constitutive factor of everyday, mundane activities. "Everywhere there is…an expenditure of energy, there is **rhythm**. Therefore: repetition (of movements, gestures, action, situations, differences)…" (Lefebvre 2004: 15, emphasis original). Repetition gives birth to differences (ibid: 7) such that no two expenditures of energy are exactly the same. As a result of these differences, Ingold reads rhythm as a "dynamic coupling of movements" (Ingold 2011: 60). This dynamism is important to highlight because everyday life, despite the mundane features of it, is by no means static. It is the repetition of engagements with difference that lines congeal in the meshwork. Rhythm is also useful in thinking about the lines and logics that we conduct our lives along and through.

One approach to activity that I will not grapple with in this thesis is immediate or intransitive engagements. Ironically, Marx states that activity is immediate and Ingold states that practice is intransitive. This is ironic because Ingold arrives at intransitivity precisely by criticizing Marx. Marx contends that living activity is not mediated but I argue that his reading of this is wrong because he only affords primacy of the dialectic to the relationship between labor and capital. To this end, all the not-values, those which cannot be commodified, he observes in the world are essentially immediate. However, there is more to life that exists outside of the labor-capital dialectic. Ingold tries to move away from Marx by arguing that despite his musings in Grundrisse, Marx still considers the moment of production more important than consumption in his understanding of the world (Ingold 2011: 5). To counter this, Ingold goes further and advocates for an intransitive view of activity. An intransitive view is one that does not elevate production over consumption; they are simultaneous acts where whatever is "produced" is

[15] My 10th grade Latin teacher made us recite the following statement at the beginning of every class for one entire year. Ten years later, I am able to use this phrase to link learning and repetition: "repetitio est mater studiorum."

immediate to that which is doing the producing and as it is produced, it is also consumption. For example, for a weaver weaving a basket, the very process of making a basket leaves an imprint on him. This view falls short for a two main reasons. Firstly, throughout his theorization of intransitive life, Ingold offers very little original ethnographic evidence. His second hand ethnographic accounts are cherry picked and he relies heavily on academic disciplines and theorists for their contributions to his ideas.[16] He does not consider even the slightest demarcation between how different entities interact; it is basically theoretical posturing. Secondly, his conceptualization for how life moves through a medium is meshwork. Meshwork is a very useful concept but it cannot be entirely intransitively produced considering the neo-Marxist roots of it. Ingold draws meshwork from Lefebvre's Production of Space. Lefebvre does not flesh out the concept but leaves initial thoughts that help Ingold explore meshwork deeper and in the ecological context (Ingold 2011: 84). The neo-Marxist roots do indicate a production of the meshwork, which is in line with Marx's notions of production. While I do not place primacy to production, I will reject intransivity in favor of mediation.

All activity is actually mediated in some way or the other. Although this statement has roots in semiotics, it can be found in a number of discourses about practice in general. I take this as a premise not only because I found it to be a consistent theme in obviously the dialectically informed theories and also the post-structural ideas presented in this chapter but in life in Dabbaguda. There are fields of mediation as I mentioned in the previous subsection such as economic-capitalist, patriarchal, caste, forest/ecological, etc. While they are not entirely mutually exclusive, within each of these fields are terms and logics of engagement. This is such that each activity is done in relation to another activity. Kohn states that "life is…the product of sign

[16] For example, he turns to the entire discipline of psychology for answers (Ingold 2011: 77) as opposed to empirically grounded concepts.

processes" (Kohn 2013: 9) that represent one another. Thus these activities inherently represent something to something else. I do not completely agree with the representational aspect of this idea, i.e. semiotics as a whole, simply because the representation is not always obvious in each mediated engagement or activity. Interpreting what representation means is beyond the scope of this thesis and for that reason, I will not completely engage such a framework (although I have earlier on in this chapter). Nevertheless, activity is mediated because it takes place in relation to something, and for this reason, I stress the mediated aspect of engagements. Even with the mediation, because activities happen within multiple fields, their mediations, too, are multiple and heterogeneous.

While pani is normatively associated in Chintaguda as productive work, these multiple and heterogeneous mediated activities produce multiple and heterogeneous actions over the course of their trajectories. As such, the meshwork is a complicated set of engagements that shape it. I will tease out the inter-relations and how such engagements played out in Chintaguda in the following sections. I deliberately excluded this in my methods section simply because it is so theoretically informed.

Animals, Cooking & Tools: Rhythms of Unconstrained Mediated Engagements

Keeping with contributions from neo-Marxists, I return to mediation as advised by Haraway who notes "experience is never *im*mediately accessible" (Haraway 1988: 142). A logical reading of Marx would lead to the conclusion that he only said activity was immediate because it was illegible to the trappings of the labor-capital dialectic. I propose that mediations can be understood as "everyday engagements" and "possibilities for relating and understanding" (Kohn 2013: 7). In fact, Kohn himself takes a note from Haraway to explore mediations in the

forest that are not, in fact, antagonistic but at times mutually affirming. Similar to Haraway and Ingold, Kohn works toward an anthropology of life with a focus of moving away from the anthropocene. While sign interpretation and representation is a large part of Kohn's undergirding theory, his thoughts can lend themselves to this discussion without a deep discussion of semiotics. Nevertheless, Kohn's explanation as to how seemingly unrelated creatures interact and interpret their actions points to how mediated engagements can operate in innocuous settings unconstrained by power relations. These are unconstrained because engagements, which are all mediated, are omnipresent; they exist in all facets of life. However, not all of them are situated in realms or structures of power.

In unrelated aspects of human society and then broadly in a forest ecology setting, complex of trajectories of action can occur simultaneously. I was initially confused one early evening during an otherwise normal day as to why Rajaswamy Anna randomly proclaimed that he has to quickly go take the sun-drying finger millet from the roof before it starts raining. I looked up – as we learned to do – in search and anticipation of rainclouds; I saw none. Immediately, I told Rajaswamy Anna that he was very much mistaken: there are no rainclouds and it was not going to rain. Laughing at my confidence, he pointed to a line of ants carrying their eggs across the sidewall of Gopi's house. He told me that whenever ants move like that with their eggs (these are very visible because they are small white specs against red or light black bodies), it means that it will rain. I laughed it off and didn't believe him, especially on a beautifully sunny day. In just three short hours, I was proven wrong when a short and brief bit of rain fell and drenched the village with fat raindrops.

Despite using Kohn to break from Ingold, both of their commentaries on how to understand this engagement are useful. In Kohn's own research, he describes when leafcutter

ants leave their colonies once a year for a mating ritual. The beginning of this period is marked by a number of climatic and ecological changes that the local people of the forest have come to observe over the years. Eager to capture the ants for food, humans as well as other creatures await the precise moment these ants emerge. They emerge just before dawn to avoid detection of predators but the local people use flashlights to attract the ants and capture them. As such, the local people were able to "enter the logic of how forests think" (ibid: 81).

Rajaswamy Anna did not specifically interact with the ants but his movements were mediated by them. While in Rajaswamy Anna's case, this change of weather and the engagement with the other selves in his meshwork meant a possibility of a ruined foodstuffs or (taking it further) financial detriment, the weather (and in turn, these ecological engagements) do not hold the same meaning for everyone. While I was thoroughly enjoying the strong gusty winds one searingly hot day in April, my friend Prasad was lamenting the same because these winds will blow off the delicate cashew flowers from the trees and ruin the crop. On the other hand, Pawan shared my joy for the wind because he was able to collect the fallen baby mangos from the trees by the bucketful. The basic idea might appear, on first glance, of a stereotypical single phenomenon is experienced differently by different people. This is not so because of the differentiated relationships our mediations have with the weather or whichever other phenomenon. While we can collectively operate similarly in our ecology, the various lines of mediations we have (e.g. in the environment) are, at times, specific to individuals.

Indeed, active intention is not always needed in a series of activities. Confusion and error are a part of these differentiated mediations; misinterpretations can be seen as engagements yet the relations still hold (Gidwani 2008: 232, Kohn 2013: 92). One day in late April, a group of about ten young men and I went to gather materials for the shade covering the street for the

upcoming weddings. These materials – bamboo and jeelugu leaves – were found in the forest. After we left the village and came to the edge of the forest, I realized that three of the dogs from the village followed us. I noticed their presence when we got to a jeelugu tree and sat around to discuss how to get the leaves. The dogs settled around us and looked a little clueless. I was too until I realized that the dogs may have thought we were going on a hunt. I have been to the forest with smaller groups of people and large groups of people of both genders and never did the dogs follow us. However, I did know that they were specifically taken on hunts when large groups of only men went into the forest. They acted based on the actions of another set of entities that they were intimately tied to in the forest meshwork.

In both instances, with Rajaswamy Anna and the ants and the dogs and the young men, there were mediated engagements that were not dialectical as there was no antagonistic tension or need for a resolution of such a tension. Even more, there was no value production in these actions. It seemed the ants were carrying their eggs to protect them and Rajaswamy Anna was moving his finger millet inside to keep it dry; he would have taken any other action necessary when he knew it will rain. (This finger millet actually was for subsistence as they took it to the mill in Badakipeta a few days after.) The dogs simply thought a hunt was happening. Nevertheless, both sets of interpretations and fleeting action-based relationships were structured by logic – the logic of the forest. In that regard, this engagement was outside the domain of labor and capital and a-dialectical but still logical.

Having entered the logic of forests (not a stable logic by any means), I started paying attention to the movement of ants to see when rain will come. Surely, every time I observed the ants carrying their eggs, it rained. Like the dogs that have repeatedly followed the men of the

village into the forest for hunts, these engagements enter logics based on repetition. Repetitive actions, despite their continuity and seemingly insignificant position form a backbone of life.

Here, Luce Giard's conceptualization of doing-cooking is important:

> "*doing-cooking* is the medium for a basic, humble, and persistent practice that is repeated in time and space, rooted in the fabric of relationships to others and to one's self, marked by the "family saga" and the history of each, bound to childhood memory just like rhythms" (Giard 1998: 157)

Despite the oft-recognized drudgery of domestic activities, Giard shifts attention to the really minute details of doing-cooking which help us understand which aspects of cooking are important. These are the calculations, the improvisations, the evaluations, considerations, gestures, preferences, and deployment of knowledge on a daily basis (ibid: 200).

Most women in Chintaguda, especially young women, get up before four o'clock in the morning to do vanta-penta. Vanta means cooking and penta means shit. They have to clear the animal shit accumulated over the course of the night. One other important task is to collect water from the well for that entire day. One morning, I woke up at 4:24 a.m. and meandered into Deepa's kitchen to observe her cook. For her cooking that morning, she considers the competing tastes of people in her family. Her father can only drink hot water, so she heats up water every morning for him. Her younger brother just returned from residential school and he prefers watery gruel-like rice known as pakale; others at home prefer dry rice without the extra water. Deepa kept the water the rice was cooked in aside so "You can eat it however you want, however you like." To accompany the rice, she cooked bottle gourd curry.

Throughout doing-cooking, Deepa shifted the fire and the firewood to make sure the dishes received proper heat. Once the dishes were left to cook on the stove, she went to wash the dishes in the far corner. She washed these with the soot from the fire of yesterday's cooking. Occasionally, she would come back to check on the dishes or adjust the fire. Her movements

seem second nature to her, but I knew that to get the perfect level of heat from the fire such that the dishes would cook properly is a difficult thing to do. Not only did she have to gauge the intensity of the fire but also the position, burn-rate, and volume of the fuel wood.

While I have not observed much complexity in this doing-cooking process, it still remains an integral part of everyday practice (for the mere fact that without cooking everyday there would be little food to fully sustain life). A simpler form than the French women of the 1980s in a highly capitalist system, doing-cooking in Chintaguda repeated itself every day. Conversely, doing-cooking in Chintaguda is spread over the forest ecology for a number of reasons. The water for the cooking must be drawn from the well, the fuel wood for the stove must be collected from the forest, and at times, the basis of the curry comes from the forest itself such as uncultivated greens or spices such as chilies or curry leaves.

Giard notes that doing-cooking is a learned, everyday, mundane skill that requires a "programmed mind" that has "multiple memory: a memory of apprenticeship, of witnessed gestures, and of consistences…" (ibid: 157). Learning vanta pani or cooking activity requires "creative ingenuity of cleverness" (ibid: 157) to cope with varying preferences and capacities. Creativity thus is not only in activity or mediated engagements but also in learning.

In this new context, I was learning new activities that helped me enter into a new set of logics while using some that I learned previously as a child (e.g. squatting to defecate or drawing water from a well). Among the new activities, one that I was not able to master in the short while I was there was how to use a knife properly. Knives are integral to life in Chintaguda: they are used to cut crops, branches, food in the forest, holes in trees, extraneous material, and many more. The knocking noise was frequently one of the rhythms I heard most in Chintaguda when the knife was used to cut at the wood – both absently and intentionally. To my genuine surprise

one morning, I discovered Navya, Lakshman's 4-year-old daughter, use a small knife to remove the extraneous small roots from her family's harvested turmeric. It was obvious that no one put her up to the task because kids under the age of ten do not generally perform household tasks in Chintaguda. Even though I was not there for a long time, I doubt her parents or other elders in the village sat her down and taught her how to do this fairly difficult task (I recount from experience). I noticed that for other people in the village such as young adults and older people this engagement with the knife continues in a repetitive and seemingly pointless manner at times. Over the course of many conversations on the mountain, I would notice that whoever I was talking to during their break would absently or intently cut at something – whatever piece of wood or hard material was readily accessible.

Complementary to Giard, Ingold's ideas on skill and development are just as salient in this particular example to understand how a four year old has already started doing the tasks of her elders. He explains Maureen Anne Mackenzie's work with Telefol girls in Central New Guinea where "…by watching the activity of her mother, a young girl absorbs and assimilates the 'intrisinc rules' of the craft" (Ingold 2000: 356). While the Telefol girls stick close to their parents, Navya's milieu is filled with aunts and uncles and grandparents who all use their knives very frequently. Considering the becoming perspective, Ingold notes that skill development at such a young age as four will actually grow with the body (ibid: 360) with the assumption that these skills will be continued and repeated.

I pointed to a very clear logic of forests by way of Kohn regarding the behavior of animals. In the latter two examples, however, the mundane repetition of activity is what is important. Nevertheless, the organizing logics in both are salient features of how to move through a meshwork. The logic of learning and deploying tools is important in the forest context.

Doing-cooking is organized by the logic of survival. Although doing-cooking is not implicitly gendered, for the vast majority of the world, it is a women's activity. I forego a discussion of gender here for the next chapter but attention to these differences is important to keep in mind to complicate notions of the meshwork.

Aesthetics, Emotions & Bodies as Possibilities of Shifts

The whittlings of the knife were found elsewhere in the village as part of daily livelihood practices, but also on an aesthetic level that stems from pure volition. Aesthetics then are a point for unconstrained mediated engagements, especially in the context of the environment. These engagements sprouted organically while I was in Chintaguda. Oftentimes, I would accompany a group of – generally women – from the village to go shepherding the goats and cows. As we made our way through the various trails, Aruna picked up a very straight stick from the ground and started using it to shepherd the animals. While they grazed and she sat in the shade, she took out her knife and whittled away the smaller twigs from stick. Even after she removed it, she continued to whittle away at the stick to get smooth edges by the nodes. I asked her what she was doing and why she was doing it. She replied that she was removing the twigs from the nodes of connection. After this, she was making the stick look nice. The presence of an aesthetic preference in this context struck me: these sticks were disposable and no one keeps them longer than that day or a few days. Making these look nice is to engage in a specifically aesthetic practice for really no other reason but to please herself.

Not all aesthetics and preferences can be grouped into one undifferentiated category. Uma, Girija, Sridevi, and I set out to Badakipeta one hot day in April to run errands. While we were walking, Uma unceremoniously plucked a few leaves from some roadside bush, put them in

her hair decoratively, and continued walking. Girija did the same while Sridevi just kept walking. I was puzzled; I had never seen any woman putting leaves in their hair. I asked both of them why they put them in and they answered "just because". I received the same answer when I asked Sridevi why she didn't pluck flowers. Uma could have placed any leaves in her hair. True, she did discriminate and placed a certain kind of leaves rather than others, but the fact remains that this choice was as random and fleeting as any of the other choices she could have availed herself to. The possibility to view this as a moment to enhance her subjective female beauty or work for the male gaze may be a valid but to me is an over-determined reading of this action and power in that instant.

Figure 3: Leaf aesthetic

The difference between Uma's aesthetic choice and Aruna's aesthetic choice is that the latter example exists in a context where there are other materials to decoratively adorn hair. Among them are rajatar flowers, wild white flowers known in Telugu as ankudu puvvulu, or orange flowers known as kanakamburaalu. Whereas these are known to be popularly aesthetically pleasing, Uma's leaves were random in her hair at best. With the shepherding stick, however, there are no other types of sticks or instruments. Nor are there particularly and popularly prescribed methods of beautification of said stick. The key difference here is that

Uma's aesthetic preference is, in some way, legible to a field of enabling constraints that may give credence to the aforementioned over-determined reading of her preference and action. This is not possible for Aruna's aesthetically pleasing stick.

Similarly, seemingly innocuous development of the body can actually take different forms depending on the context and interpretation. Living on the mountain and repeatedly engaging in mountain activities such as cultivation, gathering, walking/climbing result in the development of the body that is of the mountain with physical imprints such as "muscular consciousness" (Ingold 2011: 47). Thus our bodies are simultaneously formed with the mediated engagements we partake with the physical environment. This is consciousness I did not have much of in Chintaguda. One night, I was attempting to carry a 20-liter water can to the village in an effort to be self-sufficient. No matter how much I tried to physically engage with all the tasks in Chintaguda, I was jokingly told by Apparao Anna one day that "memu naatu, nuvvu hybridu" (we're organic, you're hybrid). In this context, naatu is generally referenced to as organic and village-made or indigenous to the village whereas hybrid would usually be used to describe seeds or broiler chicken. Apparao Anna's identification with naatu is evidence of the locally specific development of his body.

In a more profound manner, Sreenu casually showed me his hands one day when I came back from cashew picking. I was complaining to him about how disgusting and sore they felt because ripping the seed cleanly from the fruit was difficult when the fruit were rotting and the fruits often leaked their juices all over the hands. Sreenu's hands, in comparison, were a lot more calloused. His face changed to a mixed expression of disgust and disappointment when talking about his hands. His friends in Srikakulam would make disparaging comments and berate him about about the state of his hands. Sreenu's angst about his hands is deeper than simply his

attitude to them. He continues to reject the very meshwork that created these hands stating that he wants to leave as soon as he gets the chance. He couldn't specify where other than engaging in some work in a company.

This, then, is the possibility of shift to a discussion of another kind of mediated engagements. Had Sreenu stopped with just a passing reference to his hands as Apparao Anna stopped with his mention of naatu, Uma's use of the leaves, or Aruna's whittling of her shepherding stick, these would be just that. However, he takes the discussion with emotion to a place where he seeks to break from the meshwork he operates in currently as a result of his disgust about its embodiments (among other things, as I will discuss later in the next section).

Before we leave the space of unconstrained mediated engagements, we need to consider agency just briefly. Both Kohn (2013: 91) and Haraway (1988: 3), too, seek to detach agency to some degree from resistance. While some theorists posit that agency cannot exist outside of a matrix of power relations (Najmabadi 2005: 5), these assertions do not hold weight in light of a meshwork of connected selves that operate around the world. This, coupled with a reworked understanding of life by the way of Kohn, enables us to see the logic of agency amongst different living beings. The lack of a power struggle throughout all these unconstrained mediated engagements does not mean they are any less agentive in nature. Agency is necessary to enter mediated engagements. All of this does not mean normative definitions of agency as mentioned previously are not needed. Indeed, they are simply other, different forms of agency.

Caste: Fields of "Enabling Constraints"

"Jai Adivasi!"

"Jai Adivasi!" is a term that many adivasi activists use, such as Kailash Anna, when organizing and in rallies. Kailash Anna especially uses it at the end of CAVS village meetings and in front of ITDA and government officials. This term hearkens to the previous and continuing political struggles of adivasi social movements. Adivasi is a socio-political term that literally translates to "original inhabitants" or "first peoples". It has been said to have been created by Christian missionaries in the 19th century (Shah 2012: 15). Since then, even prominent environmental activists, such as Vandana Shiva, have used it to describe the innate connection people who live in forests have with their environment (Shiva 1988). More recently, it has been enmeshed in the use of indigenous, a worldwide term to denote people in a similar situation in other countries i.e. original inhabitants. Adivasi as tied to indigeneity and the environment is salient to the various subjectivities that people in Chintaguda inhabit.

There was only one time "Jai Adivasi" arose organically in Chintaguda. I was taking a harmless picture of Devi coming down the street with a bundle of sticks on her head. Just as I took the picture, she cried out and begged me not to. Seeing me take this picture, Sreenu loudly proclaimed "Jai Adivasi!" from the sidelines with an amused smirk. The first time a similar instance happened is when I was randomly taking a photo of Venkatesh, a sharp seven-year-old boy, in a very cute pose in front of his house. He was incidentally surrounded by other children. Prasad stepped in immediately and with amused enthusiasm said, "Let's take a picture of the adivasi children!" He made all five shirtless kids sit in a row on the ledge of Venkatesh's house. Prasad's frame included the thatched roof and the mud flooring of the house. The second time was when I visited Ippaguda, the natal village of Gangamma. Rajaswamy Anna was instructing

me to take pictures of people. When I was about to photograph a woman with her two children, she shied away because her hair wasn't combed and she wasn't dressed properly. Rajaswamy Anna, in a similarly amused fashion[17] made her stay in the photo because he said that is how adivasis are supposed to look.

These photographs, then, became the discursive field in which people of Chintaguda, especially the men, both claimed and rejected their embodied adivasi subject position. This subjectivity lies in their bodies: as how they are decorated, presented, and shaped by their physical meshwork, how activity sediments into their bodies like Sreenu's hands. This act of representation is also an act of agency of the adivasi subject position. Adivasi performance "…is an "act," as it were, that is open to splittings, self parody, self-criticism, and those hyberbolic exhibitions of "the natural" that, in their very exaggeration, reveal its fundamentally phantasmatic status" (Butler 1990: 146-147). The exaggeration here is the captured photographs that point to the amused and unserious affirmations of adivasi as well as the seriously embarrassed rejections by the subjects of the photographs themselves (e.g. Devi). These representations are captured on their own terms and thereby through a series of repetition – I already counted three times during my research but others have happened and may yet to come – and the representations are destabilizing the very subject position they are representing.

This unstable subject position is evident in its necessarily fraught relationship with the people in Chintaguda. One good example is Apparao Anna's view. He partakes in CAVS activities and realizes there is benefit through organizing through CAVS. One aspect of CAVS organizing is the fight for official land titles through the FRA, which the village desperately needs. While Apparao Anna may not know the exact wording of the law, he does recognize that

---

[17] He always jokes around making it hard to tell if he is ever serious.

it is for adivasis. Indeed, the law states it is for traditional forest dwellers. Conversely, he also explicitly rejected tradition and culture [of their adivasi roots] in preference for the development a road: "Sampradayam, samskruti tarvaata adagachchu, kaani road mukhyam." (Tradition and culture can be asked for later [in the context of CAVS demands], the road is important.) As much as adivasi and indigeneity have been interrogated and unpacked they still have relevance in people's lives, especially when deployed as tactical political measure. A repeated engagement with this subject position will also yield positions for subversion or reclamation.

Therefore, a reading of these seemingly mundane "Jai Adivasi!" photos can show that people like Sreenu, Prasad, Rajaswamy Anna, or Devi are critically adivasi through their representational agency. This is a transitive application of Butler's "critically queer" argument whereby it is possible to imagine the same self-parodied adivasi subject position "…to be a site of collective contestation, the point of departure for a set of historical reflections and futural imaginings, it will have to remain that which is, in the present, never fully owned, but always and only redeployed, twisted, queered from a prior usage and in the direction of urgent and expanding political purposes" (Butler 2011: 173). Notwithstanding the awkward relationship many people in Chintaguda have with the term or the subjectivity of adivasi, they will be guaranteed to engage with this term in the future through stylized repetition because of the mediated engagement between the macro-level political forces that will call them (or juridicial interpellations a la Butler) adivasi and their own tactics with regards to economic or socio-political needs. Because this is a simultaneous process of claiming and rejecting the subject position, the subject position itself becomes dynamically destabilized (Haraway 1988: 148).

The precarious subject position of adivasi has been interrogated to a certain extent by Alpa Shah (2010) through her term "eco-incarceration". Adivasis in Bero, Jharkhand have been

caught in this “eco-incarceration” tension with activists, scholars, Christian missionaries, and outside entities who posit that the state of Jharkhand has been especially created for the overwhelmingly huge adivasi population of the area. These entities then vehemently advocate for tying adivasis to their land, traditional livelihoods, and culture. They are “presented as locked in their land” (ibid: 137) and “are therefore the subjects of policies and strategies aimed at keeping them incarcerated” (ibid: 138).

Such a rootedness perspective is reminiscent of Ingold’s earlier work where, by way of Martin Heidegger, he proposed the dwelling perspective: “the landscape is constituted as an enduring record of – and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in doing so, have left there something of themselves” (Ingold 2000: 189). Ingold plays at the erasure of the boundaries between an entity such as a person and the landscape through the various activities engaged by both resulting in a dynamic “indivisible totality” (Ingold 2000: 19). As such, even though the living entity has an agentive role in this landscape, it is incarcerated by the same dynamic process of dwelling. Ingold realizes the error in his ways in his later work and admits that such thinking is “snug, well-wrapped localism that seems out of tune with an emphasis on the primacy of movement” (Ingold 2011: 12). Indeed, the need to recognize movement in life offers a possibility of liberation. This is necessary not just because not all entities and subjects live in harmony with their physical landscape but because there need to be other avenues, paths, and possibilities for movements and engagement; creativity is denuded in eco-incarceration. The possibilities of an engaged movement have to remain open and viable.

Therefore, when Apparao Anna identified himself as naatu, it is not that that is all he is. Much like the adivasi subject position, he claims it but also rejects it or grasps at the option to

reject it. Apparao Anna along with other elders in the village reject these tropes when they are forced upon them in a unilateral way. He recounted an incident when a group of law students from Hyderabad came to Chintaguda to learn about adivasis. They asked questions ostensibly with roots in the discourses of the adivasi activists recounted in Shah's book or dominant discourse more broadly. There were four questions that really angered Apparao Anna, Dugganna, and Lakkai Anna. Apparao Anna was angered when they asked why people in Chintaguda are leaving the village to seek outside employment in cities (the question implied that they should not leave) and when they asked why children in the village are getting an education, what use is it to them (again implying that they should not get an education). Dugganna was angered when they asked why people in Chintaguda are building houses with concrete (implying they should continue to live in thatched houses) and Lakkai Anna was angered when the students asked if people in the village marry their siblings or non-cross cousins (implying that they marry their siblings).

It is very likely that these students were upper-caste, educated, and otherwise privileged people from Hyderabad. Not only do these discourses play into a bounded sense of dwelling or eco-incarceration, the roots of these thoughts can be traced to understandings of caste in India. While adivasis are traditionally seen as entirely outside of the caste context, this is not true in practice. Various caste communities interact with each other on a regular basis thereby implicating all groups and peoples in some understanding of the basic form of social organization in South Asia (Baviskar 2004). Forgoing a deeper theoretical discussion of caste here, suffice to say that "caste is not a division of labour, it is a division of labourers" (Ambedkar 1936). The division of labor is socially reproduced and laborers are rigidified into reified identities designed to do their assigned labor. An extrapolated reading of the point Ambedkar is

critiquing could say that bodies then merely become vessels that perform pre-determined tasks as set by their biology, genetics. This aligns with the endogamous, biological aspects of caste. Certain tasks have been relegated to certain castes over the course of the development of the caste system including ones that have ecological implications (Campbell 2010: 199). In one upper-caste Hindu environmental movement to conserve Vrindavan Forest, activists called for the traditional method of waste and excreta removal (Sharma 2012: 47). This meant that formerly untouchable dalit populations had to return to manual scavenging as prescribed in the local rules of the caste system.[18] Similarly, care for the environment or the forest in particular and the associated agro-forestry livelihoods are predicated on adivasi subjects.

Shah works against this by detailing the very real migratory patterns she witnessed in her fieldwork. She characterizes these migrations for menial labor duties as "escape". In this material sense, adivasis are definitely not tied to their land. Aside from these, in their engagement with the state apparatus, the Mundas Shah works with aim to create "an alternative political order" for themselves (Shah 2010: 189).[19] This migratory phenomenon is true in Chintaguda as well. The questions posed by the Hyderabad students to Apparao Anna and others did not necessarily prompt them to reject the adivasi subject position explicitly and immediately. Sreenu, on the other hand, through his active disgust and disappointment with life in the village seeks to do exactly that. The rejection of his work-worn hands is just a symptom of his deeper and driving desire to leave life in Chintaguda – despite being the eldest son to his parents and having a wife

---

[18] The role of manual scavenging assigned to Dalits is actually not a localized phenomenon but present everywhere in South Asia but very often caste relations do take shape in the context of local settings.

[19] Ironically, the very picture that Devi rejected in which she is carrying a bundle of sticks and to which Sreenu proclaimed "Jai Adivasi" is on the cover of Alpa Shah's book: an "adivasi" woman carrying a bundle of sticks.

and two kids.[20] I asked him gently when I first arrived in the village of what he thought about the traditional livelihoods of his ancestors. Sreenu's response did not reject those livelihoods. But he countered my question by positing that just because his ancestors did konda pani, mountain activities, doesn't mean he has to. Here, Sreenu – without making an elaborate theoretical anti-caste argument – makes the simple case that he should (as should anyone) be free to choose his livelihood practices, whatever they may be. After a series conversations we had, I can distill that he is looking for something more. For him, there is an impending fear that this – life in Chintaguda – is it, there is nothing else. A peculiar fatalism popularly associated with the Indian psyche and caste sets in in such a mindset. I understood his rejection of this visceral irritation. He wants to leave, doesn't have a job offer, and doesn't seem to care where he will go but plans to make it happen soon. This escape, discussed by Shah and present in Sreenu not only reworks struggles against the adivasi subject position but also caste normativities.

ST-vaallu

While working against eco-incarceration, we need to acknowledge the material realities of people in Chintaguda. Surrounded by the forest, many of the ecological materials – sticks, trees, doing konda pani – these are either instigating factors or integral factors in how people in Chintaguda negotiate understandings of caste as I will discuss in the following pages. Two more ways in which people understand this are ST and Savara. The former, a legal-juridical one, and the latter, a local-cultural one, both intersect with each other and present outwardly, relationally in ways that are not entirely linear.

[20] The marriage was arranged; she is his deceased maternal uncle's daughter.

Locally termed as ST-vaallu (vaallu meaning people), this juridical subjectivity is a key entry point for people in the village to engage the state as citizens. Increasingly, people in India in are defining their caste subjectivity through this classification system (Jenkins 2003). This is a subjectivity that people in Chintaguda embody tactically and thus have a similarly nuanced relationship to it. Moreso in the younger generation and with males in particular, with continued engagement with government programs and politics, the subjectivity of ST becomes more and more inscribed in people's lives.

The watershed moment for becoming ST came in the late 1980s or early 1990s. This is when Masayya's father, Yerakayya, was violently beaten up Kapu people and how the village handled it. The story started out when Kapu people decided to take many jeelugu branches for a wedding. They proceeded to strip entire trees of the branches. This was troublesome for people in Chintaguda because without the branches, the tree would stop producing tody, a vital source of income for them in those days. The men of Chintaguda bravely decided to stop the Kapu men and sent them on their way back to Badakipeta. This happened on a Wednesday and on Thursday, the men from Chintaguda had to go to Heeramandalam to sell their wares. The angry men in Badakipeta decided to teach the men from Chintaguda a lesson as soon as the Chintaguda men entered the village. While Yerakkayya was carrying over 50 kilograms of bananas on his shoulders, he was very soundly beaten up by a group of Kapu men. Yerakkayya's comrades rushed him to the government hospital in Heeramandalam by foot where the police helped them file a case. The staff at the hospital could not treat him and transferred him to the Kotturu hospital. The police took him to Kotturu but there the staff too could not treat him. So they finally took him to Srikakulam, the district headquarters. At this point, the Sub-Inspector (SI) of Police got involved in the case and they described the dire situation Yerakayya was in, how

badly he had been beaten. The also reached out to a CPM leader who is a fellow Savara. However, this leader told them not to press charges because the Kapu farmers are rich and they may retaliate should the situation escalate. Despite having taken shelter in Chintaguda during his Maoist days and being a Savara himself, this CPM leader took the side of the Kapus.

There are three reasons why this case was filed and followed through according to Apparao Anna and Lakkai Anna. Primarily, this was an open and shut case under the SC & ST Atrocities Act that was recently passed. Secondly, the gravity of how badly Yerakayya was beaten up was relevant and Badakipeta was known to be a quarrelsome, dangerous village. Thirdly, the SI was an SC man and sympathized with them. Seventeen men from Badakipeta were arrested in the vegetable market in Heeramandalam when they came to sell their eggplants. Later, the court ordered the Kapus to pay people of Chintaguda Rs. 1,400. When the Kapus didn't pay, the people of Chintaguda got the court to force a payment. Yerakayya survived; the hospital bills were paid for by the Kapus and the government granted them a free lawyer. Apparao Anna noted "Ade first punaadi. Maa balaaniki first punaadi ade" (That was our first foundation. It was the first foundation for our strength). Since then, the threat of a court case has tempered relations between the Kapus and Savaras.

This incident can be read normatively as Savara people standing up to caste atrocities: they used their agency to resist domination. This is valid and this vein of thought will be discussed further in the next chapter. Another way to look at it is in the context it was brought up in conversation with me another time. Towards the end of the discussion about the Hyderabad students, Apparao Anna brought this incident up as evidence of their telivitetalu (wisdom/cleverness). The insinuation from the Hyderabad students is that they are naïve, innocent, and primitive people but this situation clearly demonstrates how people in Chintaguda

cleverly used the rule of law to achieve their goals. Therefore, it was an expression of their own wisdom/cleverness as a reaction to something – anything. The court case laid the foundation for more amicable caste relations between Kapus and Savaras.

Through this experience, people in Chintaguda have tactically embodied their ST subjectivity and continued to engage and spread this legal juridical subjectivity (e.g. BC v. ST) in their inter-caste interactions. Nevertheless, not all inter-caste interactions are mediated through legal recourse. When Apparao Anna, Lakkai Anna, and Totayya Anna (with Prasad, Venkatarao, and Sreenu present) finished recounting this story to me, I mentioned how the same caste – Kapus – were responsible for the massacre and violence against a Mala (SC) community in Laxmipeta in 2012. They nodded in agreement, but then launched into another story.

A Mala man from Badakipeta came to the mountain one day a few years ago and burned down ten cashew trees of someone in Chintaguda. Because they are both tribals[21] people from Palempalle supported Chintaguda. Together, they went to the sarpanch of Badakipeta to complain and arbitrate the situation. Leaders from the Mala community agreed to pay Chintaguda a fixed amount per tree (Apparao Anna could not remember exactly). They reneged and paid it only partially at the end. People in Chintaguda did not pursue the issue further. What is telling about this story is that Apparao Anna qualified the position of the Mala man (and by extension, the community) with "manalaaga thakku jaathivaalle kaani, dabbulene vaallu kaani" (they are lower castes like us but…poor people like us but…). Lakkai Anna stated "aallu memu kalise" (both of us [SC and ST people] are the same). The story differs from the engagement with the Kapus in that primarily there is no legal recourse; it was solved through community

[21] A word Apparao Anna used verbatim.

arbitration. Secondly, there was no violence between the Mala community and Savara and Jathapu communities.

These instances are layered with intersecting factors that are hard to untwine. There is undoubtedly a legal subjectivity that has created a change in local caste relations. Even Totayya Anna at another time told me that after Indira Gandhi came to power and told everyone to end caste discrimination, inter-caste relations have improved considerably. However, it is in the daily practices and attitudes that we see a nuanced understanding of how these improved relations play out. Chintaguda residents are not beholden to legal recourse – as we see in the incident between the Mala community and Savaras. That Lakkai Anna and Apparao Anna both acknowledge the shared marginalized caste status is significant. Social status, ecological and material needs, and legal status are markers, but here, emotions are key.

While I have not discussed entirely unconstrained emotions, emotions are most easily legible to the external party (e.g. me, the ethnographer) when they are born from a field of enabling constraints. They are mediated engagements because they are typically in response to something. Sara Ahmed's Cultural Politics of Emotions (2014) is important here: "Emotions are relational: they involved (re)actions or relations of 'towardness' or 'awayness' in relation to such objects." (ibid: 8). However, I will disagree with her use of "object" even though I understand she is using it in the context of bodies as a material object. Because she states earlier that "emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, which take shape through the repetition of actions over time" (ibid: 4), in the context of caste, we have to read emotions as intersubjective phenomena as opposed to subject-object phenomena. Indeed, BC, ST, and SC people have all been shaped by their intersubjective mediated interactions (seeing their subjectivity in the legally designated sense). These relations are colored by one key emotional engagement: jadipinchadam.

In this context, defining jadipinchadam would be amalgamation of instilling fear, threatening, giving warning, and shaking up. All these meanings are partial because as people in Chintaguda are asserting their rights as a Savara community and ST community, they are not posing an existential threat to Kapus or Malas. They are shaking up existing caste relations through legal or community negotiation means. At the end of both accounts, Apparao Anna and others stated that it is important to shake up the other people – be they Kapu or Mala – and conversely not be shaken up themselves. Jadipinchadam then becomes a tool, a mediated engagement – one that is quite emotional in nature – that is tactically used to influence inter-caste relations. There was the repeated assertion that because of jadipinchadam, there was a fear or awareness in the other communities that Savaras will not take intrusions on their rights or domain lying down. These are new emotions that are experienced by Kapus or other communities vis-à-vis marginalized castes. Previously, fear or that particular awareness was not associated with ST or SC groups.

Jadipinchadam does not always extend to explosive events between caste groups. It permeates everyday life as well. In preparation for wedding season, a group of ten of us – Maaramma, Chikalamma, Raji, Deepa, Uma, Madhavi, Girija, Sridevi, Veeranna, and I – walked to the Badakipeta autostand to go into Heeramandalam for wedding shopping. The women sat in the middle while Veeranna and I sat up front with the driver. The minivan did not fill up; the backseats were empty, so we waited for more people to come. Just then, an older man in his 60s came looking for seats. He looked normatively respectable: he was wearing a white dhoti and shirt and carried a black umbrella. He looked inside and asked if he could have a seat. I was getting up but Raji and everyone else told me to sit down and Raji told the man that there are seats in the back. He did not want to opt for these because they were uncomfortable and hard to

get into. The older man said that there is not dharmam[22] these days to which Raji retorted that there is lots of dharmam and they do respect their elders but we're all equal today. After a few grumblings back and forth between them, I could not take the sting of his critique (e.g. no dharmam) and went to sit in the back while the old man sat in the front.

Even in this micro-assertive, emotionally charged incident, it is easy to see how Raji and the other Savara women decided not to be shaken up by the mere request of an older, seemingly BC, probably Kapu, man and how the Kapu man was clearly upset by the lack of acquiescence on the part of the Savara women. In that situation, since I came with the other Savaras, I, too, was interpreted as Savara. So when I moved to give up the seat, it was a defeat on the part of the Savaras. Jadipinchadam is this fine line between standing your ground (not always resistance) and from the Telugu meaning, encompasses some sort of emotional aspect.

Aside from the emotional shaking up, there are other forms of social interactions that color caste relations. In conversations with my father's assistant, Kumar, himself a BC caste person from Telangana, he explained to me the two easily discernible guiding features of caste interaction in some rural parts of Andhra:[23] veepum pottu and kancham pottu. The former is marriage laws – and this would primarily apply to distinguish between larger caste groups and inter-marriage rules between sub-castes – and the latter is eating laws. This is more significant in the Chintaguda context but also it is a very discrete, tangible act.[24]

Amongst the three main caste groups in the Chintaguda area, it has been clear that there is a hierarchy typical of the caste system. The BC people don't eat with the SC and ST people.

---

[22] Hindu concept of righteousness, loosely translated.

[23] Economic and social interactions are deeper than this – indeed active economic and material deprivation very much constitutes caste relations.

[24] As opposed to sexuality and marriage which are more complicated because of the intimate details involved, the long processes, etc.

The ST people don't eat with the SC people. SC people can eat everywhere but their food is given them from a distance and begrudgingly. Apparao Anna and Chinnababu Anna recounted times when Savara people didn't eat at Relli or Pydi (both are SC) people's houses or at their functions. Indeed, Maaramma, Apparao Anna's mother, stated she still doesn't eat at Relli or Pydi functions. But Apparao Anna and Chinnababu Anna, people of a younger generation at this point stated that there are no differences; they will eat at SC people's functions. At weddings in Chintaguda, however, because BC people are invited as guests, they have hired a BC man as the head chef.

Inter-caste interactions have undoubtedly changed in the past thirty years. Savaras are no longer untouchable and to my knowledge, the SC people like Pydis and Rellis are also losing that marker. As I will discuss in the next chapter, there are daily business/economic interactions between Pydi and Relli people and Savara people. Some of these changes have foundations in the legal system that offers some protections. But these protections are maintained, at times, through the emotionally charged attitudes, actions, and interactions. Thus, this caste as a field of enabling constraints and the caste subjectivity – in this case the legally-informed subjectivity of ST (and others e.g. BC, SC, etc.) – is shaped and shapes by these emotions through a series of repetitions that are deployed tactically.

Savara Jaathi

Inter-caste interactions are fluid in another sense as well. Many Relli men have been coming to Chintaguda for years to collect jeelugu tody from those who own the trees on the mountain. Pydi women have been coming to sell their wares for a few years now. And lastly, I've become integrated in the community relatively quickly and deeply in the short while I was

there. What all of us non-Savaras have in common is that we were called by kinship terms. These were terms that conformed to the local heterosexual matrix as opposed to general terms of Anna (older brother) or Akka (older sister) of respect used widely in Andhra. It is considered rude to call people by their name in Andhra (Narayana Rao 2007: 193), especially if they are in your caste or close social circle. Therefore, when Polamma, a Pydi woman from Borrapuram who sells wares in Chintaguda, talks to Yellamma, Lakkai Anna's wife, she refers to her own husband as "mee annayya" (your older brother), meaning Yellamma is Polamma's husband's younger sister. Gopi calls Polamma "peddamma" which makes sense because he is cross cousins with Yellamma / Lakkai Anna's family and so is Polamma. Likewise, when I told Maaramma that I told someone in Badakipeta that Apparao Anna is my maternal uncle, she started referring to other people in the village with me per that kin-relation e.g. Kamakshi Akka, Apparao Anna's wife, as my aunt; Gopi as my older brother, etc. Caste lines are strong; marriage would not be permitted between different castes. Yet calling each other by kin relation terms entails a fusion into points in the meshwork.

Obviously, the meshwork is strong amongst those who were born into Savara families. The emic understanding of being Savara remains strong in Chintaguda. This intra-caste subjectivity is based on, as any caste system is, veeyum pottu or endogamy and the associated kinship meshworks. More than just biology and genes, it is espoused as an identity that is informed by family networks. This became clear to me when I was walking down the hill towards Palempalle with Venkatarao one day:

> Walking down from the mountain on our way to Hiramandalam, I casually asked Venkatarao if people from outside the village ask if he's an outsider when they come to the village (like one guy from Badakipeta asked me today). He said that most people know who he is. And then I asked how many years has it been since he wasn't in the village. He hesitated because we both knew he's been at boarding school since he was little. I clarified immediately and asked, "So you finished post-graduation and came back

> to the village and then left again when you got a job, right? How many years was that?" He said four. But he added that he was away since he was little and came back only for school holidays. I noted that even though he's been away for so long, he still knows many things about village life like the names of the trees. He laughed and said he didn't know the names of all the trees. I replied that he at least knows how to cut a coconut and people in the towns don't know how to do that. And then said, true, but after a second, he added that he doesn't really know his chuttaalu [kin]. Chuttaalutho antha parichayamledu [He isn't that familiar with his kin]. Like, he didn't know them growing up and would not go to other villages, to his chuttaalu [kin] houses until last year. He said what's the point in going and sitting silently; baagundadu kadaa [it won't be nice, right]? And then I asked why since last year did he start going (thinking it was for marriage proposals). He said it's not good to break ties with chuttaalu [kin]. He started going on his own or with others. (Fieldnotes April 7th)

It becomes clear that ecological knowledge and kinship ties coincide together to form the basis for Venkatarao's Savarathanam [Savara-ness]. Because the conversation was in Telugu, the word chuttaalu is extremely important here.[25] Chuttaalu is linked with a number of other Telugu words: chuttarikam = the kinship bond, chuttu = around, and chuttadam = to wrap. These words bring together the meshwork-like intertwining of kinship networks that are so important in Chintaguda. Indeed, entire villages are composed of kin relations and most people who attend functions or help in livelihood activities are kin. Thus, invokations of kinship terms, even with non-Savaras, but especially more so within Savaras, entails chuttukupovadam. Chuttukupovadam directly translates to entanglement. This entanglement is one of many ways, in addition to the partaking in activities together such as labor help or regular economic transactions, that people become chuttukupoyi[26] into the meshwork.

While non-Savaras are partially enmeshed in the meshwork of Chintaguda, local ecological knowledge, the language, and a number of other factors strongly play into this co-development. The Savara jaathi, as an endogamous caste, has a number of geo-cultural markers that create a strong sense of caste self. Polamma, the Relli men, and I are all partially

[25] I am sure if we had this conversation in Savara or other languages, it would not work out like this. I am well aware that Telugu is not the native language in this village.
[26] Conjugated of chuttukupovadam.

chuttukupoyi in this meshwork, but the case of Venkatarao means that he, too, is in some ways, only partially in the Chintaguda Savara meshwork. Thus, how people interact and react in this meshwork of kin relations becomes integral to how they are enmeshed in it; it has implications for social and ecological dimensions as well as the overall formation of the meshwork.

~

As theorized here and in our engagement with Butler, the transition is to "an instituted practice in a field of enabling constraints" (Haraway 1988: 142). These practices operate within the institution of caste, itself ridden with power dynamics. Therefore, tying "instituted practices" to our current use of the term meditated engagements, there are *particular* meditations[27] that occur within the field of constraints, which itself is the institution. And of course, practice and engagement, at this point, can really be used interchangeably.

I have demonstrated how the institution of caste can take multiple salient forms: a etic cultural one – adivasi, a more normatively juridical (in the legal sense) one – ST, and a emic identity – Savara. I have particularly discussed the engagements that operate in a power-laden context in the first two. In the last emic one, I have described how it operates not only to pay credence to the fact that caste is an endogamous institution but also how kinship cannot be fully conflated with it. In each of these seemingly separate but really thoroughly enmeshed fields, there are constant negotiations with power as a result of practices that can be – for our brief purposes – attributed to one or the other. There is a constellation of practices that bring these together in everyday life.

Caste is undoubtedly a power-laden institution and is pervasively pernicious. It has existed for hundreds of years – not entirely unchanged but it has remained an enduring locus of

---

[27] Not all mediations are instituted as I have shown earlier.

power nevertheless. People in Chintaguda have traditionally been at the oppressed and marginalized end of the caste system and continue to occupy a disadvantaged subject position. On a macro-level, caste can be read structurally and hierarchically. But as I discussed in this sub-section, there are contestations to the various ways the caste system operates. And the caste position of Savara people itself is not wholly stable itself. Significantly, there is a degree of emotion that is required for this contestation and interrogation. As such, caste should not *only* be understood in structurally black-and-white terms, even though a black-and-white reading of caste is also very important. Power through caste is instituted multiply and reactions to it are similarly multiple and layered in the repetitive engagements that people undertake. These are not always intentional reactions against i.e. active resistance – sometimes they come organically (e.g. Sreenu wanting to leave his traditional livelihood) – but they nevertheless contest and undermine the caste system in small and important ways. These are salient features of the meshwork in Chintaguda. How caste operates and how it is contested through various bodies and activities is significant to the development of the meshwork. These are guiding features or logics in how the various strands or lines of the meshwork come together on a daily basis. Bodies and activities are the very sites for these contestations. Having read Sreenu's body in this matrix, I will re-engage aesthetics preferences and emotions to conclude this chapter.

Into the Fields

As previously discussed, Uma's aesthetic preference of putting leaves in her hair were just engagements with the local ecology. Placements of other types of flowers in the hair have other implications. Aesthetic preferences of particular flowers in ways to emphasize beauty do hold true for the vast majority of the young women of the village. Originally, there were ankudu

puvvulu that young women would put in their hair in ways that were similar to dominant and discursive forms of female beauty in the area and in Andhra Pradesh in general. These wild white flowers were then replaced with orange kankamburaalu. These were brought to the village by one of the Sarojinis (either Ramarao's wife or Chilakamma's oldest daughter). Raji said the kankamburaalu last for an entire day unlike the white flowers that last just for a few hours. It is important to note, though, that kankamburaalu are famous throughout Andhra Pradesh and in addition to jasmine flowers are seen as desirable for women to wear in their hair. During the wedding day, the bride is dressed up in expensive saris, gold and jewelry, and sports a fat bunch of orange flowers on her hair. This creates a favorable and proper impression to the wedding guests and in the wedding photos.

Aesthetics, then, are on the verge of entering a field of enabling constraints and can be catapulted into a field of dialectical tension. Some tastes, as I will discuss in the next chapter, have certain dominant characteristics but as I showed with Uma's choice, this is not always true. Entering a field of constraints is conditional on context and the specificity of choice or preference. For example: Apparao Anna's family does not prefer most meat. When their goat died because another goat gored it, they gave the meat away to other people in the village. I asked him why he didn't simply cook it and eat it himself. He said that most people in his family – his mother, brother, wife, and others – didn't like any meat including chicken. They only eat fish on occasion. On the other hand, drawing from personal experience, my mother's own rejection of eating meat has easily and frequently been read as Brahminical and sanskritizing due to the confluence of her other engagements in a fields of cultural reproduction: being from a dominant agricultural caste, being educated as a professional, being married to a Brahmin man (my father), and speaking a more Brahminical version of Telugu.

In this regard, it is easy to see how the mediated engagements themselves also interact with one another to produce the meshwork of logics for the subject position to be read simply by the constant repetition of mediated engagements. Apparao Anna's family's rejection of meat does not mean that they are being seen as less Savara or implicated in a sanskritizing matrix. Of course, there are other aspects of Apparao Anna and his family that indicate that they desire to be upwardly mobile, but in this case, the trajectory does not include not eating meat. This is a mere preference as they come from meat eating backgrounds that are only more recently making a value judgment on eating meat and which meats to eat. This is an aesthetic preference and a mediated engagement (i.e. the rejection of meat). For my mother, however, her preference is "renegotiated and rearticulated in relation to other signifiers" (Butler 2011: 146) thereby given credence to a more Brahminical or Brahminizing subject position. Caste plays a large role in our dietary "preferences" (WS 10 Class of 2009 2009) but a confluence of practices and factors play into reading caste subject positions.

In addition to the emotional engagements with other castes as discussed previously, emotions play a strong role in shaping chuttarikaalu and by extension, ecological engagement. A prime example would be Sivapriya. Her father died at a young age and her mother left her and her brother in Chintaguda and married another man in another village. Sivapriya and her brother were given the option to join her but Sivapriya refused. She grew up in her father's younger brother's house, Bodanna's house, and tended to her father's lands by herself while her brother, Ganapathi, went to the government residential school. Her cousin, Narsimhalu, got married recently to Parvathakka and eventually there were disagreements between Parvathakka and Sivapriya. Sivapriya left that house and stayed in an unfinished house and still tended to the cashew orchards and other lands that her father had by herself. Because her family (including

Bodanna's) is one of the varsa families in the village, there are always negative snide remarks about them tending to land that was settled originally by the Peddinti progeny. She left once to do labor jobs in the city, but she ended up coming back. She came back to the village and works the land despite the negative comments, despite disliking life in Chintaguda, and despite the terrible economic position she is in. When I asked her why, she said she wanted to leave the land to her brother and help him out. She was concerned with how he will survive and what he will have left. It is this protective emotional tie that she has with him that keeps her tenuously rooted to the ecological context.

Her cousin sister-in-law, Parvathakka, too, has emotional ties with land. Orphaned at a young age, she was raised in Allthi by an old aunt. Eventually, that aunt died as well and no one looked after her or cared for her in her natal village for a few years. It is important to note that the entire village was comprised of relatives. Through some arrangement, she was arranged to marry Narasimhalu and came to live in Chintaguda. Since she came to Chintaguda, she has not once returned to Allthi. Parvathakka staidly and with bitter overtones stated that no one cared for her there and so she has nothing to go back to. I asked her about her parent's lands on the mountains there and she said didn't care for them.

These emotional mediated engagements in the context of chuttarikaalu form the basis for ecological engagement and land tenure practices. Sivapriya's return to Chintaguda, although informed by emotional kin ties, re-establishes her as a part of the local economy and she engages in cashew production among other practices. Conversely, Parvathakka's rejection of natal lands that belong to her for the same emotional reasons means that she is giving up economic benefits. Scholars such as Neera Singh (2013) have discussed affective relationships traditional forest dwellers have with their environment. These relate back to the eco-incarceration argument that

Alpa Shah (2010) outlines in her work (as I discussed previously). However, we see here that there are a number of different factors that coalesce to form the affective relationship to the environment. When there is emotion, it is not solely because there is some endemic bond between a person and the land; there are other factors at play (e.g. in Sivapriya's case, kinship). And even if there is that affect, it could be expressed in negative emotions which actually result in the rejection of the environment. These emotions are not static either: Sivapriya, as I later learned, left Chintaguda again (and came back again in the route of circular migration). As emotions are constantly in movement (Ahmed 2014: 11), as they are continually becoming, the movement of people, their engagements, and subjectivities, too, change and are dynamic.

The lesson here is that some engagements come together and others don't. There are sets of mediations that come together in concert, in relation to each other. Therefore, the kin meshwork, the environmental/physical landscape, and emotions re-integrate Sivapriya into the local processes of production i.e. to productively work the land. Similarly, her accent, education, and aesthetic preferences integrate my mother into a Sanskritizing / Brahminical schema. Those mediated engagements that come together can be apprehended by dominant norms and discourses as I have just mentioned. The matrix of enabling constraints is variable and engages bodies, emotions, and aesthetic preferences and sets of those in different and contingent ways. As a result all of these repeated iterations, the possibility of entering, existing in, or becoming a part of the matrix exists.

I understand that in my discussion of aesthetic preferences, I have skirted very close to a number of Bourdieu's concepts: social capital, distinction, and habitus. I will return to Bourdieu and his theories in following chapter focused more on dialectics.

Weaving Threads, Developing Texture

Ingold is right to move towards an intransitive perspective because there are engagements, as I have discussed in this chapter, that exist outside of dialectical power relations or logics e.g. the production-consumption dynamic that Ingold seeks to work against. But, again, contra Ingold, the moments I discussed show the persistence of mediations. While everything isn't a sign-process – a representation in the truest sense (and thereby relieving me of a deeper discussion of semiotics) – entities certainly react to and about things and subjects, where the interactions are between entities be they rocks, people, and taste or ants and chicken or trees and houses or emotions, cashews, and money – anything. These may happen in a number of repetitive and multiple ways that are not antagonistic or power-laden. I have looked to these mediations in the daily performances or activities of people, and to a lesser extent non-humans, people's emotional relationships or attitudes towards other entities, aesthetic choices, and more. We can only consider these mediated engagements as intransitive insofar as the engagement shapes both or all entities that are doing the engagement. By shape, I mean leave (even the slightest) imprint on, change in some (perhaps seemingly minor) way, or change the course of action of both (even to a small extent). The confluence of engagements and the materiality of the same make up the meshwork. But it is important to note that these entities do not become one indivisible entity; there are still discrete and material boundaries between these entities (e.g. skin, bodies, or walls).

As I discussed with caste, there are fields of power that operate in the meshwork. Caste is not wholly a performance – there are stringent structural aspects to it. These structural forces are not entirely absolute. There is a rhizomatic way (to borrow from Deleuze & Guattari) that caste operates where it is particularly manifested. And these structural aspects are not always top-

down; they are negotiated, contested, and reformed on a micro, everyday scale. Indeed, the various activities that surrounded these micro-moments include emotions and relations between others. Caste, then, is a field of meditations that is constrained – constrained by the power dynamics that proliferate through it. It is simultaneously embodied as well as contested in multiple ways that goes beyond the simple oppressor-oppressed dyad. As such, meditations are not only between one thing and another thing but also between multiple things simultaneously. The nature of caste is such that even though there are clear power struggles like the one mentioned in the methodology section (e.g. theoretical Brahmin and empirical shudra), engagements with various caste groups and intra-caste dynamics in daily life suggests a more relational approach is needed. I discussed performance, emotion, and kinship as some of the constituents of caste normativities to describe the complexity of this field of constraints. However, it is not my aim to say that there are no hierarchal power differentials; my aim is to elucidate the multi-faceted nature of caste composition and ensuing power differentials.

It is through these mediations that we are able to find the threads of the meshwork. The meshwork grows by the repetition of differences (Ingold 2011: 90). These differences spread throughout whatever spatiotemporal meshwork we find ourselves in. Performances, actions, movements, activities, communication, sign interpretation, aesthetics, emotions are usually structured by cultural logics. Despite these supposedly organizing logics, the notion of difference in repetition necessarily renders the possibility of creativity – such as putting pretty leaves in your hair or preferences for eating one food over others (or vice versa). Where these cultural logics are present but they are also quite easily transcended or ignored by other instances of cultural production in the meshwork.

I spent my four months in the entire village of Chintaguda to focus on the meshwork and which logics operate as its constitutive factors. For the most part, the village does function as a whole unit. Notions of working kalisi melisi (happily together in harmony) and unity were apparent from the start. After spending a few weeks and delving deeper in the meshwork, however, I was able to see clear breaks or disjuncture within the meshwork. I was able to understand how this meshwork would congeal with other so-called discrete meshworks (e.g. other villages like Badakipeta or Palempalle). Activities within the logic of caste present a break between, for example, non-Savara people (e.g. me) in Chintaguda and themselves. Where, even if I am able to enter the logic of the forest, our engagements would differ at least slightly simply because of our subject positions. By the same token, the phenomenon of circular migration from the village, as I will discuss in Chapter 5, is predicated on dominant capitalist gendered logics thereby presenting yet another disjuncture in the meshwork. The imprints of the logics of power as difference, then, develop various aspects of the meshwork. For this reason, the meshwork and the organizing cultural logics cannot always be discretely defined as completely independent of these logics of power. These logics of power result in the development of disparities in the meshwork, which results in unique and uneven texture of the same.

Caste is indeed a logic of power insofar as it structures social relations in a stringent way. But the multivalent nature of how caste works in Chintaguda necessarily means it cannot be read in a dialectical framework. The question of uneven power terrains, starting from caste and gender, then arises. Whereas I have shown that caste hierarchies are contested and reworked, in the next chapter, I will discuss how gender norms are actually deepened and dialectically structured as a result of the gender division of labor exacerbated and uniquely imposed by capitalist modes of production. As such, labor, gender, ecology and social relations enter into a

particular form of mediation that is dialectical in nature because of capitalist structuring of the same. It is the same emotions or aesthetics that constitute mediations in this chapter that may facilitate shifts into a capitalist logic (and its various material forms).

Mediated engagements can be a common theme for dialectically-informed neo-Marxists as well as poststructuralists. There is always some mediation going on between various entities – however they are spatiotemporally defined. These mediations can be really any kind of possible engagement. They are constant and repeated throughout life. The "with what" question is where it gets tricky. Some mediations simply occur. Dialectically informed engagements occur in a field of enabling constraints where they are antagonistic and tense. These point to the very real and material questions of power in everyday engagements. Mediation for the sake of superseding the dialectic does not happen for this is within the logic of the dialectic. Dialectic tensions are very much present, but as I have shown that is not all that is present. As a note of caution, we should not confuse the mediations that occur outside of the dialectic as simply the doxa (à la Bourdieu) or unintelligible (à la Butler). I do not want to state that the rest of the mediations or engagements occur in the shadow of dialectics, merely as the flip side of it, merely as the unintelligible or abject or failures of that particular dialectic. For these are, as many people have easily stated (Butler 2000: 28), still within the logic of the dialectic. The point I wanted to make in this chapter is that mediated engagements – just (seemingly random) activities, really – just happen everyday through the meshwork. These are the many and multiple ways that the meshwork becomes or continues to become.

Chapter 4
Dialectical Infusions

From Post-structuralism to Dialectics

The underlying premise of this chapter is that from the multiplicitous and multivalent mediations discussed in the previous chapter, some meditated engagements are organized by a dialectical framework. If, in the last chapter, I have sought to work with a broad definition of mediation as a process that is an engagement between any two (or more) things that are simple engagements with one another, then in this chapter, I hope to present a narrower definition of mediation on a larger, structural scale. The key difference here being that the multivalent, rhizomatic forms of engagement are not present. These everyday mediations as well as larger structural forces work within the same dyad that I have argued against in the previous chapter.

A straightforward explanation of dialectical engagements leads from, initially, Hegelian philosophy to Marx. Moving from the idealist forms of dialectics, Marxist interpretations of dialectics stem from the material conditions in the world (Marx 1887: 14). Having situated this project in the explicitly ecological setting and then moving to social relations, Marxist perspectives on dialectic tension then becomes integral to understanding power dynamics that exist in these engagement mediations. The working definition of dialectics I take is first from a dualist standpoint that is predicated on oppositional forces like sun and moon or civilized and savage or good and evil or so on. From this dualist perspective, Hegelian and Marxist dialecitcs add a third component: thesis-antithesis-synthesis (Lefebrve 2004: 11). In mainstream Marxist discourses, the synthesis aspect is the revolution that seeks to overcome the tension posed by the thesis (e.g. bourgeoisie) and the antithesis (e.g. proletariat). There are other dialectical tensions that are present through Marxist formulations that are not always resolved such as the dialectic

tension between use value and exchange value or capital and labor. But it is important to note that these always exist in opposition, antagonism, and in a struggle of power. As such, the dialectical structuring is that which is imbricated in relations of uneven power distribution. While there are hopes for the synthesis, the tension from the initial dualism is what I take as the evidence for increasing encroachment of capitalist logics in Chintaguda.

The previous chapter had a post-structuralist undergirding with the non-dualistic ideations of Kohn, Ingold, and Butler. I traced practices from a generous interpretation of Marx's definition of activity in unconstrained fields that result in seemingly insignificant or mundane practices. From there, I traced them to caste which is a field of enabling constrains that engenders certain activities in the logics that operate within it because of its multivalent workings. This is because just as the mundane factors such as the confusion of dogs is a part of daily life in Chintaguda, so too does power-inflected change exist in the village. This move from a post-structural perspective to a dialectical – or structural – perspective is not only a theoretical improvisation I want to do to make a more complex argument. It is true to Chintaguda as interpreted by people in the village. Capitalist logics necessitate the creation of capital, the management of ecology for the production of further capital, a conscious effort of transitioning from activity to labor and thereby denude creativity from activity, integrating into dominant social norms and producing cultural capital, and the formation of more patriarchal gender norms. These are, by and large, all productions, reproductions, or byproducts of incursions of and engagements with capitalist logics.

I will initially draw relation between activity and institution to consider how pani has become instituted as work. This understanding will be useful in contextualizing the various engagements and practices that I will discuss later in the chapter. In particular, these are

instituted in the capitalist logics that are increasingly pervasive. For this reason, I will start from a standard Marxist Political Economic perspective to consider how agriculture becomes a site of capitalist intrusions. First, I will review some research on South Indian agriculture from a Marxist perspective if only to give some context of what has been said already. Then I will examine five inter-related phenomena – dialectical mediations in concert – that are examples of capitalist logics par excellence. Undoubtedly, the narratives in this chapter will follow a more standard narrative of change. This is only because these happenings are indeed present in Chintaguda. In my attempts to abide by Chintaguda, I did not want to create only a singular narrative of change that is so often the case e.g. poor adivasis are adopting millets now that they are in vogue with dominant caste people (Sanskritization) or the need for cash crops is behind the rejection of millets (political economic). Although I do not engage with millets explicitly in this chapter, I provide some sketches of important phenomena taking place in Chintaguda. These are important not only to understand life in Chintaguda but to see simultaneously with the sketches from Chapter 3 how practices manifest and implications thereof.

I can easily state that life is life in Chintaguda and move on with the presentation of evidence and argument. That would not suffice because going back to the ecology of practice, all these practices are interrelated. Here, the mediated meshwork I cobbled together in Chapter 3 is necessary. As a medium of interrelated practices, the meshwork is a proxy to understand the various constituents of life: those unconstrained practices, the seemingly mundane materials, the illogical moves and actions, the complex ways in which entities relate or develop together. While post-structural interpretations of this set up may view this terrain as rather horizontal and discussions of power in rhizomatic or productive terms (à la Foucault), the topographic of power is uneven, complex, and textured in Chintaguda. Just as meditated engagements that happen in

unconstrained fields, ones that happen in constrained fields can either be relational as is caste or dialectical. The common feature for the latter two is the presence of a power dynamic.

The dialectic, then, can be viewed as an occasional or frequent precipitate of the meshwork that exists within the meshwork itself. By this, I mean to say, that the dialectical tensions within, say, the workings of capital or gender or society based relations of domination and subjugation are a part of everyday life and per dominant theorizations, very important markers of life at that. This chapter then becomes explicitly about a specific and hegemonic configuration of power relations. It discusses logics and modes of life in a discursively normative sense and the associated practices. These precipitates then become some defining features of the meshwork. For example, it would be very easy to say Chintaguda is on the path to coming into thoroughly and purely capitalist modes of production or adopting dominant or normative hetero-patriarchal gender roles and leave the entire thesis at that. But viewing these in the context of a constantly becoming, developing meshwork helps us understanding the various operating logics in Chintaguda and by extension, life in Chintaguda. One end goal for this thesis is to see which practices contribute to or constitute these logics and try to make sense of them with seemingly mundane and insignificant aspects of life in Chintaguda.

Becoming an Instituted Activity

Cognizant of the dominant divide in academia, the argument here is not simply one or the other i.e. post-structuralism or Marxism. This is why I initially gave a generous reading of Marx's notion of activity as a precursor to labor. Nevertheless, he is actually generally unyielding to non-dialectical understandings of activity: "Activity, regardless of its individual manifestation, and the product of activity, regardless of its particular make-up, are always

exchange value, and exchange value is a generality, in which all individuality and peculiarity are negated and extinguished" (Marx 1973: 157). It is not only Marx who has formulated activity in this way narrow way. Sherry Ortner, too, states "…human activity regarded as taking place in a world of politically neutral relations is not "practice."…Practice is action considered in relation to structure…Practice emerges from structure, it reproduces structure, and it has the capacity to transform structures." (Ortner 1989: 12). Ortner's attention to the structure-practice dynamic is extremely useful for this chapter because we can see how certain practices become a part of the various structures in people's lives and the interplay between the dynamic. In this way, we can note that both caste as discussed previously and capitalism, as I will discuss now, are indeed constituted by the various practices.

Nevertheless, I work against this narrow definition in both Ortner and Marx because as I have shown, people and non-humans in Chintaguda have been and continue to do things that are not entirely in any dominant organizing structure. I work against this because Marx had interesting ideas about life and activity (of course, he is not the only one to do so). The limits of both Marx and Ortner arise because they look only to human activity. In fact, looking to the activities of non-humans requires us to temporarily cast aside structure because they are operating logics that are not human structures. In this sense, taking the project of anthropology to beyond the human helps us broaden our understanding of what we do. I want to start from a broad-based common framework because we need to operationalize it throughout the thesis.

Tying into Butler's instituted practices, Karl Polanyi, too, sees instituted practices as the underlying factor of economic and non-economic relations (Polanyi 1957). For Polanyi, the main institution in economic life is the market. Like Marx, Polanyi sees economic practices as socially embedded and vice versa and therefore the market is very much a social institution. For this

reason, it is important to see how various practices become apprehended and negotiated within the logics and constraints of these institutions. Here, too, like unconstrained mediated engagements, the actual activities are the very constituents of these institutions. However, in the context of power, activities take on new and denuded meanings and possibilities. Whereas in the field of caste, there activities are done or performed in relation to the multiple sites of assertions of caste power, in a capitalist context, activities are acted in relation to capital and thereby entering into a dialectical relationship with circuits of capital. The legibility of these or how they lend themselves to such power-laden institutions such as capital then becomes what is crucial to understanding mechanisms of life. We want to interrogate these various institutions and the constituents because they are salient features of life.

Activities also show us how institutions organize them by varying logics, along lines and at intersections. Thus, part of becoming an instituted activity is the arrangement of multiple activities in logically inter-connected ways; they work in concert together, cohering with each other. These can most easily be visualized as linear arrangements wherein the connecting logic strings them all together. While this is a reductive model, it can help us see next how various institutions are inevitably wrapped up with each other. This is unsurprising in the context of a meshwork like concept where the threads overlap, intertwine, and co-become in various (unpredictable?) ways. Focusing on the capitalist framework, I will primarily discuss the entrapments into dialectical relations of activities into circuits of capital and labor. But these are not without understandings of how gender or caste or development (this last one as an incarnation of capital) operate or intersect with one another.

Here, Gidwani's understanding of capital is instructive as just one of the many institutions operating and becoming operational in the meshwork. Gidwani's heterodox

understanding of the workings of capital leads to fruitful ways of tying together how practices develop with institutions through the meshwork.

> "Capital is becoming-value…To stop is to confront the prospect of death. To keep moving is to grow and survive…The human and nonhuman joinings that hold together capital's countless circuits each have different georhythms and lifecycles…The travels of capital are chaotic, continuously remaking the latticework of connections that animate accumulation" (Gidwani 2008: 184).

This sounds very similar to Ingold's notion of meshwork. Notice the mention of latticework and circuits that grow and survive, which are similar descriptors that Ingold uses for the meshwork (Ingold 2011: 70). In the typically Marxist sense, Gidwani focuses only on capital as the main organizing feature of people's lives (and later in the chapter what possibilities lay in both human and non-human contexts to interrupt these circuits). This is indeed relevant but unsatisfactory for a project focused on life because as I discussed previously, there is more to life. Becoming-value is necessary to understand, however, because it shows how activities become legible as labor, as exchange value and how the enter or become a part of the capitalist dialectics. Thus the very organizing institutions, the organizing logics themselves are becoming as activities, too, unfold. They are not a priori formations in relation to practices. Indeed, they co-become in mutually constitutive ways. And Gidwani's postulation of the form of capital and its workings is useful as well but I am engaging him here to demonstrate that that is not all there is to life. Capital is an important and hegemonic feature indeed but life is much more than simply a cog in capitalism.

A Brief Review of Smallholder Agriculture

Studies about the Indian agrarian landscape have focused on practices quite explicitly. This is because the nature of cultivation and agrarian societies is very much activity based and these activities are integral to the functioning of life in those contexts. Both in these studies and as I have seen in Chintaguda, examining activities is important to understand the smallholder

context because families are so pressed for labor (yet another reason to engage Marxist Political Economy and neo-Marxism). The repetitions of these activities then coalesce at various intersections as expressions and embodiments of caste, gender, and development. Especially in a value-production context like agriculture, these activities then become associated strongly with capital and change as a result of their interaction with the specific avatars of capital.

Although millets have traditionally been cultivated on podu (shifting cultivation plots) – with the exception of finger millet – it is not the ecological system of production that is most important here. I draw the connection to smallholder agriculture cultivation on plains lands for a number of reasons. Millets are grains like rice and wheat, which are grown in these agrarian contexts I will review. In particular, the finger millet cultivated in Chintaguda for the off-season rabi season 2014 was cultivated in this manner. This method of production is distinctly different from the other methods of production that have been reviewed and studied in the context of adivasis and forest-based livelihoods in South Asia, which focus on gathering non-timber forest products (NTFP) and other ecological materials (Agarwal 1992a).

One clear reason for the need for a Marxist perspective in the context of such a development project is that much of the development literature did not consider the producers of millets in production processes until only the last few years (FAO 1980; FAO 1995). The authors of the scientific literature discussed at great lengths the principles of breeding, agronomy, soil and climatic conditions, and necessary or beneficial inputs. Thus, by excluding the producers and by extension the social relations of productions, the research failed to understand an integral part of the lifecycle of millets.

Anthropological research and analyses of the smallholder agricultural context are physically situated in the sedentary agricultural fields. However, they are relevant to this study of

millet production and consumption for a number of reasons. Classically, they have generally taken a Marxist perspective on agricultural relations, which helps delineate power relations and means and modes of production so central to agriculture. Implicated in power relations and therefore central to these analyses, many researchers have integrated caste and gender lenses to provide a fuller picture of socio-cultural aspects of agricultural production (and conversely consumption) and agrarian labor in general. While the terrain is different, attention to the material relations of agricultural implements and inputs, land tenure, production yields and social relations are relevant and salient to any serious analysis.

Indeed, even early anthropologists such as Joan Mencher (1978) focused on the mechanisms of capitalist production in South Indian agriculture. She recognized the gender division of labor in agriculture production, especially one that is prone to capital accumulation. Mencher clearly delineated which castes stood to benefit from shifting to capitalist agricultural practices and how it is predicated on women's labor. Similarly, Carol Upadhya (1988) noted how the British agricultural policies of canal irrigation benefited the rise of Kamma caste farmers in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh. As they were already marginally well off peasants with some caste privilege, the Kamma caste reinvested their agricultural profits into education, more land, and other social and agronomic practices. They were already cultivating some cash crops when the Green Revolution was implemented across India. From this agricultural innovation, they doubled their profits and simultaneously consolidated their caste status and as a dominant, upper caste in Andhra Pradesh. This new economy "…emphasised 'socially vertical' connections and rendered broader 'socially horizontal' ties of caste irrelevant" (Washbrook 1975: 165).

Moving from these linear models but still attuned to Marxist schools of thought, we turn to Karin Kapadia's <u>Siva and Her Sisters</u> (1996) and Priti Ramamurthy's work with smallholders

in Andhra Pradesh. These are more nuanced accounts that consider how gender, caste, and other institutions interact with the workings of capital (and labor). Kapadia, in her research with Pallar women in Tamil Nadu, delineates the various labor mechanisms that co-create and are co-created by notions of caste and gender. By scrutinizing agricultural and general work practices, she arrives at conclusions about how Pallar women's labor tactics are distinct from upper castes and Brahmins residing in the same village because they prefer group work and organize themselves collectively. These women's tactics are also inextricable from the patriarchy the experience within their caste. They are the main breadwinners for their families and thus this position vis-à-vis their families, particularly their husbands, means that they have to be creative in securing and maintaining labor opportunities.

Ramamurthy similarly shows intersections of caste and gender in the context of capitalist agricultural production, particular the rise of smallholder capitalist production in Andhra Pradesh. By examining the rise of Bt cottonseed production, she notes how gender roles are inverted with men doing floral sex work (Ramamurthy 2010). In another paper (ibid 2011), she looks at how caste is rearticulated in the same context because smallholders are embracing incorporation into circuits of capital. She also looks at kinship and forms of patriarchy as they directly relate to women's labor in a later paper (ibid 2014). Ramamurthy's investigations into everyday practice leads to several similar conclusions I drew from Chintaguda. She formulates overarching notions of change through social and cultural reproduction, which helps us understand seemingly contradictory or inconsistent decision-making patterns (e.g. for men to do traditionally little girls' work or forgoing profit from agriculture, etc).

If both Kapadia and Ramamurthy ask us to pay attention to the subjective constituents of power dynamics (e.g. gender, caste) in capital and their interplay, Bina Agarwal (1992a)

intentionally takes us back to the material basis of livelihoods. Through feminist political ecology, Agarwal focuses on the ecological features that comprise daily life for women in rural India. She notes that a re-orientation to these materials e.g. fuelwood, forest products, etc. will help us understand decision-making and agro-ecological practices. These are intertwined to produce people who are simultaneously making productive livelihoods while engaging in forest conservation. Agarwal most closely resonates with the ecology of practice.

Suffice to say that each of these scholars has offered incisive insights into smallholder agriculture. Although I may cite some explicitly later on, this brief justification and review is needed at this point simply to set the stage. There has already been so much written on this topic such that not doing a cursory overview would be doing the field an injustice. While Mencher and Upadhya's work may inform the first parts of the following discussion, Kadapia, Ramamurthy and Agarwal's influences can be seen in the latter parts.

Cash Crops of Forest & Field

I will first present an overarching political ecological picture similar to Elizabeth Finnis's research in Kerala. Because livelihood activities in Chintaguda take place both on the mountainside and on terrace and sedentary agricultural plots, there is a great deal of mixture in terms of production practices. Despite the two different terrains, a move to cash crops is common to both. As previously stated, Chintaguda has been undergoing a number of transformations in the recent decades. The most striking of them – and to what I was primarily introduced to before coming to Chintaguda – is the preponderance of cashew orchards that have displaced traditional shifting cultivation practices. Cashew trees were a part of the local ecology before development interventions for that purpose, but with the distribution, encouragement, and creation of market

incentives to plant cashew trees by the local ITDA, cashew trees became ubiquitous in the mountainous terrain, scheduled tribal areas, and the countryside in general. While ITDA benefits are more concentrated in Scheduled Tribe areas (e.g. job placements, etc.), there are programs that extend to non-schedule areas as well. The accounts of how the cashew trees first came to Chintaguda are varied; many say that the ITDA gave them the seeds. But others sometimes posited that they received seeds from their relatives (who may live in Scheduled Tribe areas). Either way, it is now possible to see cashew trees not only all around Chintaguda, but in many parts of Srikakulam. Cashew trees fruit once a year. They are peculiar because the flower is small but bears a large fruit. This precisely why cashews are easy to harvest: the cashew is the large seed that is outside of the fruit, attached to the end. As the fruits fall from the tree to the ground, the process of harvesting is to collect all the fruit-seed dyads and then separate them. This process is very imprecise because the fruits fall to the ground just after the leaves of the cashew trees have also fallen. Many times, these seeds are covered by the fallen leaves of the same tree. I spent most of April harvesting cashews with people in Chintaguda and talking to them about the details of their lives under the cover of the forest.

To me, they were aesthetically pleasing, as I mentioned in my description of the front entrance to Chintaguda. To many others in the village, like Prasad, they represented cash: “ilanti chettulutho enni appululaina theerchachchu” ([looking at trees with many cashew flowers] you can repay any number of loans with trees like these). Prasad said this in early March, when trees that particular tree was showing many small flowers that promised many cashews. Conversely, in April, when there were heavy rains and winds, he predicted “entha nashtam” (so much loss) because the flowers could be easily knocked off. It felt like a cartoon where he saw dollar signs in place of the trees. Prasad wasn’t the only one who talked about the association between

cashews and loans. Apparao Anna noted that cashew was their “balamaina panta” (strong crop). It yields anywhere from Rs. 70 per kilogram and upwards when sold in bulk. Apparao Anna tells me that it is possible to make at least Rs. 30,000 from cashews in one year.

Some families have extensive orchards but many people have noted the variability of the yields. When the trees were first planted two to three decades ago, they yielded strong harvests every year. As the years went on, the yields became unpredictable with some years yielding a poor harvest. After decades of interacting with cashew trees, some people have realized that in the old age of the trees, they do not yield as many fruit. In particular, if it rains at an inopportune time like March, then the crop will surely be damaged because the cashew flower is so delicate. The quandary then is whether to entirely cut down the old tree and plant a new one or hope that the old one will yield some cashews in the coming year. Should they follow the former tactic, then they have to wait at least three to five years for the tree to bear seed.

Cashews were just one of the many government livelihood schemes that were present in Chintaguda. They received bananas through another scheme and coconut trees from another. In addition to these, they occasionally received farming inputs like sickles, fertilizer or pesticides to improve production. Simultaneously, crops that were traditionally cultivated in small amounts – as everything was done in smaller amounts previously for ecological reasons – are being produced in larger quantities now. Turmeric and red gram lentils are two examples of this. Turmeric is integral to Savara identity because it is one of their traditional crops. Turmeric is also heavily used in traditional cooking across India. Red gram and junumulu are what is left of their original shifting cultivation polycropping practice. Red gram is also one of the most popular lentils in India used for daal, sambaar, and other dishes that are a part of popular (or dominant) cuisines. Junumulu are mostly sold at a good price in the market. Hybrid varieties of rice are also

grown on rainfed sedentary agricultural plots in the village, but the specific varieties were not mentioned. These, in particular, not only represent the upwardly social aspects of consumption, as I will discuss in Chapter 6, but they are also good for sale as they are of very good quality.

What is important about all these crops is that they are consumable. Rajaswamy Anna noted that they would not grow anything that they cannot eat themselves and always save a little bit from each crop for themselves. They utilize the direct use value as well. Cashews are used in wedding feasts, they make delicious red gram curry, turmeric is used in cooking, coconuts are used for beverages, locally grown rices is sometimes consumed, and more. Simultaneously engaging both use and exchange value is important in Chintaguda. Cash is important but taking into consideration the use value, the circuits of commodity production are not as closed as they seem on first glance. We see here one example of how the dialectical tension between use and exchange values is present in Chintaguda.

One crop that is not edible is cotton. With the association of farmer suicides in Telangana and Maharashtra, Bt cotton has become the target for many environmental and social activists. Nevertheless, as I've observed in the far reaches of Vizianagaram district, where my family is from, cotton fields abound like never before. Indeed, even my relatives who live there are taking notice as evidenced by their casual remarks noting the change in the landscape. There are fewer fields dotting the Srikakulam landscape or perhaps they are just not as concentrated for a critical mass to be noticeable to the naked eye. During a CAVS meeting, Bhudevi Akka proudly proclaimed that Savara people have not taken up cotton planting and instead want to grow more indigenous plants. In reality, this was resolutely disproved by the 50 cents of cotton that Dugganna planted on reclaimed reservoir land. This marks the beginnings of a possible transition in the village to a truer cash crop that is cultivated solely for its exchange value.

Repetition with difference is what prompted Dugganna to plant cotton (with, of course, the overarching specter of loans). He initially saw it when he went to his relative's place in Vennelavalasa. These relatives initially descended from living higher on the hills closer to the plains and learned about cotton from the plains land farmers. They had been planting cotton for fifteen years and as a result "manchi development [sic] vachchindi" (they became well developed). This means they built a nice house, bought good food, and bought more land. During this time, Dugganna saw BC farmers from Badakipeta planting cotton as well. Then, his good friend from Borrapuram planted cotton on 40 cents of land last year and reaped Rs. 35,000 from the harvest. This friend, too, told him to plant cotton. It is undeniable that his social milieu influenced his cropping decisions – he saw the same crop repeated in different contexts.

When he talked about his own cotton crop, Dugganna's face dropped considerably. After investing Rs. 3,800 on the crop with an interest of Rs. 400 for the loan he took to buy the seeds, he only harvested one quintal of cotton. He sold it for Rs. 4,400. He covered his investment but made no profit. He expected three quintals from the 50 cents of land. He rationalized his loss with a few reasons. The first is that he wasn't able to transplant the cotton saplings at the right time because he was visiting his daughter, Padma, in Hyderabad. The instructions on the seed packet were in English and he couldn't read them. Lastly, the soil in that area is not as fertile. Still, he was hopeful: he said now that he has this experience, he will try again next year. He doubts other people in Chintaguda will try to plant cotton after his loss.

Dugganna's family is interesting. He is one of the three varsa families in Chintaguda. He occasionally takes leadership roles in Chintaguda despite this varsa status. Aside from this, his family is the only one with a television in their house and the house is painted in nice colors. Unfortunately, his family also does have a large amount of loans – totaling to about Rs. 1,00,000.

This is one of the larger loan burdens in Chintaguda. Therefore, actively planting new cash crops to repay loans is not an unusual tactic for him to pursue. In fact, he must try to make some profit from crops if he is to make a dent in the current loan or pay for the weddings of his younger two daughters, Padma and Revathi. Like Prasad, he sees these crops as a way to make money either to spend it or pay off loans.

Aside from these production mechanisms, there are three other ways that cash incomes are derived in Chintaguda. These are village-wide systems that the whole village engages in to greater and lesser extents. These are not cash crops exactly but they are part of the local ecology that create yet another engagement with nature that is more cash-oriented. First, there is the wage labor performed by kin relations in harvest any of the aforementioned cash crops or doing any of the maintenance or cultivation-related activities. The daily wage rate is Rs. 100 with lunch provided by the family paying the wage. Secondly, there is the sale of minor forest products like tamarind, mangos, and fuel wood. There are a number of tamarind and mango trees that dot the mountainside landscape of Buddalva. These are indigenous to the local ecology, from my understanding and they were not always entirely intentionally planted. In times of need, the harvest of that year from these trees is sold off to small entrepreneurs from Tobavalasa or Badakipeta. These trees typically fetch Rs. 3,000 per harvest. For the trees that are held by the entire village, the proceeds go to village-wide costs e.g. church repairs, the television, and so on. For trees that are on people's individual podus, they collect the entire sale. Interestingly, not only do people in Chintaguda sell the harvest of the trees and make money, they also collect the harvest by performing wage labor and get paid by the same small entrepreneurs. Fuel wood is collected from the forest and sold in bundles of either Rs. 100 or Rs. 150 (depending on the size) to people in Badakipeta. Lastly, one more recent, source of cash income is the MNREGA

scheme. Generally, this work has consisted of digging six-foot trenches around cashew trees so water rainwater runoff from the hillside can be stored in those trenches and provide water for the trees. This is a value addition process for the cash crops. The work generally happens in the early morning shift of work. If the actual person registered in the MNREGA scheme can not make it to their shift, a family member goes in their stead.

Entangled in Loans

Loans and the circulation of money are a very important feature of life in Chintaguda. They fundamentally change how people view life: from Prasad looking at cashew trees as loan repayments to Nagesh telling me that he will get married only if he can find a loan to Jannayya Anna guaranteeing loans to family members and thereby furthering implicating himself into the loan system. How people first came into loans and the cash economy was difficult to uncover because of my trouble documenting oral histories with reference to time and overarching historical events. Apparao Anna casually told me that thirty years ago, most of the adults (and by extension, everyone in the village) did not know numbers i.e. any numbers and in particular numbers written on currency. There was a gradual learning of these number systems as well as general literacy over the years through a number of means – self-teaching, an outside teacher from Tobavalasa coming to the village and teaching them, through their children who went to school, and presumably, the forced necessity to engage the cash economy.

Loans are typically given at 40% interest per annum. Those who give loans are called sahukars. These are typically BC, Kapu men from Badakipeta though not always. They accept payment in cash crops like cashews or turmeric and thus are also on the cash crop supply chain. Most of the cashews go straight to paying back loans and in particular the interest. Like

clockwork, sahukars show up in the village in the early mornings of April to collect burlap bags filled with cashews. Every morning sees at least one or two come through. Although Badakipeta has no cashew trees of its own, during the cashew harvest season, there are a number of piles of cashew seeds drying in the sun seen on the street. Loans are not consolidated with any one sahukar. They are spread between multiple sahukars in small amounts. Many families in Chintaguda do not always pay back the entire loan. Cashew, turmeric and other cash crops are split between the various loans to cover interest.

There are a number of reasons for entering the loan system to begin with. General explanations include weddings, education, health reasons, and building houses. According to rough sketches of history, weddings used to be less elaborate affairs than they are now. The costs associated with them were also not as great as they are now. Weddings, then, can be seen as a form of expanding social capital. Education, while it is offered free by the state, has a number of associated costs like spending money, money for books, transportation, and so on. There are nominal test fees and other ancillary costs that add up eventually. While healthcare is also supposed to be free for economically and socially marginalized people such as Savaras and STs in general, the healthcare system of late has increasingly privatized features and it isn't unusual for hospital staff to charge bribes for expedited service. Lastly, as the Indiramma Scheme is generating interest in building houses, many people in Chintaguda are indeed building houses with bricks and concrete. The scheme reimburses each family only after they have provided the initial outlay of money e.g. to buy and/or make the materials. As such, they have to take out loans to provide this initial outlay and wait until the government can process the reimbursement.

There are obvious development-oriented and capital maximization activities that are behind the entering of loans. Nevertheless, there is also more to it than just these. If Marx briefly

and incompletely outlines certain social features of the workings of capital (Marx 1973: 156-159), then Polanyi elucidates the complete enmeshment of the social and the economic in the form of markets. As the economy is inherently a social process and Polanyi sees the practices that congeal into an instituted process, one that is in motion (Polanyi 1957: 33). Like I discussed in the previous chapter, emotions, too, are in motion (Ahmed 2014: 11). This motion is where they can be apprehended into the logics of capital. So, following the emotional practices as entry points into fields of enabling constrains, I want to show how at particular junctures certain emotional decisions become instituted into development.

Returning to the intra-family emotional relationships, a look at the relations in Sreenu's family is telling of how they have become further entangled into the loan system. Jannayya Anna, Sreenu's father, has a total of about Rs. 80,000 in loans to his family's names. Most of his loans are for his sons' education or to help them secure a job – these are typical as previously mentioned. However, it is the jammelam that I could not understand when he first discussed it. Jammelam is when he is the loan guarantor. This role means he is also the link between the sahukar and the borrower. From a North American perspective, it is easy to understand jammelam if it is between parents and children. I found it difficult to understand when Jannayya Anna was narrating it to me because he guaranteed the loans for his younger brother, a man in the nearby village of Gurraalametta, and Lakkai Anna. The first two have not ever made any payments towards the loans and so Jannayya Anna has to pay the interest (standard rate is 40% per annum) by himself. Lakkai Anna pays the interest off but has yet to pay off the principle. Here, the cashews come in handy because Jannayya Anna makes payments on both his interest payments and the jammelam payments. I was particularly confused as to why he guaranteed a loan for a seemingly random man in Gurraalametta (he did not offer any particular qualifiers for

the relationship; it's likely they are distant kin) and Lakkai Anna, who is not his direct patrilineal kin. I kept pressing him to understand why he did it. Initially, he said he would face social pressure if he didn't secure the loans for them, that it was fun if he was able to do them some good, or he'll reap rewards later in a cosmic sense.[28] However, he finally ended with: "praanam oppaledu, vellaanu mari" (His life force did not accept [not to help] so he went and helped). This intimate tie between Jannayya Anna's praanam and the loans (e.g. a form of capital) is what is crucial to understand. The striking aspect of this emotional practice is that these are not even close family members for which he is guaranteeing the loan.

Even with kin members, however, we cannot expect entirely emotional relations (as I discussed with Parvathakka previously). His daughter, Uma, too, has become entangled in emotional kin relations. She repeatedly told me how she has many fights with her brother Sreenu: that he did not want her to study past tenth grade, that he did not want her to go out and earn money, that he always brings up some conflict or the other. Her relationship with her parents is better, quite lukewarm. When she left Chintaguda to work in a church convent school in Anantapur, she ended up making good money and stayed there for two to three years. During her time there, she would remit money to her parents at her father's request. This money would be used for household expenses that I described earlier or pay mortgages to acquire new lands. She knew that some of her money would go to help Sreenu, but she gave it to her parents anyway. When I asked her why she kept giving money to her parents over the years – a significant sum in total, over Rs. 20,000 – she said "ivvakapothe manasu oppadu" (if I don't give, my heart does not agree).

[28] "Dharmam cheste karmam vastadi." (If you are righteous, then you will receive good things.)

Uma went to Anantapur for a number of reasons. Making decent money and remitting that money to her parents is just one of them. She went away because she didn't like the treatment in the village because she is part of one of the three varsa families. She didn't like the heated tensions at home. She was supposed to get married to a man she loved from another village previously but the marriage fell through. For all these reasons, she decided to pursue whichever opportunity to get her out of the village. She initially made Rs. 2,500 per month and received incremental raises over the period of three years. Although she left for emotional reasons, she ended up staying longer in Anantapur so she can continue to remit money to her parents. As such, Uma is caught up in a "structure of feeling" (Williams 1977: 128). One where her emotions are not entirely rationalized but are structured anyway and are "formalized, classified, and…built into institutions" (ibid: 132). The institution here is the dialectical relationship between capital and selling labor. She came back to the village because the food cooked from the gas stoves at the convent did not agree with her and her parents told her to return. Nevertheless, she continues to keep the option of going to Anantapur still open.

'Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic, Roofs, Road & Reservoir

As Dugganna noted, the need for cash crops is associated with good development. Either the cash from the cash crops or the cash from the loans is used to pay for education, weddings, outlay money to build houses (to be reimbursed later by the Indiramma scheme) or a variety of other betterment reasons. Loans are pervasive in Chintaguda; nearly every family has some. Development is actively sought and embraced in many instances.

The overwhelmingly young population of Chintaguda is relatively well educated. Over half the village has received some degree of education and therefore is somewhat literate. Thirty

males and twenty-four females received formal education. Education generally progresses from a school in Palempalle that is up to 2nd grade to Andhra Pradesh Government Tribal Welfare Schools, which are located around Srikakulam. These are residential schools, which means that many of the children are absent from the village during the academic year.

Unsurprisingly, the males have higher educational attainment with many attaining undergraduate level education and three pursuing or having pursued graduate education. Of the females, only Vidya, Gangamma's second daughter, has progressed past the 10th grade level and is studying nursing. In many instances, elder sisters forewent education so their younger sisters can study. In other instances, when these elder sisters got married, the younger sister will leave the educational system to help out at home. There were also prevalent notions that girls did not need more education and in one case, an elder brother actively stopped his younger sister from continuing her studies after tenth grade.

Acquiring salaried jobs is a top priority for anyone with an education – like Sreenu, Prasad, and Mahesh. Totayya noted that at the same time that they started commanding more respect from the other castes, their children were able to secure an education and be educated. He wanted his own daughter and son, Rama and Pawan, to study but they did not want to continue past 10th grade. Conversely, this development means that the educated children don't know konda pani. Other parents, such as Bulagamma, agreed and said that her daughter, Uma, does not know sapling-transplanting work in the fields. There is a simultaneous disaccumulation of traditional livelihood knowledge. Even when these children come back to the village, they cannot perform these tasks very well.

One task that everyone is invested in, regardless of education, is building houses. Since the Indiramma scheme came into effect, making bricks making, pouring concrete slab rooftops,

mixing concrete, among other house-making tasks have been something everyone in the village has engaged in. Houses are necessary as Dugganna noted because mud huts with thatched roofs can be easily destroyed and require a lot of maintenance work. Indeed, these construction panulu take up considerable amounts of time for everyone in the village.

When Apparao Anna said that the road was important to them, the emphasis was on connectivity to Heeramandalam and ease of going to and from the village. Of course, there was an implied notion that people in Chintaguda will be able to access the markets in Heeramandalam easily as opposed to walking to Heeramandalam to sell their wares like they did years ago. There is a proverb in Telugu that translates to: the distance from this town to that town is the same as the distance from that town to this town. Just as people in Chintaguda want to access the market in Heeramandalam by way of a road, Chintaguda becomes a market to be accessed by people outside of it. Within two months of the extension of the 1.1 kilometers dirt road from Palempalle to Chintaguda, a man from Badakipeta came to the village on a loaded motorcycle (he was surprisingly able to go up the rocky incline after the dirt road petered off). He brought with him packets of clothing to sell to Chintaguda stating, "Chintaguda meedi naaku eppadanuchi undi drishti. Eppudo vellaalani." (I've had my eye on Chintaguda for a while now. To come here at some point). Stocked with nightgowns, pants, shirts, underwear, and a number of other clothes, he created a big hubbub and, to my surprise, even sold a few items.

One conspicuous but generally absent feature is the construction of the Heeramandalam Reservoir. When I initially came to Chintaguda, I was foolishly excited at the prospect of a large-scale infrastructural development project. Normative social justice critiques would fall into this development state oppressing peasants/marginalized people trope. I thought such a narrative would certainly help me produce a stellar M.A. project and hoped that it would relate to millets

in some way. This reservoir project, like many development projects, has been in the works for decades. It was only recently launched in 2007 but with the death of Y. S. Rajasekhar Reddy in 2009, the former Chief Minister, it was put on ice. By that time, the government already acquired many acres of land, created resettlement areas, provided monetary compensation, and constructed two large walls for the reservoir (using dirt from the acquired lands). People in Chintaguda largely did not care for the construction of the reservoir despite it impeding on a grazing trail (used for livestock) and creating a more circuitous route to Heeramandalam. In fact, a few families even reclaimed some of the dug up government lands and started sedentary agriculture (e.g. planting sunflowers, rice, chilies, finger millet, etc.) for the past three years.

These are all integral parts of Chintaguda. This sort of development has become the constituent of basic life necessities. These structural elements of development are seemingly unmoving but they are points along pathways of development that deeply and fundamentally impact the course of said development.

Social Capital & Cultural Reproduction

The cultural side of this linear development is most definitely present in Chintaguda as well. Aside from education being a strong cultural marker, there are other features that are salient as well. Pierre Bourdieu (1973) has written extensively on the social capital of education, so I will not delve into that here. Rather, I will first start with a small example of conversion of economic capital to social capital and then discuss the aesthetics of development. Operationalizing aesthetics as mediation is thoroughly helpful to me. Bourdieu's Distinction (1984) provides a wonderful foray into neo-Marxist understandings of how aesthetic expression can be a marker of and enable the reproduction of cultural capital. "And nothing is more

distinctive, more distinguished, than the capacity to confer aesthetic status on objects that are banal or even 'common'…or the ability to apply the principles of a 'pure' aesthetic to the most everyday choices of everyday life, e.g. in cooking, clothing, or decoration…Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier" (ibid: 5-6). Bourdieu markedly does not offer the possibility of cultural production to so-called dominated classes, but the notion of cultural reproduction which belies possibilities for dominant / normative cultural respectability. The direct conversion is one method through particular events like weddings. In everyday life, however, it is the attitudes and choices of aesthetics that are more telling.

"Entha appu aiyna parvaledu, kaani vacche maryada mukhya" (the amount of loans does not matter, the requisite respect is important) says Prasad about his wedding costs. Devi and Prasad were actually living together out of wedlock for four years prior to their formal wedding on May 1st. This is a fact I only gradually came to know after several weeks in Chintaguda and only through hushed tones. Because they were living together in Prasad's parents' home, I simply assumed they were married. After their wedding, Prasad, Devi, Devi's sister Padma, and I were talking. Devi held her hand to her neck and said they are neck deep in debt. Despite this, Prasad was happy they had the wedding. Now no one will talk about the illegitimate relationship. This is was a direct conversion from economic capital to social capital.

In the Savara tradition, there are two days of wedding activities. The first day is in the bride's village. The second day is in the groom's village where the actual ceremony (either Hindu or Christian) takes place. This manner of performing the wedding means that traditionally, the groom's family shouldered much of the wedding cost and burden. People I talked to in Chintaguda pride themselves on not paying bride price or dowry, which is a marker of backwardness in India (despite its widespread prevalence). Nevertheless, the costs for the bride's

family have greatly increased because they have adopted the local socially upward practice of buying and giving a number of household items to accompany the bride to the groom's family. These include: beds, mattresses, cabinets, cooking items, trunks, and other items. The more items they give, the greater status is created and flaunted.

Devi and Prasad married in a proper Savara Christian wedding. Christianity is seen as a marker of development and by extension a change in aesthetics. As I will discuss in the next chapter, the change from traditional methods of worship to Christianity or mainstream/ Brahminical Hinduism is not wholly a calling of god but an aesthetic marker as well. The media produced by Savara and Telugu Christian churches and missionaries are quality material with colorful dances to catchy songs. The dancers are well dressed and the celebrations shown e.g. Christmas, Easter are grand with flower varieties and lots of other decorations. It was in this context – when we were all crowded around the common television in the school to watch these videos – that Sreenu noted that there has been good development recently. Implied in Sreenu's (and other people's) comments on Christianity being tied to development is that their previous faith / religious practices were not developed or socially acceptable.

Christianity as development is an interesting idea. Scholars have shown that proselytization in rural parts of India has made some positive impacts on people's lives (Viswanathan 1998; Hardiman 2002). People in Chintaguda are especially happy because Christianity has largely and seemingly put an end to excessive alcohol consumption that is prevalent in rural areas in India. Indeed, Apparao Anna is happy at times to be Christian because he used the opportunity to study the children's bible in Telugu and practice his reading and writing skills in that way. There is a social dignity in partaking in Christianity (aside from the spiritual aspect which I did not explore). However, when I went to Allthi and visited their

baagaarlu, I noticed that in Parvathamma's house, there was an idol of Venkateswara Swamy – a very Brahminical South Indian diety. Her husband, Gopi, mentioned that he brought that idol when he went to Tirupathi, where Sri Venkateswara Swamy resides atop the seven hills there. The rise of pilgramages to Tirupathi has been astronomical in the recent years as popular Hinduism has really taken off amongst "proper" South Indian Hindus and the mark of a pilgrimage shows the extent of the devotion (indeed, even logistically, it is difficult because Tirupathi is so far from Srikakulam). But the proud tone that Gopi took when he discussed it is also telling – a similar social dignity is also present. They have become a part of the respectable, Brahminical / popular forms of Hinduism. As such, the development here, then, is not a simple route of either being Christian or Hindu, but the way they practice socially valorized and respectable faiths. This, of course, meant that they leave their traditional devotional practices in a large way if not entirely.

In addition to the aesthetically pleasing media of Christianity, Sreenu mentioned how the men used to wear only gojju or loincloths before. Indeed, the move from loincloth to pants and watches is something Ramamurthy observed as well when she discussed how Madiga men were rearticulating caste by displaying these markers of self-respect and prestige (Ramamurthy 2011: 1048-1049). While Ramamurthy contextualizes this clothing aesthetic in a matrix of caste relations, Apparao Anna more strongly associates it with education. He said that he still does not wear pants because he feels only educated people can wear pants – despite non-educated people telling him otherwise. Of course, the few times people from Chintaguda wore pants or watches in the past, the Kapu men would poke fun of them. Conversely, now, these same Kapu men poke fun of them because they are still wearing lungis. They mock them saying that they aren't changing; they are still backward – for not adopting pants. There is undoubted caste

respectability at play here. But that is not all: for Apparao Anna, it is an internalized association between education and pants. The younger generation, however, does not even wear lungis – they only wear pants or shorts and laugh at the thought of wearing loincloths.

As the emic understanding of development is tied to good things such as Christianity, the aesthetic perception of infrastructural development, too, matters. Here, two instances are from discussions with Ravi are important. I realize that I am taking disparate narratives and bringing them together – Ravi might well be an outlier (in fact, he probably is) in Chintaguda – but his perspective is important in understanding the various unique dimensions of the perception of change. Ravi feels mostly unhappy in the village because it is so disconnected with "the outside world"; he said he doesn't get to know what is going on outside the village because there was a time in the not-so-distant past that news such as general bus strikes did not reach Chintaguda immediately. He is, undoubtedly, seeking a better life either in the way of a salaried position, education, food preferences, or material possessions. In the village, Ravi does not engage in as much konda pani as other returned males – although he has spent more time outside the village.

One day, we were sitting on his father's pasupu podu (turmeric plot), the higher one towards the top of the mountain. Below us, we could see the vast expanse of the plains – Badakipeta, Tobavalasa, Heeramandalam and the reservoir wall. As we sat side by side simply taking in the view, Ravi suddenly says "Won't this be so nice once it's covered in water?" I was taken aback. When I first came to Chintaguda, I was eagerly looking to frame an anti-reservoir story (as so many good anthropological / activist projects consist of) as a part of my thesis; I was definitely biased against big development and the dam. After a second, I curiously asked him to clarify, to explain what he meant. He continued to say that the water will be nice to look at. I then countered that the new road will be a much longer route to Heeramandalam. He didn't seem to mind much. This was not the only time he voiced this – the second time we were at the same pasupu podu, he mentioned the same idea with a dreamy smile in his eyes. Ravi does have a point. The reservoir close to my mother's hometown, the Peddagedda reservoir, is actually quite

Figure 4: Imagine the water

aesthetically pleasing despite the displacement it caused. In fact, earlier in the year, my cousins and I went there for a short sightseeing tour and took photos with the still, serene water washing against the mountainside.

Another example of Ravi's socially upwardly inclined tastes is when he corrected my Telugu. Having lived in Srikakulam for so long, by later April and May, I was using the local Telugu dialect and slang.

> "I was in Ravi's porch and called out to Deepa at the end of the street, "begi raa". Ravi then immediately corrected me while he was painting his front porch grill (gajaalu) blue. "Begi kaadu, thondaraga." For the briefest second, I was confused and wondered if I used the word incorrectly (as it was my first time using it and I used it slightly off the cuff and it was an attempt to really immerse myself in local language). Then I immediately realized that it was because begi was vyavahaarika, low status. And I asked Ravi why not begi and he said "begi ante baagundadu." I persisted and asked why and he and Gopi (who was sitting next to me) said "Mari naatugaa untundi." I didn't get a chance to ask further why it shouldn't be used." Fieldnotes April 25th, 2014

Even this simple correction in language is telling of the social markers of language use. The word thondaraga is more aesthetically pleasing as it is more proper.[29] Ravi is not the only one making distinctive language decisions. Sambamurthy Anna and Meena Akka have decided not to encourage their two young sons to speak in Savara; they only speak in Telugu to them. In fact, early on in my stay, everyone generally asked me "eetavap" – simultaneously teaching me a small phrase in Savara and asking me what curry I had in the evening. Once Meena Akka came by and asked in English, "What curry?" Two simple words drove home the point instantly: she was educated and polished.

Going from weddings to wearing pants, Christianity to the aesthetics of reservoirs and language preferences, we see that indeed, as I mentioned in the previous chapter with the example of my mother, that these various seemingly disparate and at times insignificant practices can only be understood in relation to each other (Butler 2011: 146) as they are negotiated and

[29] This has been explored further by Brad Miller (2013) who, in his M.A. thesis, discussed the particular ways Brahmins in Visakhapatnam speak uniquely to their caste.

renegotiated in people's lives. These minor distinctions, then, congeal and form bonds between different institutions as religion, development, or language. The pervasive logic in operation here is a dialectical one that creates a backward versus respectable dynamic. Through the methods of cultural reproduction, this dialectic is engaged on multiple fronts to produce different forms of capital e.g. social or cultural. It is these practices that I wish to draw attention to in order to understand how the ecology of practice functions and how logics manifest in ways that tie various practices together (in a logical format). It should not only be about "direct" or "dominant" logics that we term as capitalist such as growing cash crops for money but also the pervasive and uninterrogated aesthetic manifestations of the same in the various facets of people's lives and in their meshworks. It is how these activities then congeal and precipitate at intersections and nodes over the course of the becoming of the meshwork. That is to say that they too become, develop through the overall meshwork.

Gendered Activities through Capital

The gender division of labor has been undoubtedly present in Chintaguda. As a result of the explosion of development-oriented government programs and pressures to produce commodities i.e. cash crops, gender norms in Chintaguda have really taken on a very capitalistically informed dichotomy. Inasmuch as gender is a performance that is materially situated through the bodies performing it (Butler 1990; 2011), its various iterations are increasingly denuded and structured through the mechanisms of capital and thereby through the infusions of dialectical logic. Reaching a historical understanding of gender norms in Chintaguda is difficult simply because it was difficult to find out much history to begin with. Nevertheless, despite the existence of some gender division of labor, before more exhaustive labor systems

came about i.e. increase in cash crops, these divisions were not particularly marked or burdensome – from what I could understand. What then is happening, as a result greater enmeshing of capitalist logics, is that activities are becoming increasingly gendered. Women are shouldering a greater burden of production work in addition to their domestic duties. Men are engaging in other, non-cultivation activities. However, notions of masculinity remain the same. This disjuncture is now a defining feature of gender in Chintaguda.

Most of the cultivation related activities that are shared and can be performed by both men and women. Every time I questioned whether a man would be made fun of or looked down upon doing a task or not, generally, the response was no. There were no particular social norms that dictated a rigid division of labor per se. Therefore, it is important to start in the domestic sphere. Women typically rise earlier than most men and start on the vanta-penta tasks. These include cooking for the family, removing the excrement of livestock from the night before, and drawing water from the well. The associated domestic tasks are also in the domain of women: washing clothes, collecting firewood, collecting teethcleaning sticks, cleaning, sweeping, and childcare. On the cultivation end, the only activity that was explicitly feminine is the sapling-transplantation work for paddy or finger millet. The men are generally supposed to do the tilling of the land, but I heard from a few members that women may do it too. Both genders traditionally do a number of other livelihood activities together: removing weeds, shepherding the livestock, clearing the forest to make new podus, burning the podu after the harvest, making bricks for their houses, and more.

Many of these livelihood activities were not gendered. Nevertheless, in practice, they became extremely gendered. As I came to notice over the course of several weeks, many men were absent from konda pani many times. They would either go to Heeramandalam to take care

of government/bank work such as aadhar card processing, reimbursement for the Indiramma houses, campaigning for politics, cashing MNREGA payments, or other activities. More often than women, men would go to other villages to engage in kin-related events e.g. weddings, funerals, or general events. These are so that the ties of kinship are still maintained. Aside from these reoccurring one-off absences from the village, as I discussed earlier, young men are more likely to be in the formal educational system for long periods of time meaning when or if they return the village, they are less proficient at livelihood activities than young women are.

One major marker of gender in Chintaguda is hunting. It is the only time when men took a number of days "off" from livelihood activities to devote to this activity. Hunting is an integral part of a strong masculine Savara identity (Sharma 1992: 170) as evidenced by discussions with people in Chintaguda as well as the paintings I've seen of Savara life. Hunting nowadays in Chintaguda is more fraught with complexities than before. Savara masculinity is in transition with the gradual enmeshing of capitalist modes of production and overarching notions of development. The loincloth to pant example would be one such transition. Later, I will discuss changes in livelihood practices. However, neither is tied as intimately to masculinity as hunting, which upholds both cultural and gender norms.

Previously, the mountainside would be filled with wild animals and hunts were carried out both during daytime and in the cover of the dark. After the rice and red gram harvest in January, there was some time in the rabi off-season. The finger millet was planted and largely forgotten about. People were slowly digging up their turmeric but without rush. The cashew crop would not come in until April. It was fortuitous, then, that there was a wild boar running about the mountain. I was not there for the beginning of it, but an entire band of men from Chintaguda went off to hunt it. They carried their guns in secrecy for fear of being caught by the Forest

Department, which banned hunting and imposed severe consequences. For five days, the men ran about the forest trying to kill the boar.

I did not follow the groups of men to hunt in those days in early March. Eventually, they stopped trying and the boar still roamed free after days of evading capture. Apparao Anna said that the men couldn't run like they used to; before, running was like walking to them. But now their legs were without that strenuous exercise (which I found hard to believe because they engaged in a lot of physical labor each day). He also said how Kamakshi Akka, his wife, would be angry with him had she found out that he had not done any pani for several days (she was out of town). Sreenu remarked with bitter disappointment that the day had been wasted (and used the English word). Not only did both Sreenu and Apparao Anna characterize the days spent hunting as a waste or loss (in English words) but Sreenu justified all that time spent hunting because the boar was close to the finger millet fields. If they did not scare the boar, the crop would be ruined.

I take this reasoning with a grain of salt. Although most men and in particular the younger men in Chintaguda do not hunt as much these days, there are still a few that do. When I asked Chinnababu Anna why he hunts at night – at the loss of his sleep and having to do some work the next day, he replied: "tappadu" (can't help it). There was a glint of excitement in the men's eyes when they were out hunting for five days. They knew all the work that had to be done yet they chose to continue the hunt for several days. They chose to hunt covertly even with the risks that the Forest Department posed. It is possible to read hunting as an activity that resists capitalist logic but this cannot be fully true because of the disappointed reactions to the failed hunt as well as the reasons to protect their crop. Hunting is still intimately tied to Savara masculinity, but what is recalibrated is the uneasiness of feeling about the hunt.

Ironically, this absence from konda pani does not change their attitudes to their perceived presence. Sambamurthy Anna and I were discussing family planning one day and he mentioned that after the birth of their second child, his wife, Meena, would get a hysterectomy. I was curious about this and asked why he wouldn't get a vasectomy. He looked at me with a mixed look of gravity and incredulity and said he possibly can't get one. A vasectomy would be detrimental to his ability to do konda pani; it is whence a man derives his strength. As such, some notions of (Savara) masculinity still remain the same.

They remain the same at the same time as practically and materially, women's burden of activity is increasing. This burden is increasing in such a way that these activities also become work. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact capitalist intentions in men attending relatives' events or the uneasiness of loss of pani because of hunting. One clear way that men are becoming capitalist subjects is the continued and repeated engagements with the government programs. These development schemes discussed in Chapter 2 serve basic needs, but they are also ways in which men integrate themselves and their families into the "modernizing"[30] sections of society. Leaving the village to accomplish even a simple task in Heeramandalam is a half a day process. Many activities with the government require multiple visits for a variety of reasons such as going the first time, accidentally presenting the incorrect papers or materials, not knowing which papers to present or bad timings and so on; this is typical engagement with bureaucracy. As a result, men have generally been absent from livelihood activities in Chintaguda. They are simultaneously absent from these activities and reifying their status as a development subject through these government interactions. As I discussed in the previous section, another measure of the modernizing aspect of men's lives is the transition from loincloth to lungi and then finally

[30] I do not use this in the academic sense of modern, which is why it is in quotes.

wearing pants. Thus men are upholding traditional Savara masculinity at the same time that they are becoming more and more development subjects and more rounded citizens.

As a result of this, cultivation and agricultural production in Chintaguda are becoming increasing feminized. That agriculture already had some element of a gender division of labor and external pressures e.g. capitalist logics only exacerbated this division and burden is not a new phenomenon as many scholars have already discussed this (Agarwal 1992a; Razavi 2009). Granted, I was present in Chintaguda during the rabi off-season, but even when the strongest crop for families was bearing seed, most of it was being harvested by women. Cashews in particular were harvested almost entirely by women, but turmeric was also largely harvested by them. Lastly, the finger millet, as I will discuss later, which was used for subsistence was also largely harvested by women.

It was difficult to get women to discuss the present and growing gender division of labor in the village. When they did, Venkamma noted, perhaps with a trace of distaste, that men don't help out. I can imagine this feeling is only exacerbated with the increase other, external activities that men are taking part in. She would like it if men did help out but did not provide the reason why they don't. Subhamma does give a reason but it seems to protect men more than indict them. She said that men simply don't have enough opika (energy) to do all the work that women need help with. She did observe that some men do equally shoulder the burdens of domestic tasks – such as in Lingaraju and Sukkamma's household. Both Lingaraju Anna and his son, Nagesh, partake in cooking, washing clothes, and sweeping as I have witnessed. Nevertheless, Subhamma affords men an easy excuse for their absence in the many livelihood and domestic tasks that are necessary for life in Chintaguda. Despite the difficult tasks that women have to do in Chintaguda as a result of these changing relations of production, infrastructure development in

a normative sense has benefitted them as well. After a long hard day's work, most of the people found sitting in front of the community television in the unused schoolhouse would actually be women – young and middle aged women. For about an hour or two hours, they would tune in to watch Telugu television or Christian media and relax.

Capital in Motion

The undergirding framework for this chapter is undoubtedly a dialectical perspective. Neo-Marxist theorizations especially by Bourdieu and Gidwani and a host of other Marxist feminist scholars on South Indian agriculture have helped me understand how the incorporation into the dialectic between capital and labor plays out. Additionally, considering the manifestations of capital and capitalist logics, we are able to see how Chintaguda is indeed on a linear path in many regards. Aesthetics, emotions, the environment, infrastructure, gender norms and much more are being simultaneously and concertedly changed and developed by engagements through capitalist logics. Gender performance and gendered activities are increasingly predicated on a dualist logic that – while it may already exist in Chintaguda – is worsened by capitalist modes of production. Engagements with ecology are increasingly seen in exchange value and commoditized terms. I have not fully teased out the interrelations between these to show the dialectical process in motion; I have only provided brief markers. Chintaguda was, until quite recently – thirty or forty years ago, very much a pre-capitalist society. Immersion into capitalist logics does not happen overnight or in one generation. It is a slow and protracted process. Nevertheless, we are able to see the beginnings of such a process in motion. One prime example of how capitalist logics have paid off is how Venkatarao was able to secure a quality education, pass the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), and secure a position as a teacher in a school

by Narsammapeta. Education, a form of development, with some capital investment (i.e. associated educational costs) has led to a salaried job. He has little knowledge of village life and his kin-relations but achieved the goal of a steady income and socially respectable job. Finally, the benefits he reaps are felt solely by his immediate nuclear family – not the larger village.

It would be easy to say that with the rise of development schemes and as people improve themselves in Chintaguda, there is a move away from subsistence production and towards more capitalist forms of living such as producing cash crops or becoming wage laborers. We can say that as a result of increased education and connectivity to "the outside world" that people in Chintaguda, especially the young people, are moving away from indigenous or traditional practices and livelihoods. Another statement could be: money is solely used to engender other forms of capital such as social and cultural capital by way of weddings, media, and more. These are simple political economic conclusions we can draw up immediately and without further consideration (Rajamma 1993; Finnis 2008; Louis 2015). From my experience in Chintaguda, they are undeniably true.

Notwithstanding the linear path, continued observance of life in Chintaguda leads us to know that these are not at all static positions but a development that is dynamic and fluid. These statements I made in the last paragraph are particular precipitates of capitalism in the meshwork. They come together and bring together in particular, capitalist ways various aspects of the meshwork and latch on to the material features and, at times, the emotional or aesthetic features of life. By latching on I mean to say it is a mechanism of institutionalized activity. Even though these statements represent the congealing parts of the meshwork that become into and with capitalist logics in a spatiotemporally specific way, they are not all that there is there in the meshwork. In fact, capitalist logics are not all encompassing through the meshwork no matter

how compelling they are to its continued development. There are still aspects to life in Chintaguda that do not fit the neat dialectical tensions that are wrought on capitalist logics. There are simultaneously direct and linear pathways such as with cash crops and infrastructure development but there are also pathways, which recalibrate some relations of caste, gender, ecology, and notions of pani. These are tinged with the emotional and aesthetic aspects of life that are apprehended by capitalist logics. Therefore, we need to consider the concurrent movements that are also present in Chintaguda.

Chapter 5
Why We Need "And"

Development as Machine

Everything I described in Chapter 4 is indeed occurring in Chintaguda. What I have discussed in Chapter 3 are also very important features of life in Dabbaguda that cannot be ignored. In both instances, I have, at once, tried to describe some overarching, broad aspects of life as well as attend to the mundane or insignificant aspects of life. That engagements with nature are for purely aesthetic purposes and incorporation into loans and the cash economy have emotional undercurrents are realities that direct us to the relationship between the overarching and the mundane. I have taken, in moments throughout this thesis, emotions and aesthetics as just two forms of activities that are apprehended into various logics. There are several other singular activities or continued repetitions of action that are also part of the becoming meshwork of Chintaguda. All of these need to be understood through their multiple meanings and the context in which we find them i.e. the confluence of meanings of other activities. No one activity can be understood entirely singularly – as much as a capitalist logic would like us to do so.

We need "and" because neither wholly post-structural nor wholly Marxist i.e. structural explanations can explain these meanings and the relationships between the overarching and the mundane. This does not mean we reject both approaches to life outright. This means we try to find an explanation that this thesis does: agree with one philosophically framed narrative e.g. Chapter 3 as well as agree with another, perhaps entirely different philosophically framed narrative e.g. Chapter 4. Adhering to any one school of thought or schema aligns ourselves – anyone but scholars in particular – to the theory, the school of thought, rather than life as it is and

is becoming. Should we pursue "and" with a fickle and non-dogmatic perspective, we might be able to grapple with the messiness of life.

Until now, I have tried to present a linear narrative of how cash crops, loans, and social relations in Chintaguda follow a largely normative development path. These markers of development are certainly relevant and salient to everyday life in the village. There is a combination of government schemes as well as hegemonic social norms that are at play here. These various incarnations of power, according to Tania Murray Li, "worked to shape…landscapes, livelihoods, and possibilities for action" by constituting subjects imbued with the will to improve (Li 2007: 94). Li takes various practices and reads them in a web of power matrices that enable "their capacity for agency" (ibid: 228). Li's narrative of the highlanders of Central Sulawesi in Indonesia forces us to confront how people come into these development schemes willingly. Nonetheless, as Li points out, the will to improve is, at times, thwarted by the failure of nature to comply (ibid: 74) or the failings of the governmental forces that started these development programs to begin with (ibid: 94), which only strengthened the resolve to improve within people. Success and failure are two normative and appropriate ways to judge development. Li notes how the programs may have failed but they succeeded in creating subjects who actively want to improve. The cashew tree scheme that was, at first, taken with curious enthusiasm, but decades into their aging process, the trees are now points of lukewarm feeling. People are now looking to new crops to come into "manchi development".

Li does not present a black and white picture by any means but the workings of development can be understood by looking to a more multi-faceted perspective that considers micro-moments and unstable relation to nature. To do this, we can consider development as a "machine" as posited by Gidwani (2008). As such, development:

1. "reorganizes the conditions – or ecology – of human life for its betterment" (ibid: 70)
2. relies "on such heterogeneous associations of humans and nonhumans, which, *in combination*, produce life functionings that would be impossible in the absence of connection" (ibid: 74).
3. is not "immune to mutation from the dense wave of (often banal, everyday) practices and micropolitics of concrete assemblages that actualize" it (ibid: 79)
4. "puts in place an infrastructure – a networked collective of humans and nonhumans – within which certain kinds of *economic* conducts now become intelligible, and compelling." (ibid: 100)

The key idea here is the ecological set up of everyday practices as well as the subjects that embody them. Then these contingent assemblages, unified by – at times fleeting – logics (or infrastructure per Gidwani), become instituted. Unlike the subjectivities discussed in Chapter 3, the distinguishing feature of these activities read relationally is that they are formalized (as per Raymond Williams's (1977) idea) and intelligible (see above) to the dialectical tension of capital. Activities no longer are solely activities. Some or many are precipitated from the meshwork through the workings of development.

Development is only one incarnation of capital circulations but it is a highly relevant one. Whether through ITDA supported programs or electing to grow cash crops (among other activities) on their own, people in Chintaguda are inevitably entering new forms of dialectical relations e.g. between capital and their own exchange-value becoming labor. In this process, the disparate workings and encompassing of circuits of capital mean that social and ecological relations that existed before will be reorganized – not always in the ways that are to be expected. Gidwani (2008) refers to these unexpected changes as interruptions; Ramamurthy calls it a "trump" (Ramamurthy 2014: 169). Both scholars rely on cultural production as moments of unexpectedness and indeed, Paul Willis (1977; 1981), in his ethnography of working class youth in England posited this idea at first. Willis is directly arguing against a Bourdieuian idea of habitus in this regard. Just as practices become instituted into dominant logics, it is these points

of production that are classified as cultural logics for these scholars. Indeed all these scholars cite workers or those who become workers as doing work on their own terms – terms that are logical per their culturally-inflected reasonings.

Not only will there be reorganization and recalibration; the point Gidwani tries to make by examining development as a machine is to account for the unintended effects: "*Things simply happen* despite the best of designs" (Gidwani 2008: 135, emphasis original). These resulting unintended consequences that are multiple and diverse in nature. Thus, there can be the engendering of new activities that are unintelligible and informal. There can also be some possibility that despite ensuing formalization and intelligibility, there are aspects of the activity or activities that are simultaneously constrained and unconstrained. The meanings of these activities are, again, multiple and diverse. While I will not cover such instances in this chapter, it is important to acknowledge these possibilities over the course of capital in motion.

In the research reviewed on smallholder agriculture, the already powerful people (e.g. by way of caste or class or men) reaped more benefits. While this is still largely true, thinking about development as a machine helps us look at the unintended effects of capital circulation. The framing of development as a machine also helps us understand the interactions between instituted and non-instituted practices, interactions with other sets of logics. Inevitably, there are inconsistencies that do not neatly follow capitalist logic.

Recalibrations in Capital Circulations

The instituted activities in circuits of capital lead to new, unexpected interactions between people and how they react to things. Simultaneously, logics of capital will engage relationships, activities, and attitudes that are already bound together in novel and disruptive

ways. I will term these as recalibrations as opposed to all out interruptions because at the end of the day, these are all still activities in service of capital. As Vivek Chibber states, "Why should it matter if capitalists consult astrologers as long as they are driven to make profits? Similarly, it doesn't matter if workers pray on the shop floor as long as they work. This is all that the theory requires. It doesn't say that cultural differences will disappear; it says that these differences don't matter for the spread of capitalism, as long as agents obey the compulsions that capitalist structures place on them" (Chibber 2013). These cultural differences may delay or pause so-called a pure or uncontested spread of capitalism but a spread of it will nevertheless continue as will attempts at instituting activities into exchange value. Therefore, these are simply cultural recalibrations or reorganizations under the aegis of capitalist logics.

Circular Migration

Gendered division of labor is not only changing in the village, but people from Chintaguda are also integrating themselves into labor forms that are explicitly gendered. Circular migration is a huge phenomenon in the Indian countryside and indeed at least a quarter of Chintaguda has participated in coolie pani (labor work) in cities or outside the village. Generally construction jobs or other manual labor jobs, these forms of labor pay less for women and more for men. These vary by place, time of employment, and employer yet the gap is always there: Rs. 80 for men, Rs. 60 for women per day for construction in Coimbature; Rs. 500 for women, Rs. 800-1,000 per week for construction in Chennai; Rs. 4,500 for women, Rs. 5,500 for men per month for grape picking in Hyderabad. The oft-cited reason for this is that women's tasks are different from men's. But even when they are the same as men's tasks (e.g. carrying loads of concrete mixture), the pay gap persists.

Circular migration seems to be an interruption of capital, and Gidwani and Sivaramakrishnan (2003) work towards such an idea. They analyze the cultural effects of circular migration in various parts of India. They find that seasonal or circular migrants are able to assert their rights and voices in their natal places because of the added income. They are able to break caste hierarchies, consume the aesthetics of modernity, and assert themselves. This pattern breaks the typical migratory path associated with modernization and the authors make the case of regional modernization.

Circular migration in Chintaguda encompasses some of the modernizing aspects that Gidwani and Sivaramakrishnan discuss, but it takes a different form. Indeed, when Ramesh returned from grape picking in Hyderabad, I was surprised to find that he bought himself a Rs. 9,000 phone. This is a counterhegemonic consumption that makes a "tribal" subject cosmopolitan. But there is more to circular migration. Locally, the strongest form of labor connection between Chintaguda and BC and SC villages I was able to observe is the selling of sticks for fuel wood. However, Tobavalasa, in the recent years, have turned to gas stoves, which decreased the market for fuelwood. In addition, most people who were engaging in circular migration were the educated younger generation. These people were not a part of the fuelwood labor circuit or other caste hierarchical labor relations, so their absence does not have the same impact that Gidwani and Sivaramakrishnan discuss in their case studies. The reasons for leaving the village, as I briefly mentioned earlier with Sivapriya, Uma, Ravi or Sreenu, could be, at times, emotional. The Munda people that Alpa Shah worked with in Jharkhand have described the opportunity to migrate away from their village as places to live freely and "liberation from the constraints of village life" (Shah 2010: 143). These were echoed by Devi and Padma who, despite liking life outside of the village, came back eventually.

The circular pattern is also a result of the same – Sivapriya came back for her brother. Other came back to tend to their land for cashew season. Other, still, came back for the weddings – generally in May. Even Sreenu noted that people need to be serious about this labor arrangement and not just return for any old wedding. Nevertheless, weddings and such social functions are a large draw back to the village. The arrangement of these flexible labor relations lets people come back if they simply don't like the work, find it too hard, or whatever reason they choose. Chalapathi noted the inevitably of needing to go to the city to find work and to earn money, but he said he doesn't like it aesthetically. The smoke and pollution do not sit well with him. He prefers life in the village, despite the lack of employment opportunities.

Members of both genders have migrated at some point thus creating an equal rate of migration between them. Nevertheless, men stay longer and because they have been educated for longer periods of time (i.e. past tenth grade), they have had more exposure to the "outside world". This results in a divergence from the local meshwork because they are exposed to different cultures, ideas, and indeed, logics. Thus circular migration has a gendered facet to it because the meshwork that is constituted by and constitute the exposure a person has is different.

The importance of this labor system is that even while it seems to be interrupting capital flows, it gives flexibility to those who are working and those who employ the workers. Both parties are alienated from the production process and as such, the bodies are replaceable. The people in Chintaguda don't owe the companies anything and are free to leave when they wish. But leaving is only a brief pause in the production process should the company actually face a labor shortage; because it is one of many villages, there will always been another stream of workers taking their place.

Inter-Caste Relations

As gender divisions are being reified as a result of incorporation into circular migration, it is curious to see how the incorporation into circular migration actually happens. Predictably, one source of incorporation is word of mouth from family members, relatives – generally other Savara people. But another, equally important source, is geographic and necessarily inter-caste interactions. Many people in Chintaguda found out about labor opportunities through people from Badakipeta, Rajapadu, Tobavalasa, Palempalle, Chinna Kolli Valasa, Borrapuram, and other towns. People from these villages are definitely not Savara – they include people from the Jathapu (ST), Kapu (BC), Pydi (SC), and other castes. They were typically described as friends and when the opportunity presented itself, people from Chintaguda returned the favor and connected them to employment opportunities. More importantly, when people from Chintaguda and the local village left to work in the same jobs outside the village, the local connection they had strengthened that much more. Much like the cotton that was planted by Dugganna, inclusion into circuits of capital is an inter-caste phenomenon. However, what was remarkable is that all these inter-caste interactions are described as friendships. These are, of course, evinced by the younger generation (my generation), but this still marks a progressive change in inter-caste relationships.

Much as the workings of capital reorganize social relations, social relations reorganize the disparate workings of development to produce unlikely economic relations. Borrapuram is located where the Heeramandalam Reservoir will be once the final phases are complete. Polamma, one of the Pydi women who comes to sell her wares in Chintaguda, received a large, unspecified amount of compensation money for her house and fifty cents of land. She started construction on a house in the resettlement area but will forego acquiring land. Instead, like

others affected by reservoir resettlement, she will pursue other means of making money (not that she was solely dependent on land before).

She told me she bought some gold at a very good price through a sahukar she knew. She also gave people in Chintaguda loans – a total of Rs. 30,000 split between four people. The standard interest rate applied. She inadvertently became a sahukar herself because of the displacement she will experience from the construction of the reservoir. She told me that she only gave out those loans because the people in Chintaguda asked her for them and she did not want to say no. For an SC woman to be a sahukar is a marked change from previous and normative caste and gender roles even if she is not actively identified as a sahukar in Chintaguda.

This reorganization of an aspect of caste relations is important to understand. While caste can be understood in other contexts as a "flexible source of social capital" (Upadhya 1997: 191), we have to understand that caste is still being reorganized in the local context of Chintaguda. On a macro-level and indeed with my presence, there are broad linkages between greater social capital afforded to Brahminical people such as myself and less social capital among marginalized castes such as Savaras and Pydis. This is what enables me to go study them. But there is more at play in and around Chintaguda. As I noted in Chapter 4, the economy engenders the transformation of social relations along caste lines from a more horizontal one to a more vertical one. This transformation is still undergoing a lot of negotiation on the ground level in Chintaguda. As such, the structural perspective of caste e.g. who is higher in the hierarchy – an SC Pydi or an ST Savara – or who has the most access to economic capital – an SC Pydi or an ST Savara is not always going to neatly line up with dialectical class formations. Caste and class are undoubtedly interrelated in pernicious ways, but at this stage of the development infusions into people's lives in and around Chintaguda, the reorganization is still characterized by that of

varied and multivalent caste negotations. As such, it is not neatly divided into and collapsible on oppressed and oppresser categories as of yet, as I have discussed in Chapter 3. We cannot easily state that capital and development have directly apprehended and worked with caste structures in harmonious ways to further stabilize caste and capitalist hegemony.

~

This is how development and, by extension, capital recalibrates social relationships, between groups of people and between people and place. There are moments of emotions and aesthetics that play into these recalibrations but on the whole, the reasons for these changes are varied. The practices associated with these engagements with capital are reorganized but within the mechanisms of dialectics. Therefore, an SC woman giving out loans or young people leaving the village for employment in faraway places further entrenches them in various dialectical dynamics, especially with that of capital (in its various incarnations e.g. economic, social, etc.) and labor. Exchange value is constantly becoming and does not stop simply because of culturally-inflected reasons. In this regard, we cannot see these moments as points of cultural production that are uniquely resisting capitalist logics. In fact, we must recognize how, despite the varied effects of the development machine that result in seemingly slow, inefficient, or counterintuitive processes, these processes will become inevitably or eventually apprehended by capitalist logics.

Violations

I term this section as violations as opposed to interruptions or trumping because some points of cultural production are illegible and incommensurable to the circuits of capital. These cultural productions continue in tandem with capitalist production but do not quite overlap in

ways that enter the dialectical relationships that characterize other activities in capital. These, I hope to explain, are articulations of activities that, going back to unconstrained meditated engagements, can demonstrate how incursions of capitalist production or capitalist logics could be violated. Moreso than the social functionings, as I will review first, ecological development on the hillside is crucial to this argument. There is something inherent to the workings of the natural environment that, despite repeated engagements with capitalist logics, refuses to be rendered technical or disciplined (Li 2007).

Kalisi Melisi Group Work

Both Kapadia (1996) and Gidwani (2008) discuss how in the agrarian wage labor context, there is a distinct preference for group work. This form of work is present in Chintaguda as well. Previously (perhaps 50 years ago?), this form of labor was compensated with a measurement of rice or other grains e.g. millets. As the years passed, the daily rate for compensation had become money starting from Rs. 20 per day (per Totayya Anna's reckoning) to what it is today, Rs. 100 per person. In Chintaguda different families use this form of wage labor within the village such that they end up employing non-nuclear family members and neighbors who live in the village.

There is a distinct preference for this work because they are able to work in a kalisi melisi (happily together in harmony) fashion. This was particularly true when I observed Madhu, Masayya, Deepa, Sita, Satyamma, and Suresh performing wage labor or coolie pani in Totayya Anna's cashew orchard. I noted a number of things in their kalisi melisi form of work: they all talked in Savara; they joked around; they took breaks whenever they wanted to; some spilled a bucket of harvested cashews but were not seriously reprimanded; Madhu was collecting neem sticks for toothbrushes for herself while she was harvesting cashews; Satyamma was

simultaneously collecting firewood; Masayya took a break from cashews and picked and ate a papaya fruit from the tree in the orchard; they were all referring to each other by their kinship relationship. In wage labor in Chintaguda, those paying also have to provide lunch – typically rice and a curry. Serving lunch is particularly important because in other parts of Andhra, as I learned anecdotally (again, from my father's assistant, Kumar), lunch is not a part of the daily wage. The workers bring their own food. The eating together aspect of wage labor is a practice leftover and maintained from days when they were not integrated into capitalist logics.

The process of doing wage labor is a confluence of multiplicitous activities that really, almost mask the entire incorporation into the monetary system. From reifying kinship to having fun to performing other livelihood activities to continuing to speak their language – the subtle effects of this group work are numerous. It is a reiteration of the meshwork. Granted, it is under the aegis of a monetary transaction, but this exchange is so subtle that never once have I witnessed the actual passing of money for these labor activities. They are indeed working on their own terms, but they are also continuing to grow into their emotional relationships with each other. This is compounded by the fact that I think most of the wages earned that day actually went to a pool of money so the youth of the village can buy a large speaker system – a collective activity. I do not think there was any capital accumulation as a result of the labor output. The degree of flexibility is so great that the constraining effects of capital are almost absent. The dialectical tension between capital and labor are really almost unseen.

"Messy Landscapes" (Lin 2015)

A more ecological orientation will help us further understand points of cultural production or cultural logics. Scenes of agrarian India, particularly Andhra Pradesh, generally

feature lush, waterlogged paddy fields. In the culture of monocropping, the only interruptions to these landscapes are the occasional tree on the edge of a plot where a farmer may take respite from the sun. The scenes of lush, waterlogged paddy fields are appealing not only because of some green-oriented aesthetic appeal but because they represent productivity and prosperity. These can also be found in the very small terrace or sedentary farms in Chintaguda during and after the monsoon season. Chintaguda, however, also practices shifting cultivation on the mountainside, in the forest.

When I first arrived and as I noted in my description of Chintaguda in Chapter 2, the untrained eye only sees a mass of undifferentiated green. It is almost akin to seeing a crowd of people on the street. None of the familiar, none of them legible. This is one reason Anna Tsing reads the landscape of the Meratus in Kalimantan, Borneo as "intelligible to neither developers nor conventional conservationists. It is in this sense that I describe it as forming within a "gap." Gaps are zones of erasure and incomprehensibility…Gaps are only experienced from the perspective of a particular, historically instituted line of demarcation in relation to which certain ways of being seem invalid or illegible. From another perspective, that gap may be another form of ordinariness. Yet some perspectives are more powerful than others. To the extent that categories are drawn with power, the gaps they stimulate are worth taking seriously as critical spaces and sites for emergent voices and dreams" (Tsing 2005: 195-196). The notion of illegibility and incomprehensibility resonate with other scholars such as Butler (2011: 142) and Bourdieu (1977: 169), but it resonates most with Gidwani (2008: 101, 231) who sees salinization as an interruption to or failure of the flows of capital. Therefore, we need to approach landscapes in their local, socio-ecologically designed meanings and engage with them on our own terms. It

is only after walking through them and engaging with them in activities do forests become legible to us and us to them. It requires a number of repeated engagements over time.

These various engagements then reveal that the podu, despite being cleared and cultivated, actually features a great biodiversity of life forms. Thus, cashew orchards or even red gram podus are not entirely either. Because they are a part of the forest, they simply cannot be fully monocropped. From my observation, the rocky terrain, the incline, and the extent of the degraded forest make it difficult to discipline. Such a landscape is "messy" (Lin 2015: 272-274) because there are so many different types of plants that propagate themselves through the workings of the forest. Since I only spent four months in Chintaguda, not all the plants in the forested orchards were clear to me but they nonetheless dotted the landscape.

Figure 5: Exchange value - cashews (left) & use value – burradapp (right)

On closer inspection, there are a number of flora that have no bearing to capitalist production; some have use value, some do not. One such use value plant is called "burradapp" in Savara. It is an uncultivated green that people in Chintaguda make a curry with. Incidentally, burradapp goes from being a weed to a foodstuff to being a weed again over the course of its lifecycle. When it is a sapling, it is simply weeded out in the orchards. They know it can grow anywhere on

the mountain. When it is grown past a soft, sapling stage, people pick bunches of it on their way back to the village from working the mountain. They have a leafy green to cook with. However, when it is past this stage, it grows long with large leaves the size of an adult hand. These are then useless to use. They are generally left alone. Tubers, too, come into people's lives at certain points. For example, when we were shepherding, Vasanta felt hungry and so she spotted the leafy top of a small tuber in the ground. She easily dug it up with her knife, brushed the dirt off, and ate it. These values come together at specific points in time e.g. when people are hungry or need food. When these values don't come together, life for both the uncultivated foodstuffs and the people nevertheless continues. This is how the gaps provide spaces for emergence and possibilities.

Indeed, people do not want to fully discipline them either. Even when cashew orchards are cleared for "weeds", the weeding process does not entail fully ripping the roots of the plant out. Instead, the weeds, which can be any non-cashew plant or even a small cashew sapling itself, are cut at the bottom, near the ground, and simply discarded there itself. The idea behind this is that this dead organic matter will decompose and become fertilizer for the trees. At the same time, the roots are all not pulled out to ensure a further supply of organic matter.

Aside from this practice, the aesthetic aspect of nature is another reason why people do not want to fully discipline the landscape. The moment this became really clear to me was when I saw a large rajatar tree in Rajamma and Bodanna's cashew orchard. After harvesting cashews all day, I came across this tree in the middle of cashew trees, and it looked out of place to me. It was a large tree that easily could have been replaced with a cashew tree. I asked Rajamma about it and she said she intentionally brought a branch back from her relative's place and planted it on the podu. She said that she likes flowers and found the tree to be pretty. Even more, she said

planted it just for fun. Like the leaves Uma put in her hair, this tree has absolutely no use value. In fact, neither Rajamma nor her daughter-in-law, Parvathakka, even use those flowers. Nevertheless, the tree stays.

There are two points to note here. First, planting a rajatar tree for aesthetic purposes is important. But secondly, and more importantly to this thesis, is Rajamma's ambivalence to the tree or rajatar flowers after that brief or mere moment of aesthetic inclination. We can say that the tree has *some* use value for the aesthetic appeal to Rajamma. But I know that she is not obsessive over these flowers, and in fact, her tone had a marked ambivalence when describing the tree she planted many years ago. From an economically rationalist or capitalist logic perspective, such a tree or the ensuing attitude are illegible. This is yet another example of how the landscape is filled with a whole host of plants, trees, and living things generally that crop up and are valued and not valued as time goes on. As a result of this, life for humans and non-humans, including plants and trees, goes on in an undisciplined fashion despite their repeated engagement with capitalist logics. Just as Gidwani states, "things simply happen" (Gidwani 2008: 135) over the course of development, some things in life just are. And these are not reducible to the workings of capitalism or its itinerant logics as Tsing notes.

Productions & Logics

Attending to both types of schools of thought, structural or functionalist and post-structuralism broadly defined, helps us consider the ways in which the uneven and divergent texture of the meshwork develops from interactions with dialectical ontology. Relating back to the original RESMISA objective to look at the ecology of practice, my attention to both schools of thought finds common ground in practice. Rather, my attention to practice is able to create

common ground to both schools of thought. The mundane features of life and seemingly difficult to grasp aspects such as emotions or aesthetic preferences need to be attended to from a post-structuralist perspective; they need to be understood in ways that don't place primacy on functionalist interpretations. This means understanding the intentions and desires of those seeking an escape from village life or those in need of social acceptance in the context of exploitative features of capitalist production. Therefore, looking to how the reiterative machinations of capitalist logic interact with and apprehend basic life desires, emotions, organically produced innate tastes, and attitudes will help us understand how these are incorporated into the logics of capitalist production.

It is in the midst of circuits of capital e.g. group work or sites of production like cashew orchards that we need to look for violations or moments of cultural production. Often times, these moments may not even come together as an assemblage of cultural logics – they may be standalone activities. Indeed, perhaps entering a logical framework for these moments might be their undoing. Nevertheless, these make an impact on the meshwork. Perhaps not as much congealed precipitates of dialectic tensions but the possibilities of movement away or (intentional or unintentional) evasion from such tensions remain. It important to recognize the ways in which the local environment provides a setting for unconstrained mediated engagements to occur in the context of an increasingly teleological meshwork.

The reason why it is important for me to understand the various incarnations of activities in (the life of) Chintaguda is because not only is the village on a very real and continual process of entering constrained mediations, a series of subjectivizations but because how we frame millets in this development discourse is very much a part of this. In addition to that I have to understand which activities are and which activities aren't in the aegis of capital. Indeed, a

reimagining (perhaps in line with or divergent from revalorizing) of small millets requires a look at the possibilities of cultural production that already exist in Chintaguda and looking for those moments with regards to millets. Considering the ecological nature of interactions and activities, millets cannot be understood outside all the different aspects of the meshwork.

Chapter 6
Dark Nooks & Distant Memories

Finding Millets

Finding millets in Chintaguda was a lot like finding millets in social science literature. Aside from Elizabeth Finnis, there are only passing mentions in the most fleeting ways. I realized quite quickly that ethnography, being with people, living there is the only way of finding millets in Chintaguda. Had I visited for occasional field visits with a list of prepared interview questions, I would not have learned much about the actual state of millets. I found them in the most unexpected places at the most random of times. Stumbling upon them was literally the only way I was able to deduce information about them. Therefore, wading through and growing with the meshworks in Chintaguda was the only way for me to stumble upon them.

This chapter may read more as a case study than anything else. In some ways, that is a justified reading. However, I hope that in the previous three chapters, I have not created a dichotomy between theory and empirical material. Drawing theory from millets is even more difficult simply because the millet moments in the meshwork were so disparate. To reiterate, I found very few references to millets when I came to Chintaguda. For this reason, I have chosen to contextualize millets rather than induce a theoretical framework from them. The previous chapters, despite the greater depth and volume, are really a foundation to read this chapter.

The narrative of millets in Chintaguda can undoubtedly follow a linear path. To a large extent, such a path is appropriate as well. As millets become valorized in dominant discourses and through the market economy, a Marxist Political Economy perspective is vital to understanding a trajectory of millets. I hope to discuss, however, later in this chapter, little moments of intervention or cultural production in the meshwork that may shed light into at least

one cultural logic that millets are a part of. Keeping in mind the practices, activities, attitudes, performances, attitudes, emotions, aesthetics, and engagements mentioned in the previous pages, I will attempt to place millets in relation to those in this chapter.

A Straightforward Narrative

The notion of unexpectedness can be extended to the perplexity associated with why people stopped growing millets. When I asked Addai Thatha, the oldest man in the village, why they stopped growing millets immediately after he detailed all the great things about them, his face became glazed with a look of confusion and his eyes seemed lost in distant memories and contemplation. Perplexity is a feeling that Ramamurthy discusses when she discusses the integration of smallholders into circuits of capital: “Dalit smallholders experience incorporation in this contradictory capitalist world as a structure of feeling marked by perplexity – as mysterious, paradoxical, and outside their control even when they appear to have control over some of its elements and are drawn to its possibilities” (Ramamurthy 2011: 1051-1052).

The local, national, and international narratives around millets are that they are the losers of the incorporation into circuits of capital. The Green Revolution of the 1970s inspired a massive shift towards rice and wheat production with the use of hybrid seeds, inorganic inputs, and increased water usage. The area under small millet cultivation decreased dramatically (Shiva 1991: 81-83). Compounded with this is the Public Distribution System (PDS) and the Antyodaya Anna Yojana scheme that offer up to 35 kilograms of rice at Rs. 2 per kilogram per family per month. Therefore, rice planting was encouraged and increased in the local area and a robust rice market was created. As a result of the introduction of government-subsidized rice rations, subsistence farming was not entirely needed. It is important to note that the ration does not

always cover a full month's supply of staples for one family but subsistence burden is greatly reduced. Simultaneously, in the 1980s, the local ITDA in Srikakulam introduced cashews as a cash crop that people in tribal and non-tribal readily accepted. This was part of a larger project when other ITDAs throughout the state introduced other cash crops in their respective regions (e.g. tea in Araku Valley). The promulgation of cashew trees was ideal in the context of shifting cultivation. Typically, a podu would be used for three years in slash and burn style before it was let go to allow the soil fertility to regenerate. The forest would reclaim the podu, as it is said, and cultivators would move to another area. Instead of letting the forest reclaim it, many people simply planted the cashew seeds distributed by the ITDA in those podus. Slowly, each of the podus became cashew orchards. In the early days, as I previously stated, cashew trees yielded good profits for people in Chintaguda. This, combined with the rice production that people in Chintaguda engaged in small amounts through terrain farming and small plots of sedentary farming, resulted in shifting cultivation falling largely to the wayside. Both moves were also pivots to addressing loan payments accrued for various reasons. Rice and cashews (among others) are cash crops so their exchange value could be leveraged to pay off loans. Lastly, as rice was a socially desirable food (to be reviewed in the next subsection), millet consumption dropped off considerably.

Millets were traditionally grown in polycropping fashion in Chintaguda. Many people, when discussing millets, recited multiple crops in a string of singsong intonation that linked each word (each crop) to the next. These were altogether (in no particular order): foxtail millet, barnyard millet, pearl millet, sorghum, and little millet.[31] In addition to these, pulses were also

[31] I do not distinguish between the various types of millets only because the people who talked to me did not. It is important to note that there are multiple types of foxtail and finger millets.

mixed in the cropping and recited: red gram, junumulu, and babberlu.[32] These were planted with a kanke, a wooden implement that makes shallow holes in the dirt (they resemble a cane). The harvest from this polycropped podu comes in stages: first the foxtail millets and junumulu, then the barnyard millet, next the pearl millet, after that the sorghum, and at the end, the red gram. Planted first in June, just before the beginning of the monsoon season, the first crops would come in by September and the rest would be harvested in stages until early or mid-January. Some are set aside to provide seeds for the next crop in emptied and dried out squash or gourds.

Although these crops are touted for being rainfed – indeed, it is difficult to irrigate or supply water to hillside crops – tending to these crops was difficult in other ways. An important factor of engagement with the forest in Chintaguda was and to an extent still is the presence of wild animals. One reason why millets could not be cultivated in larger quantities was because wild animals made it difficult to cultivate the crops – either boars would run through and eat them, birds could ruin crops, or they could not cultivate in larger or farther mountainside plots for fear of being killed by a wild animal (e.g. jaguar). People would stand guard from a little thatched mud outpost next the podu. During the day, they would ward off the birds and during the night, they would guard against the boars. At a time when all cultivation was for subsistence purposes, these were deterrents to grow millets in larger quantities. Traditionally, men did these tasks. Red gram and junumulu remained a part of shifting cultivation in Chintaguda because boars and birds don't usually eat them.

Finger millet, a more popular millet and one that was being cultivated while I was in Chintaguda, is quite different. It is cultivated on flat land that is typically unirrigated. There are two types of finger millets that are typically found locally. One is called punaadi chodi (literal

[32] I was unable to verify the English names of these crops.

translation: foundation finger millet) and the other is called vasavi chodi (summer finger millet). These two forms of finger millet have not been fully forgotten in Chintaguda. But on the other hand, they are not cultivated in great quantitates. Punaadi chodi is cultivated in October and it is harvested in December. Vasavi chodi is cultivated in the rabi off-season from January to April. It was difficult enumerate the families that cultivated punaadi chodi. I will discuss the ones that cultivated vasavi chodi later in the chapter. Nevertheless, the seeds for both types of finger millets are still saved and found in the village. Finger millet was not mentioned in the singsong list of crops that were traditionally planted. Unfortunately, I could not locate the exact period in time when they were first planted by Savara communities.

As the participants in Elizabeth Finnis's research state, "now it is an easy life," (Finnis 2009) so too do Savara women: "sukham aiypoyinaamu" (we have become comfortable). This is what women in Ippaguda, relatives of Gangamma, in particular said. Processing for foxtail millet and finger millet needs the use of a large mortar and pestle. Further processing for finger millet requires a grain grinder to produce a powder. These are typically laborious tasks and thus traditional processing becomes one of the oft-cited reasons for the decrease in millet consumption (Finnis 2006; Finnis 2007; Finnis 2008). For this reason, it is unsurprising to observe the absence of the use of these processing instruments. In Chintaguda, only seven houses have functional mortar and pestles and grain grinders. In other parts of the local area such as in Heermandalam, discarded pestles can be found in the streets as relics of the past.

Lastly, foxtail millet has extra cultural significance to Savara people. Called "buroi" in Savara, it was central to worship practices. Unfortunately, this is one area that I was not able to learn about more. As practically everyone in Chintaguda converted to Christianity, I was not able to find out much about the methods of worship. When I visited Allthi and Ippaguda, where they

are not Christian, I found traces of worship to foxtail millets. Decomposing old stalks with bunches of foxtail millet can be found hanging along the walls of some people's houses. These were covered in cobwebs in dark corners. They were generally draped over dried and gutted squash or gourds that presumably held the seeds. However, because the residents of Allthi and Ippaguda adopted more socially respectable forms of Hinduism and foxtail millet cultivation has decreased to nearly nonexistent levels, worship of the same has fallen to the wayside. I tried to talk to the religious man called a jannodu but he was not available while I was there.

Figure 6: Dust & cobwebs on foxtail millet

A Matter of Taste

The staples of pre-rice Chintaguda were millets and pulses. Two particular staples that are not made anymore are jeelugu ambali and mango seed ambali. The former is a porridge that is made from the inside of the jeelugu trunk by cooking it slowly over fire. The other is a porridge made from mango seeds cooked in a similar way. There are a number of roots, tubers,

and uncultivated greens that are also a part of the diet as I mentioned in the previous chapter. These have helped people in Chintaguda survive through famines, of which there were many in the past. Still, these roots and tubers are found in the mountainside and are consumed seasonally. There are a number of meats that were traditionally consumed in Chintaguda depending on what was hunted in the forest.

These staples are not mentioned in the current research for food security. While Salome Yesudas has produced cutting edge research on uncultivated greens and marginalized food systems (Yesudas & Satheesh 2009; Deb et al 2014), these have not attained the recognition that millets have in the food security field. Moreover, she has particularly focused on uncultivated greens and other foods unique to different locales. Roots and tubers are mentioned but still relatively understudied. The holistic approach to nutrition still requires a further step from my initial findings. I realized that it could be important to consider how various foods interact with one another in an ecological way. This is to say that what has disappeared from the local food system is not just millets but a whole host of foods that, when consumed together, produced a unique diet and nutrient sources.

When discussing the food history in Chintaguda, most people said they had nothing back then. There long periods of hunger. They could not find enough food to eat. I can guess this period is either characterized by extreme malnourishment or even stretches of famine. This period was talked about quite bitterly and with great sadness. When I asked Maaramma what was served at her wedding, she initially said nothing. I kept pressing her because I knew "nothing" was impossible; she finally said they served barnyard millet. Satyamma said the same about her wedding feast; they served nothing, just sorghum and barnyard millet. She contrasted that to what they serve nowadays: chicken, biryani, pulao, and more. What is striking about this

description is that despite the presence of *some* food, people characterized it as an absence of food. It is likely true that there was not enough to eat for long periods, but the description of the foods they did eat indicate a disaccumulation of value with regards to these foods.

As a part of the typical narrative, we can follow the itinerary of millets and rice along caste lines. For ST people, and people in Chintaguda in particular, millets and other forest-based foodstuffs formed the majority if not totality of their food consumption before the 1980s. I have corroborated this with anecdotes from my mother who recalls my grandmother cooking finger millet ambali for the farmer laborers who worked on the family farms. But my mother clearly remembers not eating this ambali despite seeing it cooked in the house. Nor did anyone in my mother's immediate family; they ate rice. As such, in a BC family, a locally dominant agrarian caste of Koppula Velamas, millets and rice co-existed. When I interviewed Rajesh, a Polinatu Velama (another agrarian BC caste) man from Janagarla Valasa, a nearby village to Chintaguda, he stated that his family used to eat both finger millet and rice. In an OC community, there are little to no traces of millets. Discussions with my father and grandmother, both Niyogi Brahmins, confirm that they were aware of millets but millets such as finger millet or foxtail millets had been entirely absent from their daily lives in rural Andhra Pradesh. Furthermore, conversations with other Brahmins in urban India or the diaspora reveal that they either do not know many types of millets or have only recently encountered finger millet because of its nutritional content and fame as a nutraceutical against high blood pressure and diabetes.

In the linear process proposed by Bourdieu in Distinction (1984) and M. S. Srinivas (1956) in Sanskritization, marginalized castes adopt the practices of dominant castes. Conversations in Chintaguda do reflect this as they said that rice was not found anywhere previously. They constantly wanted rice because it had great taste. The village elders spoke

fondly of NTR's PDS program. Since then, the previous Congress government of Y.S.R. Reddy halved the price of quota rice[33] from the initial Rs. 2 per kilogram to Rs. 1 per kilogram. Despite all these macro-level reasons for the change in food habits in Chintaguda, there could be a simpler reason of just change. When Masayya, Murali, and I were wandering Buddhalva mountain, we came across a hard, small fruit that looked like a wood apple to me. Neither of them could tell me the name, but they said their elders used to eat it. The youth nowadays do not. I asked why and Masayya replied matter of factly: "Generationalu maaruthu, tastelu koodaa maaruthaayi kada" (As generations change, tastes, too, change, right). Previously, their elders did not cultivate as much with sedentary agriculture and did not have enough food; they had to forage in the forest. Now they are growing rice, getting rice, and have enough to eat. This resonates directly with what Sreenu said earlier about not being bound to traditional livelihoods: why should tradition be kept simply for tradition's sake? Why should they not have opportunities for change, too?

However, after thirty years with quota rice as a staple food, some people in Chintaguda have gradually developed distaste for it. Sreenu noted how it is not possible to eat rice without a curry or something to augment the tastelessness. Upon my return to the States, I noted how a family friend, Kishore Uncle, remarked that rice doesn't have any taste whatsoever. Indeed, people both in rural India and elsewhere are getting tired of mass-produced, low quality, polished (i.e. processed) rice. On a day-to-day level, this polished rice that people receive through the PDS does not last long once it is cooked. People who consume quota rice know that has been heavily processed and can taste the residues of the inorganic fertilizers and pesticides on the grains. Multiple people remarked how no matter how much rice they ate they were still not full.

[33] How they refer to rice received through the PDS rations.

Both Sreenu and his wife Swarna Akka noted this but they quickly followed these descriptions with the reality that they have no choice but to eat quota rice. Rajaswamy Anna pointed out the irony that they eat quota rice that is produced in distant places but sell the good quality rice they produce to the market. Ironically, there is a disaccumulation here on two scales: one with regards to taste and the second with regards to nutritional and gastronomic fulfillment. The promise of rice from the 1980s has failed on those counts.

It is impossible to say that this ennui with rice directly correlates with an increased interest in millets, but it could be one reason. Nowadays, Savaras in Chintaguda and outside of Chintaguda continually extol the benefits of millets. Millets give more strength; it is possible to feed a family with millets on three tenths of the quantity of rice. Distinct from the scientific studies on the nutrition of millets, these assertions come from the lived experiences of the elders in the village. The taste of finger millet ambali specifically was mentioned as really tasty. The naturally tangy, slightly sour taste of this ambali was well liked by most people in Chintaguda. Unfortunately, per their account, even if they wanted to eat millets, they cannot plant them in a shifting cultivation manner because the podus have all become cashew orchards. Others stated that they are too lazy now anyway to engage in proper shifting cultivation. One other reason could be that the association of finger millet as a health food has driven cultural and market interest into this crop, which translates to greater interest in Chintaguda. Finger millet can finally be sold because its exchange value has increased dramatically. Previously, it was sold for Rs. 1 per three kilograms. Nowadays, it fetches a rate of Rs. 50 per three kilograms or Rs. 18 per kilogram. This increase in market demand can be directly tied to an increase in urban demand for millets and in particular, finger millet (Nagaraj et al 2013: 79; Malleshi 2014: 6).

Just as in the urban population, finger millet as a response to high blood pressure and diabetes as an idea has permeated even Chintaguda, where, per my knowledge, no one has these issues. It made sense that Rajesh from Janagarla Valasa planted finger millet in the rabi off-season and cited these two health conditions; they are prevalent in plains land communities and in BC communities. Finger millet has been pushed by local vernacular media, government programs, and NGOs in the recent years as an antidote to these health conditions. In fact, Bhudevi Akka showed me a millets recipe books produced by the government with a wide variety of recipes. The telling part of these recipes is that they use the various millets as mere replacements for rice or wheat. This is such that the actual taste of the item would vary only a little. For example, foxtail millet is substituted for the vermicelli, a wheat product, to make semiya or seviya, a sweet dish. The consistency and the taste vary a little as a result, but the large quantity of sugar and butter used in the recipe mollifies any substantial difference. Such incorporations in dominant food cultures, which are essentially replacements, beg the question: what kinds of indigenous practices are being revived as a result of this collective revalorization project and for whom?

Intervention & Incorporation

The development intervention in Chintaguda was a combined effort. The Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion (INSIMP) is a nation-wide scheme that was started in 2011. It reached Srikakulam District in 2013 and to the Scheduled and non-Scheduled tribal areas through the ITDA. This scheme provides millet seeds and inputs such as organic fertilizers to farmers. The aforementioned recipe books were a part of the policy and awareness campaigns of INSIMP. CAVS facilitated the INSIMP intervention in Chintaguda and

other villages by acting as the conduit for distribution and implementation on behalf of the ITDA in non-Scheduled tribe areas. When I asked people in Chintaguda why they elected to participate in the INSIMP program, a common answer was: why leave something that the government is giving us. This reminded me of how they accepted the various other development interventions by the ITDA: planting cashew trees, banana trees, coconut trees, and more. The opportunity to plant millets may be exciting, but the mechanism of how the opportunity came about is the same as any other cash crop development intervention. Some families had some finger millet seeds saved but they decided not to use their own seeds and use the ones provided by the ITDA.

The RESMISA intervention in the local area was to the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), which targeted nutrition for children aged 0 to 6. The RESMISA intervention aimed to include finger millet into the nutritional programs for these children, also known as the Anganwadi scheme. While Chintaguda did not explicitly receive this Anganwadi intervention, the RESMISA intervention was taking place in nearby village where people in Chintaguda had relatives. The other RESMISA intervention was to place me in Chintaguda to study the sociocultural aspects of millets and associated indigenous knowledges.

The INSIMP program had a quiet impact on the village. The seeds distributed were finger millet and they received neem cakes, neem oil, and vermi-compost as fertilizers and pesticides. A total of twelve families received six kilograms of seed each. Of these twelve, only nine families harvested any finger millet at the end of the season – the crops of three of the families died completely due to a lack of water. Early on the transplanting of the millet saplings was delayed and proper pesticide was not applied, so the crop suffered from a disease afflicting the leaves. Otherwise, it was a low maintenance crop. Water was either directed from a spring or pumped from a nearby well using a rented pumped. The rainfed readiness of millets would not

stand in the drier rabi off-season. Lingaraju Anna tried using the organic inputs provided but they did not work by his reckoning. Therefore, he resorted to urea and DAP, the inorganic inputs that he has become accustomed to over the past several years. Jannayya Anna did the same as well. The hunt discussed in the previous chapter was supposedly carried out to protect the finger millet crop. This was, perhaps, the most labor-intensive activity associated with the crop. But as I mentioned previously, I doubt the hunt was conducted solely to protect to protect the finger millet crop. Otherwise, I practically forgot about the finger millet because there were so few labor outputs necessary for the crop. It was only in late April, when the time came to harvest it, did I remember the crop was still growing. The harvest was mostly done by women and mostly done in the morning time. It was done quietly and quickly with remarks of disappointment from many families about the poor crop.

Figure 3: Field of finger millet

By May, I was able to see the effects of the INSIMP program. Despite the leaf disease that afflicted the crop and resulted in poor crop yields, nearly every house that planted the finger millet was consuming ambali. Most families lamented about the lower yields because they knew from experience that finger millet yielded greater quantities. Nevertheless, the quantities they had were so great that they were passing out ambali to the incoming wedding guests. Many people in the village offered me ambali. The hot summer sun was beating down on us and everyone appreciated the cooling effect that ambali had when they ate it. This was one of the main attributes they associated with it even when they were simply generally describing it.

Although the relatives in Ippaguda, the research Elizabeth Finnis has produced, and pervasive narratives have emphasized the difficulty of processing and the burden on women's labor, this is not entirely the case in Chintaguda. Being Savara was frequently associated with and constituted by hard work. As Swarna Akka said: "Maa savara jaathikante anni panulu kashtamthone cheyyaali. Lekapothe avvadu, anthe. Maa jaathananthe, ilage, pani" (For us Savaras, all work has to be done with diligence otherwise it won't get done. That's just how it is for us, work.) Notions of doing konda pani or mountain work are strongly associated with Savara-ness as well; it is strongly rooted in the local mountainous ecology. There is always hard work to be done in Chintaguda, so processing millets is just another difficult activity to do. There is a finger millet mill in nearby Badakipeta, but only those who had money to pay the mill went there. The mill is privately owned and the price to process is Rs. 10 per kilogram. Others, typically women, processed the millets on their own. Millets were just one of the many crops they processed on their own, however. They processed red gram, horse gram, and medicinal plants using similarly difficult methods with the mortar and pestle and grinder.

An incidental and interesting point was when Lakkamma, Chinnababu Anna's wife, had ambali. I knew they did not plant any finger millet because they did not receive any seeds from the ITDA. They also could not plant it because they said they did not have oxen to till the land. Naturally, I was curious as to how she got it. She told me that she received nine kilograms of finger millet for helping Lakkai Anna and Yellamma's harvest their finger millet one day. At a general rate of Rs. 50 per three kilograms, this translated to fifty more rupees than she would have received had she been paid the standard daily wage rate. This of course is because Lakkai Anna and Chinnababu Anna shared the same grandfather, so they felt a closer kin connection to each other than to other families. But effects of this in kind payment were multiple: it ensured the food security of Lakkamma's family because the large quantity of the finger millet and the nutritional content is much better than polish rice they normally depend on. She told that her son Venkatesh and younger daughter Arudra especially like ambali while her eldest daughter Suseela does not.

Both Lakkamma and Chinnababu Anna are known to drink quite a bit – generally the jeelugu tody found in the mountainside. As a result they do not work on the mountain or on the fields as much as other families. Chinnababu Anna usually either hunts or makes money by selling the jeelugu tody. Any money he makes or Lakkamma would make from the wage labor system, he takes and spends on alcohol like brandy to drink even more. For this reason, Lakkamma generally shirks the wage labor system. To avoid this, she told that she sleeps in all day or simply does not leave home to do any work – either collecting their own cashews or doing wage labor for other families. As a result of this alcoholism, there is a tight cash flow for the family. Without cash, she is unable to buy a greater diversity of foodstuffs for her family. Therefore, when she received an in kind payment, a rather uncommon payment nowadays, she

was able to diversify her family's food intake without engaging the cash economy at that particular point.

Like Lakkamma, Girija was also paid in millet for her labor. She went away to an uncle's place in Ippametta to help his family with some agricultural tasks (she did not specify). She was paid for labor in money per the standard wage rate, but as she was leaving her uncle told her to take three kilograms of foxtail millet with her. She refused because she felt hesitant. Then the uncle scolded her strongly and made her take it with her when she left. Upon returning to Chintaguda, she was fairly pleased with having the foxtail millet because she kept saying how delicious cooking foxtail millet and rice together would be. As in the case of Lakkamma, kin-relations are important for the circulation of millets. In this case, there is an element of community food security because both families – Lakkamma's and Girija's – are known to be on the poorer end of the economic spectrum in Chintaguda and in their extended families. By giving millets valued more than the standard monetary wage rate, these families were looking out for their kin. Many scholars have documented the importance of inter-family food security coping and support mechanisms (Agarwal 1992b: 183; Chatterjee 2014: 56).

Historically, it was not just the millet grains that were consumed by people in Chintaguda. The husks of barnyard millets were also consumed. Called tavudu, these were cooked lightly with water and eaten as such when there were periods of little food. Nowadays, if there is tavudu, it is still kept and used to feed livestock. Although these millet husks do not constitute food security for people anymore, they are still an important addition to the nutritional diversity of livestock feed.

Another point of incorporation is in faith-based practices. After the increase in respectable faith practices like Christianity or Brahminical Hinduism, the general notion is that

millets have disappeared from local or traditional faith practices. As I was under that impression, I was surprised to find a large plate of finger millet at the dais of the church the one day I went in April. I asked Gopi what the finger millet was doing up front by the pastor and he said that it was a tithe to the church. It was entirely optional but if people had anything to tithe, they could do so. Thus, while traditional faith practices have disappeared, millets have not disappeared from faith-based practices entirely. Millets become incorporated in the various life strands of people even as these life strands (e.g. faith practice) change.

Incorporation into the market economy is most definitely one path for the INSIMP finger millet crop. Rajaswamy Anna said that he has been selling his punaadi chodi crop for eight years. He repeatedly cited how finger millet is good for high blood pressure and diabetes.[34] He sells it at a standard rate of Rs. 50 per three kilograms. Rajaswamy Anna is one of the more enterprising cultivators in Chintaguda and has calculated the returns on finger millet carefully. Relatives of people in Chintaguda who live in Rendigullam are a part of the Scheduled Tribal areas covered by the ITDA. These relatives have planted finger millet on a more extensive scale and received much greater yields. They planted finger millet with the intent of selling it; they recognized the cash value in it. Finger millet works well for them for two reasons: primarily because of its market value and secondarily because it can be cultivated on flat, unirrigated lands that are abundant and otherwise used as paddy fields anyway. Like the other crops they cultivate, finger millet is used for personal consumption as well. It fills them up, is a source of nutrition, and fetches a good price in the market.

This development intervention achieved success per its own goals by developing food and livelihood security. We have seen millets circulate through circuits of wage labor and kin-

[34] The rise of these non-communicable diseases provides a market opportunity for smallholders!

relations, faith practices, and of course, through the market economy. These are only some of the circuits that I have happened to observe. Very few people could detail all the different places that millets travel through their meshwork, but these dialectically informed logics have placed in millets at integral junctures within the meshwork. As people in Chintaguda become more enmeshed in capitalist logics, which now place greater value on finger millet as a commodity, the desire to grow finger millet will become stronger. However, I have noted the continued presence of the use value associated with millets or any crop production – still a mainstay of local logics. With increased incorporation into circuits of capital, there still may be points of cultural production – perhaps even entire cultural logics – that are undercurrents in the larger ecology of practice.

Cultural Logics

I posit that the use value still retained in crops, especially finger millets, can be a possible point of cultural production. The political economy narrative shows a straightforward teleology that the becoming-capitalist and respectable subjects of Chintaguda will embody such a narrative through their continued, repetitive practices. However, culture is not always a linear, one-way path. Not all forms of food, and those in particular associated with millets, go from dominant caste cultures to marginalized castes. Sanskritization is one way to view the diffusion of culture but a narrow one at that. That millets have disappeared means that they do not exist in discourses and logics that enable an understanding of value of existence (e.g. by noting they had nothing at their wedding feasts when they had barnyard millet or sorghum). They are still physically present in the dark nooks and crannies of houses in Chintaguda and other rural households. They are also present in the perplexed minds of people like Addai Thatha or the scoldings of Girija's uncle.

Millets remain in the local landscape of meaning in Chintaguda. When we were mixing concrete and rocks to pour on the roof of Totayya's new house in April, one man who was working kept sayings the mixture needed to have the consistency of (finger millet) ambali. The mixture should be blackish gray and thick. Everyone understood the reference, even the younger generation. This is just another unlikely place that millets arose in my time in Chintaguda. Using ambali, a millet dish, to describe something shows an unconstrained engagement with the dish itself – using it as a descriptor. It also reiterates, in the most unlikely of places – with concrete and rocks, the image and meaning of ambali (and by extension, millets). Lastly, it is significant to the local geo-cultural meshwork because outsiders such as myself may not be able to understand the reference.

Another unlikely place that millets came up was when Apparao Anna was recounting to me how previously (I will place this in the pre-1980s era) the forest was filled with dangerous animals like jaguars and wild boars among other animals. At that point, the houses were also made of mud and organic materials like branches and they did not have access to many guns. There would be a regular problem of jaguars busting into the livestock holding pen (also made of branches and a thatched roof) and eat a goat or two. To counter this, one person would sleep with the animals to keep guard. In this structure, they would keep stalks of pearl millet hanging about from the walls. These were as thick as sugarcane. When the predator came, they would light the stalk with fire and brandish it in front of the animal. Either the particular smoke from the burning millet stalk or the fire itself would be a deterrent to the jaguar and the livestock would be safe.

These pearl millets were cultivated in the forest through shifting cultivation. This use of a forest product, in particular millet, to engage with another forest being can be seen as a moment in the logics of forests. It is an activity of unique cultural production because aside from the use

value, there is an interpretative nature of this interaction. Sensing the jaguar coming and the jaguar being frightened by the burning millet stalk. It is almost a dance of trying to stand their ground and fend the other being off. Much like protecting the finger millet from the boar, this could be seen as a value maintenance practice in the aegis of capitalist logic but the difference here becomes that jaguars are dangerous to any life. Jaguars could and have before maimed and killed at least one person in Chintaguda. This interaction then becomes an interaction that is based in the logics of life – protecting it and continuing it.

Millets in the Meshwork

From my conversations and observations in Chintaguda and the surrounding villages, I found that millets have largely followed a standard narrative. To this end, my research is only one more case study in the studies of agrarian transition. This chapter, at minimum, is one of the few additions to social science literature about millet production and consumption. Nevertheless, I hope to have provided enough nuance to show that millets are found in different logics and ones that are, at times, independent from each other.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to locate millets through a post-structural lens – a lens that is more focused on the points of cultural production. Even though millets don't exist in "massy landscape" these days, an ideal place to find how they are constituted through interactions with their surroundings and surrounding beings, they still retain some cultural meaning and historical significance for people in Chintaguda. I have not detailed millets in emotional or aesthetic positions either. I have examined these positions as sites or possibilities for cultural production throughout this thesis but I have failed to find varied accounts of millets in relation to them. As they become increasingly cash crops – even with the attempts to preserve their use value –

millets are ripped metaphorically from the local ecology. We see here how capitalist interventions and apprehensions have had a negative effect on millets, but the disappearance of animals and the change in local ecology has also reduced the need for millets. Granted, the burning of the pearl millet stalk was not, perhaps, an integral and foremost use of millets, but it still marked a use and then a gradual disappearance of millets in the ecology of practices in Chintaguda. The importance of understanding such an activity and legibility of millets to people in Chintaguda is that it represents the varied possibilities of millets as just one direction of movement. Whereas international development projects and people such as myself can only see millets as sources of good nutrition, market products, or any other exchange value, the creative uses of millets are still remembered and recounted in Chintaguda.

Because I came to Chintaguda at time when the transition from a subsistence economy to a capitalist economy has congealed in meaningful ways, nearly all the instances I found millets were in modes of dialectical production as I discussed previously. Nevertheless, such dialectical precipitates i.e. capitalist logics are important developments over the course of the meshwork and provide a texture that we can easily grasp. Millets have a number of attractive exchange value qualities to them, which further reiterates the primacy of the market while simultaneously framing the project as a revalorization of indigenous livelihoods and knowledge.

Notwithstanding the larger narrative arcs and political economic processes, people in Chintaguda expressed hope to plant millets once again. Of course, it helped that Bhudevi Akka and CAVS emphasized millets strongly and the exchange values are strong such that millets are more clearly on their radar. But in reality, a return to shifting cultivation polycropping would be more difficult: a great amount of land on the hillside is covered in cashew trees that they do not want to cut down. Even as people in Chintaguda mentioned to me that they want to return millet

production in a shifting cultivation fashion by clearing new land, this became difficult for the 2014-2015 growing season because rogue elephants terrorized the forest surrounding Chintaguda. As dwellers on Forest Department land, they are formally banned from hunting and cannot address the issue of the elephants by themselves.[35] Ironically, now, it is not the capitalist modes of production that are steering them away from millet production through traditional shifting cultivation methods. They are trapped by their engagements with the forest as well as the Forest Department in seemingly immobilizing ways.

[35] A dead boar is less noticeable than a dead elephant.

Chapter 7
Chintaguda Saagu

Saagu, in Telugu, can mean two things. In one sense, it means cultivable in the sense of cultivable, fertile land or preparing land to cultivate. In another sense, it means to continue, to advance, or simply to go on. It is in both senses that I wish to conclude this narrative: both from a tangible, concrete cultivation perspective as well as in a more abstract sense that views life writ large in Chintaguda as a process that proceeds – much like the cultivation of crops. As beings in a meshwork of interwoven entities – life forms and non-life forms – we grow (as a broader sense of cultivate) and go on together.

Place

Fundamentally, this is a narrative about life in Chintaguda that I have deduced in my limited time there. This is not a complete narrative nor should I have any arrogance to presume that I should, uninvited, write a narrative about Chintaguda. But at base, from months of doing rather typical village ethnography, I want to make the point that Chintaguda is changing, growing, and developing in a multitude of ways. Although we can easily say that there is a loss of culture or traditions as a result of these changes, this angle to the story only covers a sliver of what is going on. If we adopt a lens that attends to growing[36] in the mutually constitutive sense, we can come to more nuanced understandings of the various changes that Chintaguda has been grappling with for the past twenty to thirty years.

---

[36] Growing is used here to differentiate from growth, a word loaded with economic and linear baggage. It is also used to differentiate from development, which has been used to mean a circuit of capital among other things in different contexts.

As it exists along and as so many interwoven threads, paths in constant movement, Chintaguda cannot be boxed into any one narrative. I jokingly summarize the thesis of my research to my family members by telling them it's about not stereotyping. Translated to non-academic jargon, so-called laymen's terms, this is indeed one major point I want to make. The complexity in Chintaguda is not only reflected by the lives of people but the ecology that envelops it. With a myriad of crops, plants, and life forms in Chintaguda, interactions compound into a daily compendium of ecology of practice. As such, characterizing Chintaguda as smallholder capitalism, adivasi/indigenous livelihoods, food sovereign communities, or Sanskritized culture, would be partial and incomplete. I would say this is extending a basic human courtesy to people I have lived and worked with: to acknowledge and attempt to understand the complexity in their lives.

To the extent that this work is about Chintaguda, it is a work about change in Chintaguda. The most salient sociological impression I have of Chintaguda is people are hedging their bets amidst all this change. Not just in Chintaguda, but places with other Savaras or more broadly, places that are in such transition are responding similarly. Kanaka Himabindu Pottumuthu, too, finds that: "They [Savara villagers of Maanapuram] will try to grab any kind of occupation which approaches them in any form" (Pottumuthu 2013: 70). People in Chintaguda plant crops but make decisions based on their use value as well. They leave the village for monetary reasons (among others) but return at their convenience as well. They engage other castes in mutually beneficial ways while standing firmly on their own. There are so many seemingly mundane activities in Chintaguda that factored in quietly significant ways in life in the village. Notions of aesthetic preferences, emotional engagements with or against, and embodied experiences are bases that lead many people in Chintaguda to make decisions the way they did. They place a foot

in as many doors as possible in tactical ways that they hope will pay off later. In a sense, this is a philosophy of polycropping that is organically present in the village taken from the cultivation context to the context of development or change more broadly. Multiple people in Chintaguda noted that with the traditional polycropping on the podus, even if one crop fails for whatever reason, the other crops would come through. Viewed in this regard, both the definitions of "Chintaguda saagu" come together to hint at the pathways of change.

Theory

Despite the seemingly "heavy" inclusion of theorists and the imperfect mix of them, I want to stress that these theorists are present in this narrative because of various interconnected everyday engagements in Chintaguda. Keeping with the idea that Chintaguda cannot and should not be boxed in, I have drawn upon several scholars whose theories are useful in certain regards. It is not my intention to do justice to the scholars – many of whom, like me, are producing scholarship in the context of academia, intentionally or not for their career purposes. It is my intention, by using certain theories or concepts at certain points in this thesis, to stitch together these mundane moments in Chintaguda in a way that I can communicate to initially the academic community to receive my degree and then communicate to a larger audience, including Chintaguda. For this reason, I am not beholden to any one theorist.

Just as in life, they exist in a meshwork. Many times, I found scholars saying the same things albeit in different words. The repetitive occurrence of certain concepts resonated with me and I was able to stitch them together on a discursive level. Broadly, there are two schools of thought that I engage in this thesis, as is evident by Chapters 3 and 4. The first is a poststructuralist view of life that seeks to move past dualist constructions and rethink life in a

more relational sense. The second is a Marxist view that is grounded in dialectical materialism at base and cognizant of relations of uneven power. My initial tensions with the first group, especially Ingold and Kohn, were the lack of engagement with institutions of power. Likewise, I was hesitant about Marxist ideations that subsume everything into dynamics of power. Neither school of thought did Chintaguda justice. For this reason, I used concepts partially and reworked them as necessary. For example, Ingold's meshwork is a wonderful idea that moves away from objective notions of being and gives new insights to ways of relating. Unfortunately, he does not consider mechanisms of power and unevenness in nearly any of his major works, which is rather ignorant of the realities of life (a topic he seems to be concerned with). Therefore, I have tried to develop a texture for the meshwork that emphasizes the unevenness of it. Another example would be Bourdieu's notion of habitus. Many scholars – some of whom I cited in Chapter 4 – were deeply disappointed in the seemingly singular perspective he takes towards the genesis of creative practice i.e. that it is all located within the habitus. For this reason, I have engaged ideas by Willis, Gidwani, and Ramamurthy to demonstrate that points of cultural production can exist, if partially, outside of matrices of power. Lastly, while Nyerges tries to marry two schools of thought – that of practice and the ecology – he is only useful insofar as he is explicitly focused on the mundane and insignificant. His impartial conceptualization left much room for students such as myself to take the ecology of practice in varied directions. To recap: each scholar has their own shortcomings.

Although they seem separate and I have separated the two, much as bodies leak (Butler 1990; Ingold 2011), the thoughts and theories discussed in thesis have also leaked into each other. There are traces of Marxist inflections in Ingold's work; Haraway, who broadens Marxist thought, influences Kohn; Giard is a part of French Marxism; and so on. Conversely, Gidwani, a

major influence for this entire thesis but who features more prominently in chapter 4, is taken with ideas of Gilles Deleuze and Brian Mausummi, who also feature in Ingold's theorizations. Then there are scholars I have completely avoided to lessen the scope of my work but nevertheless feature consistently in multiple sources I draw from: Gilles Deleuze, Gregory Bateson, Charles Pierce, Georg Hegel, and more. Upon on closer inspection, having understood the more philosophical underpinnings of each of these theorists, it is unsurprising that there are repetitions in their works. It is the philosophical underpinnings that form the binding logics of these works. Even though I have divided them between two chapters, themes of life, movement, ecology, activity/practice, institutions, subjectivity, power, aesthetics, and emotions come through across all these scholars. While I have not fully quoted or cited every scholar (e.g. Haraway or Ambedkar), their ideas nevertheless come through in my chapters. Unwittingly, I have chosen to work with scholars who push the spongy boundaries of the schools of thought they are traditionally associated with to come into better ways of understanding life. Indeed, engagements between poststructuralism and Marxism have evolved over the course of the past three decades, so I could have chosen any number of other scholars to engage but these happen to be the ones readily available from my education. Wading through them has been both as intentional and serendipitous as my route to Chintaguda.

While this work is about life in Chintaguda, I have tried to engage these scholars in a unique way to come upon understanding this life. The goal was and continues to be to look at the practices and not look for testing theories. Empirical research, in that regard, is quite inductive. "And people and the social worlds they navigate are more complicated and unfinished than philosophical schemes tend to account for" (Biehl 2014: 105). Therefore, it is only possible to

employ each scholar and their theorizations in a partial manner to arrive at fuller pictures of what is going on in Chintaguda.

There are two main theoretical concepts I sought to elucidate in this document. One is meshwork and the other is cultural logics. The idea of the meshwork is really just a medium through which we can describe the entirety of life and show how all things are, in some way or form, connected simply because they co-exist. Because it is a medium, it is divisible and unique to each individual entity however that each are broken up. However, because nothing on earth exists in isolation (e.g. even the smallest single celled organisms have to exist in some environmental setting), the meshwork is the medium that connects us all. It is simply a metaphor I use to describe everything in life; these "things" can be activities, material objects, structural institutions, coherent logics, and more. The main contribution and need to use the specific term, meshwork, is because Ingold does infuse the term with an intentional focus on the environmental aspect of it, one that is unique to the place based setting. Therefore, it is possible to think of meshwork as both ecological as relating to the natural environment but also think of the interrelations that comprise the meshwork in a metaphorically ecological way as well.

Even though I started with cultural logics because my background reading led me there, I stuck with the concept because of what I found in Chintaguda. So, what are cultural logics? Mediated engagements or activities that are found in non-dialectical, non-antagonistic settings are points of cultural production. These are typically mundane and insignificant activities that not yet apprehended by dominant logics. These points of cultural production may or may not be associated with each other and may not even come together. But those that do, examined in concert through their various reiterations and repetitions with difference, can spell the undergirdings of certain cultural logics. From my understandings in Chintaguda, they are most

easily found in engagements with the environment. One example found in the literature but not explicitly stated as such is Kohn's idea of how forests think (Kohn 2013). Cultural logics are useful because they are seemingly unintelligible to the workings of dominant logics be they capitalist or patriarchal or caste not yet subsumed working in concert with each other. Unintelligibility is a concept that nearly all the scholars look to – Gidwani, Ramamurthy, Butler, Bourdieu, Giard. This notion of unintelligibility (to capital for example) and cultural logics broadly can undoubtedly be questioned. However, I will not engage that debate in this document as it falls outside the scope of my (limited) objective.

Learnings

I have not provided one clear meshwork model in this entire discussion. Nor will I place millets physically within this absent model. That is not the goal. The cultural logics I have described run through the meshwork that produce, at times, violations to constraining fields of engagements. These fields, either dialectically or relationally constituted, apprehend basic engagements of everyday life into their own instituted logics and thereby produce their own repetitions of instituted practices. There are a number of different places – both physically and discursively – where these various practice converge or diverge per the various logics at play.

I covered just a few basic strands of logics however briefly and perfunctorily – that of the forest, of caste, of culture, of capital, of gender. I realize that I have not fully engaged a feminist standpoint in developing the various logics. I also acknowledge that locating caste post-structurally may give the impression that I am eliding power from a more rigorous understanding of caste dynamics. Both these assertions can be justified but I wish to state two defenses. Despite looking for gendered differences based on entrenched patriarchy, I was only able to find a few

(entirely relevant to this narrative). I presented caste through a post-structural lens to show that the relations of power are being contested and at a very local level, inter-caste relations are slightly more relational than they are extremely hierarchal (and by extension, dialectical).

I juxtaposed only two of the aforementioned logics: cultural logics and capitalist logics to see how these logics may interplay. I realize my evidence may be weak at times, especially with regards to the cultural logics. But such wisps of "evidence" are more difficult to come by than those that are already constituted by more pervasive, typically dominant logics. A second reason is that methodologically, I have been weak in terms of looking to the "natural environment" in a closer fashion. For this reason, I have not been able to capture the entirety of millets (should that be a really viable project).

In terms of presentation, because I have chosen to focus on really mundane, seemingly minute instances of time, turns of phrases or attitudes, this thesis ended up being quite long. In the presentation of these micro-narratives or brief moments, I hoped to string together various points into lines (i.e. logics). These lines themselves are not static entities; rather, they are contingent on the logics that bring them together and, as the meshwork changes, takes them apart (Gidwani 2008). Ultimately, this is a narrative about life in Chintaguda. For that reason, even though there may be, at times, extensive theoretical discussions, it is my irrepressible hope that this document is seen as much as a narrative about Chintaguda as it is a theoretical commentary.

From a less complex ecology of practice perspective, I have shown how a number of interconnected phenomena such as kin relations, circular migration, loans, education, faith practices, and repetitions of pani broadly defined that point to how although they occupy a significant part of people's lives in Chintaguda, millets, in particular finger and foxtail millet, turn up in unexpected ways. The development intervention from INSIMP most definitely helped

a rejuvenated circulation of finger millet in the various life paths but millets also exist, if fleetingly and unimportantly, in the memories of people as well. Despite the intervention, the larger mechanisms of change, overarching logics of becoming have not been altered. However, this is also not the intention of the specific INSIMP program i.e. to fundamentally alter the way people move about their lives. To the extent that it sought to promote small millets production and consumption, INSIMP was a success.

Some of the key learnings from this project are:

1) People who cultivate and consume millets do not place as great an importance to millets as the RESMISA project does. Millets are viewed with ambivalence and perplexity or confusion. In this way, attitudes about production and consumption are not explicitly positive or negative. Millets have to be contextualized in the relation to everything else in their lives.

2) Millets are locally understood in different ways, not just as food or sources of nutrition but as organic material, as markers of social class, as metaphors, and more. To this end, when a project such as RESMISA aims to address an issue about an object, the project needs to address not only the various points in the life cycle of the object but also the various meanings the object can be. Essentially, this means to look at the object not as an object but subjectively.

3) People in Chintaguda seek improvement or development in their lives that comes in the form of being closely connected with the cash economy and capitalist logics. Some important needs of the village that take precedence over millets are: the development of a road, the need for better education, the continuation of an affordable and robust PDS and other government programs. Despite these needs and desires, there are still local cultural logics that are present that undergrid this overarching capitalist development. These logics inform micro-moments of activity that give rise to interruptions or even violations to a straightforward development path.

Abiding

The reoccurring question for me as I continue to write this document is "who am I writing for?" As I have discussed in the introduction, there are a number of stakeholders in this project. And as I have told everyone in Chintaguda, the reality is that I am materially benefitting the most from this entire exercise. I do not pretend that the ultimate goal isn't for myself. In submitting this thesis and publishing academically, there is a direct self-interest. It is a direct reproduction of the "empirical shudra theoretical Brahmin" dynamic (Guru 2002).

Nevertheless, after having lived in Chintaguda and growing with the people there – however briefly but really profoundly – I want to abide by Chintaguda. This means, in one regard per Ismail's definition, taking a stance. I may be aligned with principles of food sovereignty, utopian anti-capitalism, and against the cultural hegemony of Brahminical heteropatriarchy on a philosophical level, but these are not what, in practice, I would advocate for Chintaguda. This is simply because people in Chintaguda, cognizant of these principles, seek something different. Despite my aversion to English language hegemony, I provided brief English lessons to children and youth in the village. Despite my critiques of institutionalized Western education, I see how my own family has benefitted from it and support the same efforts for my friends in Chintaguda. Despite my rosy notions of subsistence farming and liberation from capitalist modes of production, I realize this is not and should not be a viable option for people in Chintaguda. Indeed, principles of food sovereignty are not universally applicable or always viable (Louis 2015). For these reasons, I seek to advocate for a nuanced perspective in my stances on the broad themes of agriculture, caste and gender relations, capitalism, marginalized foods, and development.

This thesis is just a first step. I realize that much of this document will be esoteric for many people simply because of the academic jargon. It will be incomprehensible to most in Chintaguda because it is in English. My next step is to write something shorter and (hopefully!) simpler in English – perhaps for publication. Simultaneously, I will work on a brief synopsis of this entire argument in Telugu at least to deliver to Chintaguda. I realize the mother tongue there is Savara and only maybe 50% or 60% of the village may be fluent enough to read Telugu, but this is a first step on a more direct attempt to abide. It is my hope that such a document in Telugu would help them present issues that they face on a daily basis to people in power in order to effect change. At the very least, they will know what came of my experience in the village and how I attempt to abide by them. In the continuation and cultivation of life, I hope to go back and spend some more considerable time in the village. If not, even attending the weddings, like all the other people who leave the village and come back for weddings, would be meaningful.

Abiding takes a certain amount of enmeshing. This means a lived, embodied experience. Living in Chintaguda was an incredible experience. Even though it was for just four months, there was a process of home-making involved, if only through the daily routines of drawing water from the well, taking shits, walking to and from the village and so on. Predictably, it helped me broaden my horizons but in complicated ways. I realized that many of my friends or aunties and uncles in Chintaguda went out and did manual labor or catering jobs in urban centers. But I engaged with them on an inter-personal level with good (or great?) rapport. During many moments in my research, I felt like I almost became pretty integrated into the village (even though this is pretty impossible). But after having such deep, emotional almost connections, going back to life in urban centers then became a little awkward for me. Seeing wait staff at my cousin's wedding or construction workers building the apartment building my parents bought a

unit in – I realized that any one of those workers could be a friend from Chintaguda. Indeed at my cousin's wedding, I was talking to a bunch of kids (they were hardly 20 years old) who were from the Kotturu area. But at the same time, the context we met in means that we would not be friends. Really, how can I develop close bonds with overworked wait staff over the course of a family wedding when there are other people I've known there for my entire life? In Chintaguda, I knew the entire family and then extended relatives too by the end of my stay. I knew their daily lives, some secrets, and personalities – a wide array of interactions that really fully humanizes one person to the other. How can that happen at a wedding? Of course, I'm not saying that I treat random wedding wait staff as subhuman; but they are simply people I do not know. Conversely, I kept my interactions with the Kapus from Badakipeta brief and curt but with full knowledge that those pot-bellied BC men who give off sleazy vibes with their gold rings and greed could be my maternal uncles. I purposely kept a one-dimensional interaction with these Kapu men and attributed only exploitative qualities to them. I realized these meshworks are not always easy to traverse or bind together and it is possible to accept that there is no easy answer to this. That I was at least minimally cultivated in Chintaguda and that living there made a profound impact on my continuation through life will attune me to these reoccurring issues and require me to confront them, at the very least on an abstract level.

I have tried to present "evidence" from some cases of emotions and emotional ties or relationships. The reader can find such "evidence" across any number of academic or similarly story-like narratives. Until they are embodied, reading about other people's emotions is almost meaningless. I realized that because I too have been enmeshed into these emotions and until I felt them and later, remembered them, this did not become clear. As I grew close to people in Chintaguda – and so many, really – there were anxieties that I will forget them when I leave

Chintaguda. Subhamma Atta, Maaramma Yuyung, Bunnamma Yuyung…so many others repeatedly told me that. Initially, these were remarks reinforcing our difference. Later on, these became remarks of regret. When I was leaving Chintaguda, both yuyungs, Maaramma and Bunnamma, started tearing up and stayed back in the village. There were disappointed looks in the faces of many of the dadalangs. Kasakka cried a little and forced a twenty-rupee note into my hand. Like they gave away a bride in the wedding season, nearly half the village came down from the mountain to Palempalle to see me off. After they packed my belongings in the car, I got in and started waving bye to them. As the car pulled away along the dirt road, I, too, felt the pangs of sadness and started tearing up. This is the practice of what it means to become enmeshed.

Glossary of Terms

Telugu

akka	older sister
ambali	finger millet porridge
anna	older brother
atta	paternal aunt
baagaarlu	patrilineal cousins
chuttarikam	relationship or kinship
jadipinchadam	to shake up
jeelugu	a type of tody tree
konda pani	mountain activity
pani	work or activity
podu	plot of land in shifting cultivation
tavudu	grain husks
vanta penta	cooking and cleaning shit
varsa	cross cousins

Savara

buroi	foxtail millet
daakojagbar	place to sit and discuss
dadalang	paternal uncle
rajatar	king's flower tree
yayang	maternal aunt
yuyung	grandmother

Note: I follow the stylistic lead from Kamala Visveswaran and choose not to emphasize Telugu or Savara words in my writing through the use of italics or diacritics. "In keeping with my belief that English (as any language) is the product of particular historical, linguistic or cultural collisions, and is continually being transformed by other vocabularies, I have also chosen not to emphasize the "foreignness" of Tamil or Hindi words in the text through the use of italics or underlining conventions" (Visveswaran 1994: 180).

References

Aggarwal, A. (2011). "Implementation of Forest Rights Act, changing forest landscape, and "politics of REDD+" in India." Resources, Energy, and Development **8**(2): 131-148.

Agarwal, B. (1992a). "The Gender and Environment Debate." Feminist Studies **18**(1): 119-154.

Agarwal, B. (1992b). Gender relations and food security: coping with seasonality, drought and famine in South Asia. Unequal Burden: Economic Crises, Persistent Poverty, and Women's Work. Oxford, Westview Press.

Ahmed, S. (2014). The Cultural Politics of Emotions (2nd ed). Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press.

Ambedkar, B. R. (1936). The Annihilation of Caste. Bombay, Self Published.

Asad, T. (1973). Introduction. Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter. T. Asad. London, Ithaca Press.

Barbeau, W. E. and K. W. Hilu. (1993). "Protein, calcium, iron, and amino acid content of selected wild and domesticated cultivars of finger millet." Plant Foods for Human Nutrition. **43**: 97-104.

Baviskar, A. (2004). In The Belly of The River: Tribal Conflicts Over Development in The Narmada Valley (2nd ed). New Delhi, Oxford University Press.

Behera, S. (2004). Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Livelihood: A Comparative Study of Selected Villages of Rayagada District of Orissa. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Jawarharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Biehl, J. (2014). Ethnography in the Way of Theory. The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage Philosophy. V. Das, M. Jackson, A. Kleinman, B. Singh. Durham, Duke University Press.

Bhullar, L. (2008). "The Indian Forest Rghts Act 2006: A Critical Appraisal." Law, Environment and Development Journal **4**(1).

Bourdieu, P. (1973). Cultural Reproduction and Social Reproduction. Knowledge, Education, and Cultural Change. R. Brown. London, British Sociological Association**:** 71-112.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). Outline of a Theory of Practice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste. Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Butler, J. (1990). Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York, Routledge.

Butler, J. (2000). Restaging the Universal: Hegemony and the Limits of Formalism. Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left. J. Butler, E. Laclau, S. Žižek. New York, Verso.

Butler, J. (2011). Bodies That Matter: On the discursive limits of "sex" (2nd ed). New York, Routledge.

Campbell, B. (2010). Beyond Cultural Models of the Environment. Culture and the Environment in the Himalaya. A. Guneratne. London, Routledge.

Certeau, M. d. (1984). The Practice of Everyday Life. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Chatterjee, M. (2014). "An Improved PDS in a 'Reviving' State: Food Security in Koraput, Odisha." Economic & Political Weekly **49**(45): 49-59

Chibber, V. (2013). How Does the Subaltern Speak? An Interview with Vivek Chibber. Jacobin **10**. Retrived from https://www.jacobinmag.com/2013/04/how-does-the-subaltern-speak/

Deccan Development Society (DDS). (2009). Millets: Future of Food & Farming. Hyderabad.

Deb, D., et al. (2014). Forests as Food Producing Habitats: An Exploratory Study of Uncultivated Foods and Food & Nutrition Security of Adivasis of Odisha. Koraput, Odisha, Living Farms.

Devi, P. B., et al. (2014). "Health benefits of finger millet (*Eleusine coracana* L.) polyphenols and dietary fiber: a review." Jounral of Food Science Technology. **51**(6): 1021-1040.

Donthi, R. (2014). "Tribal Development Programs in Andhra Pradesh – An Overview." The Dawn Journal **3**(1): 817-837.

Dutta, B. and B. Ramaswami. "Targeting and Efficiency in the Public Distribution System: Case of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra." Economic & Political Weekly **36**(18): 1524-1532.

Food and Agricultral Organization (FAO). (1980). Improvement and productio nof maize, sorghum and millet: vol. 1 – general principles. Rome, Italy.

Food and Agricultral Organization (FAO). (1995). Sorghum and millets in human nutrition. Rome, Italy.

Food and Agricultral Organization (FAO). (2001). Millet: Post Harvest Operations. Sokone University of Agriculture, S. Kajuna.

Food and Agricultral Organization (FAO) and International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). (1996). The world sorghum and millet economics: Facts, trends and outlook. Rome, Italy and Patancheru, India.

Finnis, E. (2006). "Why Grow Cash Crops? Subsistence Farming and Crop Commercialization in the Kolli Hills, South India." American Anthropologist **108**(2): 363-369.

Finnis, E. (2007). "The political ecology of dietary transitions: Changing production and consumption patterns in the Kolli Hills, India." Agriculture and Human Values **24**: 343-353.

Finnis, E. (2008). "Economic Wealth, Food Wealth, and Millet Consumption: Shifting Notions of Food, Identity, and Development in South India." Food, Culture & Society. **11**(4): 463-484.

Finnis, E. (2009). ""Now It Is An Easy Life": Women's Accounts of Cassava, Millets, and Labor in South India." Culture & Agriculture **31**(2): 88-94.

Geervani, P. and B. O. Eggum. (1989). "Nutrient composition and protein quality of minor millets." Plant Foods for Human Nutrition. **39**: 201-208.

Giard, L. (1998). Doing-Cooking. The Practice of Everyday Life Volume 2: Living & Cooking. M. d. Certeau, L. Giard and P. Mayol. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Gidwani, V. (2008). Capital, Interrupted. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Gidwani, V. and K. Sivaramakrishnan. (2003). "Circular Migration and the Spaces of Cultural Assertion." Annals of the Association of American Geographers. **93**(1): 186-213.

Gordon, L. (1984). "Paul Willis: Education, Cultural Production and Social Reproduction." British Journal of Sociology of Education **5**(2): 105-115.

Gull, A., et al. (2014). "Significance of Finger Millet in Nutrition, Health and Value Added Products: A Review." Journal of Environmental Science, Computer Science, and Engineering & Technology **3**(3): 1601-1608.

Guru, G. (2002). "How Egalitarian Are the Social Sciences in India?" Economic & Political Weekly **37**(50): 5003-5009.

Haraway, D. (1991). Simians, Cyborgs, and Women. New York, Routledge.

Hardiman, D. (2002). Christianity and the Adivasis of Gujarat. Labour, Marginalisation, and Migration: Studies on Gujarat, India. G. Shah, M. Rutten, H. Streefkerk. New Delhi, Sage Publications.

Ingold, T. (2000). The Perception of the Environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill. London, Routledge.

Ingold, T. (2011). Being Alive. London, Routledge.

Ismail, Q. (2005). Abiding by Sri Lanka: On Peace, Place, and Postcoloniality. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Jenkins, L. D. (2003). Identity and Identification in India: Defining the disadvantaged. Longon, Routledge.

Kapadia, K. (1996). Siva and Her Sisters. Delhi, Oxford University Press.

Karthikeyan, M., et al. (2010). Revalorizing Small Millets: Enhancing the Food and Nutritional Security of Women and Children in Rainfed Regions of South Asia Using Underutilized Species, CIFSRF: 1-98.

Kohn, E. (2013). How Forests Think: Towards an Anthropology Beyond the Human. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Lefebvre, H. (2004). Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life. New York, Continuum.

Li, T. M. (2007). The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics. Durham, Duke University Press.

Lin, H. (2015). Vanua as Environment: Conservation, Farming, and Development in Waitabu, Fiji (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh.

Louis, E. (2015). ""We Plant Only Cotton to Maximize Our Earnings": The Paradox of Food Sovereignty in Rural Telangana, India." The Professional Geographer. **0**(0): 1-9.

Madden, R. (2010). Being Ethnographic: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography. London, Sage.

Malleshi, N. G. (1983). Processing of Small Millets for Food and Industrial Uses. Small Millets in Global Agriculture. A. Seetharam, K. W. Riley, G. Harinarayana. New Delhi, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.

Malleshi, N. G. (2014). Post-harvest processing of millets for value addition. Retrived here: http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic868074.files/Millet%20processing%20and%20botanical%20names.doc.

Marx, K. (1887). Capital Volume 1. Moscow, Progress Publishers.

Marx, K. (1973). Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy. New York, Random House.

Mencher, J. (1978). Agriculture and Social Structure in Tamil Nadu. Durham, Duke University Press.

Mies, M. (1986). Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour. London, Zed Books.

Miller, B. (2013). Speaking Like a Brahmin: Social Aspects of a Register of Spoken Telugu (Unpublished masters thesis). Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

Narayan, K. (1993). "How Native Is a "Native" Anthropologist?" American Anthropologist **95**(3): 671-686.

Nagaraj, N., et al. (2013). "Sorghum and Pearl Millet Economy of India: Future Outlook and Options." Economic & Political Weekly. **48**(52): 74-81.

Najmabadi, A. (2005). Women with Mustaches and Men without Beards: Gender and Sexual Anxieties of Iranian Modernity. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Narayana Rao, V. (2007). Girls For Sale. Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

Navayan, K. (2015). "Caste in Modern Global Context: Perception of International Aid Agencies." International Journal of Research in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management **3**(1): 121-132.

Ninan, K. N. and H. Chandrashekar. (1993). "Green Revolution, Dryland Agriculture and Sustainability: Insights from India." Economic & Political Weekly **28**(12/13): A2-A7.

Nyerges, A. E. (1997). Introduction - The Ecology of Practice. Ecology of Practice. A. E. Nyerges. New York, Routledge.

Ortner, S. (1989). High religion: A Cultural and Political History of Sherpa Buddhism. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Pandian, A. (2015, March 2nd). The Ecology of What We Write. [Web log]. Retrived from: http://savageminds.org/2015/03/02/the-ecology-of-what-we-write/

Pellissery, S. and S. K. Jalan (2011). "Towards transformative social protection: a gendered analysis of the Employment Guarantee Act of India (MNREGA)." Gender & Development **19**(2): 283-294.

Polanyi, K. (1957). The Economy as Instituted Process. Trade and Market in the Early Empires. K. Polanyi, C. M. Arensberg, H. W. Pearson.

Pottumuthu, K. H. (2013). Economic Organization Among Savaras of Maanapuram, Seethampet Mandal, Srikakulam District, Andhra Pradesh (Unpublished masters thesis). University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

Pushpamma, P. (1983). Utilization of Small Millets in Andhra Pradesh – India. Small Millets in Global Agriculture. A. Seetharam, K. W. Riley, G. Harinarayana. New Delhi, Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.

Rajamma, G. (1993). "Changing from Subsistence to Cash Cropping: Sakaramma's Story." Focus on Gender **1**(3): 19-21.

Ramachandraiah, C. and A. Venkateswarlu (2011). Dispossessing Tribals and the Poor from Lands: Land Laws and Administration in Andhra Pradesh, India. Hyderabad, Centre for Economic and Social Studies.

Ramamurthy, P. (2010). "Why Are Men Doing Floral Sex Work? Gender, Cultural Reproduction, and the Feminization of Agriculture." Signs **35**(2): 397-424.

Ramamurthy, P. (2011). "Rearticulating caste: the global cottonseed commodity chain and the paradox of smallholder capitalism in south India." Environment and Planning A **43**: 1035-1056.

Ramamurthy, P. (2014). Marriage, Labor Circulation, and Smallholder Capitalism in Andhra Pradesh. Marrying in South Asia: Shifting Concepts, Changing Practices in a Globalising World. R. Kaur and R. Palriwala. New Delhi, Orient BlackSwan.

Ramanujan, A. K. (1992). Annayya's Anthropology. From Cauvery to Godavari: Modern Kannada Short Stories. R. Sharma. New Delhi, Penguin Books Ltd.

Ravindran, G. (1992). "Seed protein of millets: amino acid composition, proteinase inhibitors and in-vitro protein digestibility." Food Chemistry. **44**: 13-17.

Razavi, S. (2009). "Engendering the political economy of agrarian change." Journal of Peasant Studies **36**(1): 197-226.

Reddy, M. G., et al. (2010). The Making of Andhra's Forest Underclass: A Historical Institutional Analysis of Forest Rights Deprivations. Institutions for Pro-Poor Group Discussion Papers. Manchester, School of Environment & Development, University of Manchester.

Reddy, M. G., et al. (2010). Obstructed Access to Forest Justice: an Institutional Analysis of the Implementation of Rights Reform in Andhra's Forested Landscapes. Institutions for Pro-Poor Group Discussion Papers. Manchester, School of Environment & Development, University of Manchester.

Salomeyesudas, B. and P. V. Satheesh (2009). Traditional Food System of Dalit in Zaheerabad Region, Medak District, Andhra Pradesh, India. Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems: The Many Dimensions of Culture, Diversity and Environment for Nutrition and Health. H. V. Kuhnlein, B. Erasmus and D. Spigelski. Rome, Food and Agriculture Organization**:** 185-208.

Samata v. State of Andhra Pradesh and others. (1997). Civil Appeal Nos. 4601-02 of 1991(1) with Civil Appeal No. 4603.

Singh, N. (2013). "The affective labor of growing forests and the becoming of environmental subjects: Rethinking environmentality in Odisha, India." Geoforum. **47**: 189-198.

Singh, P. and R. S. Raghuvanshi. "Finger millet for food and nutritional security." African Journal of Food Science. **6**(4): 77-84.

Shah, A. (2010). In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous Politics, Environmentalism, and Insurgency in Jharkhand, India. New Delhi, Oxford University Press.

Sharma, B. V. (1992). Formal Education Among The Savara (An Ethnographic Study). (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.

Sharma, M. (2012). "Dalits and Indian Environmental Politics." Economic & Political Weekly. **47**(23): 46-52.

Shiva, V. (1988). Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Survival in India. New Delhi, Kali for Women.

Shiva, V. (1991). The Violence of the Green Revolution: Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics. London, Zed Books.

Srinivas, M. N. (1956). "A Note on Sanskritization and Westernization." The Far Eastern Quarterly. **15**(4): 481-496.

Stacey, J. (1988). "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?" Women's Studies International Forum **11**(1): 21-27.

Thurston, E. (1909). Castes and Tribes of Southern India. Madras, Government Press.

Tsing, A. (2005). Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Upadhya, C. B. (1988). "The Farmer-Capitalists of Coastal Andhra Pradesh." Economic & Political Weeky **23**(27 & 28).

Upadhya, C. B. (1997). "Social and Cultural Strategies of Class Formation in Coastal Andhra Pradesh." Contributions to Indian Sociology. **31**(2): 169-193

Vidyasagar, S. A. (2012). “A Saga of Three Villages in Andhra Pradesh.” Economic & Political Weekly **47**(1): 105-111.

Viswanathan, G. (2002). Outside the Fold: Conversion, Modernity and Belief. Princton, Princeton University Press.

Visweswaran, K. (1994). Fictions of Feminist Ethnography. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.

Washbrook, D. A. (1975). The development of caste organization in south India 1880-1925. South India: Political institutions and political change, 1880-1940. C. J. Baker and D. A. Washbrook. Delhi, Macmillan Company.

Williams, R. (1977). Marxism and Literature. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Willis, P. (1977). Learning to Labor. Farnborough, Saxon House.

Willis, P. (1981). "Cultural Production is Different from Cultural Reproduction is Different from Social Reproduction is Different from Reproduction." Interchange **12**(3-4): 48-67.

WS 10 Class of 2009. (2009). Isn’t This Plate Indian?: Dalit Histories and Memories of Food. Pune, Krantijyoti Savitribai Phule Women’s Studies Center University of Pune.

Appendices

Appendix A: Scripts

1. Recruitment Script Page 195
2. Informed Consent Script for Individuals Page 196
3. Informed Consent Script for Focus Groups Page 198

Appendix B: Research Instruments

1. Individual Questions Page 200
2. Focus Group Questions Page 201
3. Labor Migration Questions Page 201
4. Food Basket Survey Questions Page 201

Recruitment Script

Research Project Title:
Everyday Practice in Dumbriguda Mandal

Principal Investigator and contact information:
Lakshman Kalasapudi

Research Supervisor and contact information:
Derek Johnson

Hello, my name is Lakshman Kalasapudi. I am a post-graduate (PG) student from the University of Manitoba in Canada. I am working with Vikasa NGO to learn about the status of small millets – little millet and finger millet – in the context of land-adivasi relations. I am interested in talking to you about your farmwork, what you grow, and your thoughts especially with regards to millets. This will help me promote millets, adivasi rights, and adivasi land rights to local, state, and national government officials. In addition, my studies are about food production and the research I do here will help me earn my PG degree.

If you have time, I am interested in talking to you or shadowing you while you work. Interviews are confidential and will take place at a time that is convenient to you. I will also conduct focus groups during which a group of farmers will come together to talk about issues facing them. I will also ask participants to draw maps of their land so I can understand how land is used here. Lastly, I hope to survey land use here with GPS units and with your help to create a map for land pattas (titles).

Your participation in this project would not jeopardize you in anyway. There are very little risks to this project. Please let me know if you are comfortable in helping me in any of the just mentioned methods. I would be grateful for your participation, time, energy, knowledge, and support in this project.

Informed Consent Script for Individuals

Research Project Title:
Everyday Practice in Dumbriguda Mandal

Principal Investigator and contact information:
Lakshman Kalasapudi

Research Supervisor and contact information:
Derek Johnson

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to listen to this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

1. The purpose of this research is to examine the position of millets in the context of the relationship to land that adivasi people have in Visakhapatnam District. This involves a mixed-methods approach with ethnography and GIS.
2. The researcher will stay in the field for four months and spend time formally and informally with various participants and their families. Individual participation includes being observed, being interviewed formally and informally, and general conversation. This will happen at convenient times for the participant through the four month research trip for however long is convenient for the participant.
3. A voice recorder either from an Android smart phone or an iPad will be used. No video will be recorded at all.
4. The diet, customs, and culture of the adivasis will be promoted through this research and hopefully create an increased demand for the millets they farm. In addition, land rights and usage will be researched thoroughly to enable meaningful political discourse and action with regards to policy measures.
5. Participants will be exposed to very minimal harm, if any. No psychical, psychological, social, or economic harm will result from this project.
6. The data will be kept confidential. No one will know the participant's identity except the researcher himself. Every paper written about the research will use fake names and change minor details in the life histories to ensure anonymity.
7. No compensation will be provided.
8. The participant can choose to leave the research project at any time simply by notifying the researcher. There will be no negative consequences as a result to the participant. They are free to leave at all times of the project.
9. A stakeholders meeting will be conducted at the end of the fieldwork to let participants know about the research, what my next steps are, and how their participation has helped further the goal of the research. Those who cannot or do not wish to participate in the group meeting can be debriefed individually.
10. The research will be written up in academic prose form and be presented to a university

committee of professors. In addition, it may be sent to publication in academic journals.

11. A summary of the findings in English can be found through the Vikasa representative by February 2015. Alternatively, the researcher can get in touch with the participants upon their next visit to Visakhapatnam and give them the summary in person in Telugu.
12. The confidential data will be anonymized by February 2015. The researcher will change all uniquely identifiable features in the raw data like voice recordings and notes.

Your agreement upon this notification indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint Faculty REB of University of Manitoba-Fort Garry Campus. **If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.**

Participants' information for further contact (e.g. dissemination):
Name: ______________________________
Phone Number: _______________________

Informed Consent Script for Focus Groups

Research Project Title:
Everyday Practice in Dumbriguda Mandal

Principal Investigator and contact information:
Lakshman Kalasapudi

Research Supervisor and contact information:
Derek Johnson

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to listen to this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

1. The purpose of this research is to examine the position of millets in the context of the relationship to land that adivasi people have in Visakhapatnam District. This involves a mixed-methods approach with ethnography and GIS.
2. The researcher will stay in the field for four months and spend time formally and informally with various participants and their families. Participation in a focus group includes being a group setting with discussion facilitated by either the researcher or an NGO worker. Focus groups last anywhere between thirty to ninety minutes. Participants are allowed to speak freely and leave at any time if they feel uncomfortable.
3. A voice recorder either from an Android smart phone or an iPad will be used. No video will be recorded at all.
4. The diet, customs, and culture of the adivasis will be promoted through this research and hopefully create an increased demand for the millets they farm. In addition, land rights and usage will be researched thoroughly to enable meaningful political discourse and action with regards to policy measures.
5. Participants will be exposed to very minimal harm, if any. No psychical, psychological, social, or economic harm will result from this project.
6. Information revealed in the focus groups cannot be kept confidential or anonymous. However, dissemination of the research findings will anonymize participants' identities and change minor details in the life histories. Data gleaned by the researcher will be kept confidential and later totally anonymized.
7. No compensation will be provided.
8. The participant can choose to leave the research project at any time simply by notifying the researcher. There will be no negative consequences as a result to the participant. They are free to leave at all times of the project.
9. A stakeholders meeting will be conducted at the end of the fieldwork to let participants know about the research, what my next steps are, and how their participation has helped further the goal of the research. Those who cannot or do not wish to participate in the group meeting can be debriefed individually.

10. The research will be written up in academic prose form and be presented to a university committee of professors. In addition, it may be sent to publication in academic journals.
11. A summary of the findings in English can be found through the Vikasa representative by February 2015. Alternatively, the researcher can get in touch with the participants upon their next visit to Visakhapatnam and give them the summary in person in Telugu.
12. The confidential data will be anonymized by February 2015. The researcher will change all uniquely identifiable features in the raw data like voice recordings and notes.

Your agreement upon this notification indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint Faculty REB of University of Manitoba-Fort Garry Campus. **If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.**

Participants' information for further contact (e.g. dissemination):
Name: ______________________________
Phone Number: _______________________

1. Individual Questions

Name:
Gender:
Age:
Religion:
Languages Spoken:
Mother Tongue:
Education Level:
Nature of land holding / labor:
Favorite and/or preferred meals:

What do you grow on the lands that you work? Why?
- What are the breakdowns?
- How does each crop sell in the market?
- How long have you or your family worked that land?

Do you own the lands you work?
- Have you encountered any difficulties in securing land titles?
  - Can you describe the difficulties?
  - Are there any fake land titles being created by non-adivasis?
- What is the gender division of labor?
  - What labor is seen as men's work? Women's work?
  - Is there child labor? What work is seen as children's work?
- What tools or instruments do you use?
- What is your attitude to your work?

What is your daily life like?
- Which labor do you do on the farm?
- Which labor do you prefer doing? Which labor do you not like doing?
- Which activity is most time consuming?
- Do you have spare time? How is it spent?
- Do you ever leave the village? If so, how often? For what reasons?

How does your caste / tribal group interact with non-adivasis? With other caste / tribal groups in the area?
- What are historical social tensions?
- What is the history of your caste / tribal group?
- Do different caste / tribal groups have different cultivation practices?

What foods do you eat?
- What are the dietary restrictions you follow, if any?
- Who cooks your meals? Do they/you use particular methods of cooking?
- What are the sources of uncultivated foods if any?
- Has your diet changed in your lifetime? In your parents' lifetimes?

2. Open-ended Focus Group Questions

- What are struggles you have encountered collectively in trying to secure land rights?
- What is your relationship to the land rights movement? Have you engaged it before? Why or not? Please detail the history.
- What is your relationship to government officials and the Tribal Welfare Authority?
- Who prefers to grow millets? Why? Who prefers to consume millets? Why?
- What are different cultivation practices in the area? Why do you practice agriculture that way?
- What are barriers to cultivating millets?

3. Labor Migration Questions

Place of employment:
Specific job function:
Company name:
How they found out about the opportunity:
Duration of employment:
Salary:
Who provided the food & accommodation?:
Reason for leaving:

4. Food Basket Survey Questions

Household:
Date:
Morning & Afternoon:
    Item 1:
    Item 2:
    Item 3:
    Item 4:
    Preparer:
    Notes:
Evening:
    Item 1:
    Item 2:
    Item 3:
    Item 4:
    Preparer:
    Notes:
Spices/Condiments: