Modernity and Post-Coloniality

The Metropolis as Metaphor

Sanjay Srivastava

Founded in 1935 and supported by a wide cross-section of Indian society, the Doon School has produced a very specific discourse on modernity and citizenship, a discourse which has had wide currency in the (metropolitan) public sphere in India. The article suggests that the metropolis itself has functioned as a metaphor at the school and in Indian national discourse in general. The discussion explores the cultural, political and gender aspects of the metropolitan metaphor in the 'nation-building' discourse of the school.

I
Roads, Rubble, and Sites of Modernity

THIS paper constitutes a part of my wider interest in constructions of post-colonial civil society in India. The research focus of this study is a residential boys' school in the North Indian city of Dehradun in Uttar Pradesh. The moving spirit behind the foundation of the Doon School, established in 1935, was Satish Ranjan Das, Law member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, sometime treasurer of the Boy Scouts of Bengal and the Lodge of Good Fellowship, and a prominent member of the 'reformist' Brahmo Samaj in Bengal. I treat the School as a historically significant site for the production of a discourse on modernity and citizenship, and for the formulation and dissemination of the politico-cultural desideratum of the post-colonial nation-state.[1] The Doon School was to be the site where, as S R Das wrote to one of his sons in 1927, "the problem of the nationality of Indians" would find its resolution, a place where they would learn to be citizens, and learn to come to grips with the demands of modernity.

As epigraph to the discussion of the article, I want to present an abridged version of a Hindi short story by Mithileshwar in which the construction of a 'pucca' road through a village comes to represent, in a synecdochical manner, the luscious promises of general well being; the comfort, the good life of the metropolis and the cornucopia of modernity. In his pithy rendering of the fate of the 'non-modern' in its encounters with the cunning of modernity, Mithileshwar writes a chapter on the cultural politics of metaphors in the realm the post-colonial nation-state; and through a wry turn of historical and sociological sensitivity, he extends the Bakhtinian idea of the chronotope of the road in unexpected and original ways. The road, in Mithileshwar's story, is the mark of the ferocious manoeuvres modernity – in this case, the insurmountable absolutism of the Indian nation-state implementing 'development' – practices on 'non-modern' populations.

The day the villager Jagesar comes to know of government plans to lay a bitumen road through his village, he considers his days of misery over. With prescient alacrity, Jagesar organises to refurbish the small shed he owns by the side of the proposed road-site in order to convert it to a tea-stall to service the expected flow of traffic. He borrows heavily for the construction work, happy in the knowledge that in the coming days not only would he able to repay the debt but also have a secure source of continuing income. The road becomes metonymic with well-being, and the village begins to hums with good-natured envy at Jagesar's turn of fortune.

Then, one day, construction work on the road, and that on Jagesar's tea-stall is finished. The road and the shop constitute a fragment of the ichnography of modernity, and wedged between them lie Jagesar's hopes of subject-hood, of freedom from the savage constraints of his marginal existence in the village. But then, one day, Jagesar is visited by some government officials enquiring after the ownership of the refurbished tea-stall. Why did he build his house there, they ask Jagesar. But this is not a recent construction, he responds, "this is my ancestral house". The building has got to go, Jagesar is informed, for the road is to be inaugurated soon and the orders are that there are to be no building ten feet to either side of the road. Jagesar pleads with the officials: "it has been there since my grand-father's time"; but the geometry of modernity brooks no interference and the stall is demolished. Jagesar's future has slipped away, reduced to the rubble of his shop.

The account below – a story of sorts – concerns the construction of a narrative of the metropolis – and of modernity – on a wider scale than that in Mithileshwar's story. It is an account of the grafting of the narrative of the metropolis to that of 'civil' post-colonial existence. I have, in effect, sought to supplement Mithileshwar's story with an ethnography of a specific site of Indian modernity, a *tableaux vivant* of the metropolis, in an effort towards an exploration of the bond which unites modernity and the functioning of capital; and the manner in which it marginalises those who are seen to fall outside its ken. For, this is the 'problem' with people such as Jagesar: in awaiting the largesse of modernity with earnestness, they assume the neutrality of capital.

The establishment of the Doon School marked the articulation of a redemptive tactic of post-coloniality: the 'conversion' of the native into the citizen. Here, the citizens-in-the-making of the coming nation-state were to be suspended in the ethereal matrix of a new age, the imperatives of the techno-scientific will. The site chosen for the school was itself by way of homage to the 'scientific attitude', "understood as the application of 'epistemological' thinking to acquired knowledge" [Lefebvre 1991:4]. The present campus of the Doon School was formerly the Forest Research Institute, one of the several 'Institutes' and 'Surveys' – and clock-towers at important cross-roads – which proclaimed the presence of a 'rational' Occident in the 'irrational' Orient. It was to this Occident – and Vico reminds us that there were other 'Wests' – that the Indian sponsors of the School wished to align themselves. It was the *Geist* of this Occident which engaged the attentions of an indigenous class already part of the utilitarian and rational world of capital. For, although a considerable part of the financial backing of the School was provided by feudal elements, the majority of its earliest students came from 'professional' families, sons of a nascent middle class consisting of doctors, engineers, bureaucrats and members of the legal profession.[2]

The School is administered by the Indian Public Schools Society, formed and registered by Das under the Indian Companies Act of 1860. This was the first of many acts through Das paid conscious homage to the idea of the market as a redemptive force: the market would rescue the native from the primitivism of customary obligation and deliver him, the male object, to the contractual calculus of the modern age. In this way, Das and those others associated with the School's foundation sought to explicitly differentiate their own philosophy of education from that of, say, Tagore, Gandhi, and the Arya Samaj which was more critical of the ethos of 'rationality'. Despite this, however, in several ways the School shared the modernising perspective of socio-religious movements such as the Arya Samaj.[3]

Perhaps the most obvious and continuing philosophical influence upon the School derives from S R Das's active membership of the Brahmo Samaj, and it is the discursive territory fashioned by the Samaj – where the monotheist revelled in the praxis outlined by Alfred Marshall – which provided the School with an ethos. "Normal Action", Marshall had asserted, "is taken to be that which may be expected, under certain conditions, from the members of an industrial group" [Marshall 1938:vii].[4]

In this paper I link these issues to a discussion of the image of the nation fashioned at the Doon School. I will argue that at Doon this image is inextricably enmeshed in pageants of the city: the metropolis as the fulfilled dream of modernity. And that 'metropolis' here is not merely a conglomeration of specific spatial practices – "which embraces production and reproduction" [Lefebvre 1991:32-33], i e, physical and material flows – but also a configuration of "social inventions... that seek to generate new meanings of possibilities for social practices" [Harvey 1989:261].

II
Objectified Province and Metropolitan Imaginary

The Doon School discourse on the metropolis is part of a wider dialogue on 'Indianness' prevalent during the early part of this century. In this dialogue, the metropolis, its concrete presence apart, is also a settlement of the mind: an imagined configuration of desires and comforts, hopes and projections; a specific way of viewing the unfolding of both every day human life and the more distant future in which these lives may find their destinies. This process of imagining the city is also bound to what might be called the fetishism of the metropolis. It is a fetishism in which the metropolis "has been transformed... into a sign" [Appadurai:1990]. This fetishism has as its *deus ex machina* the *Geist* of the metropolis which 'transcends' its objective reality – the relations of power and exploitation which characterise the contemporary city – and takes on a life of its own.

The fetishism of the post-colonial metropolis – Bombay, Calcutta, Nairobi – is contained both in the unofficial images of the media and the official pronouncements of policy-makers. It appears, and lodges itself in public thought during the process of the transformation of the metropolitan idea from the realm of 'use-value' – lived experience – to that of the commodity; the commodity which forms part of the discourse of the post-colonial nation-state. It is then that the metropolis becomes "a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties...[taking on] an enigmatical character" [Marx 1978:76]. Discourses on the metropolitan theme in the dialogical realm which constitutes the arena of 'citizenship' and 'nationhood' progress through an effacement of the concrete subject in favour of "the abstract subject, the *cogito* of the philosophers" (Lefebvre 1991:4). The Doon model of the citizen – the metropolitan man – occupies that habitat, the metropolis, which exists as a fetishised "philosophico-epistemological notion of space...[and where] ... the mental realm comes to envelope the social and physical ones" [Lefebvre 1991:5].[5]

The valorisation of the metropolitan milieu in India would seem to be coeval with the formation of a 'national' consciousness. During the period of the nationalist movement in India it was not just an abstract Indian nation which was, to use Benedict Anderson's terminology, being imagined, but a nation with a very specific metropolitan identity; its inhabited spaces animated by the spirit of a supposed rupture between the 'backward' and the 'progressive', and its inhabitants alive to the necessity and the incontrovertibility of a new temporal regime.

This metropolitan model of national identity was contested at its birth, and through the various stages of its maturation. Paradoxically, however, it drew its sustenance from this contestation, and eventually triumphed at the very moment that its opposition – the provincial or the non-metropolitan model – provided the most cogent picture of an alterity. The reason for this lies in the objectivist and essentialist arguments employed by the critics of the metropolitan model of Indian post-coloniality.

In presenting the case for an alternative model of national life – encompassing, *inter alia*, the education system, a national language, and the methods of the creation and distribution of private and public wealth – thinkers such as Gandhi also constructed certain typologies of non-metropolitan life. The metropolitan project at the Doon School operates through an engagement with these very typologies as static categories, a characterisation made possible through the initial taxonomic act of 'non-metropolitans' such as Gandhi.

Specifically, it was the establishment of a series of binary oppositions between the milieu of the metropolis and that of the non-metropolis – all the emotional and political evocations contained in the debates which presented the symbolic opposition between the mill and khadi cloth – that set the stage for the 'modern' nation-state's assault on the 'primitivisms' within it. The point is this: the proponents of the alternative point of view, those who sought to contest the modernist *weltanschauung* of the state, presented their case in such terms as to reduce its actors to passive caricatures. They presented their protagonists and their life-worlds as changeless, their actions to be judged according to some predetermined and static morality and world-view. The view of the 'non-metropolis' as a zone of morals and goodness was an objectivism which undermined its own position.

In a different context, Andrew Metcalfe speaks of the "logic [that] underlies the work of all theorists who *analyse* society as they might analyse an organism or thing" [Metcalfe 1988:13. Emphasis in the original]. This line of analysis proceeds, he suggests, as if "workers are merely the bearers of a proletarian essence", and that 'history' can simply be 'read off' in a mechanical manner from these essential qualities. The proponents of the 'non-metropolis' similarly objectified the rural/provincial figure who was meant to provide the alternative model of the post-colonial citizen. Thus the latter, imbued with a static morality and made part of a fixed, absolute world-view, came to be constructed more as a caricature of the 'ideal' citizen, rather than as an individual negotiating life between the bounds of structures and the imperatives of agency. If Nehru was the flaneur of metropolitan fetishism, then Gandhi,[6] no less, provided the text for the objectification of the 'other' India.

For Gandhi, the khadi programme was the blueprint for national regeneration: material, moral as well as spiritual. The spinning wheel would provide not merely the mechanics of personal prosperity to pauperised villagers, but also stood for the fabrication of a symbolic web knitting the entire Indian population into the seamless fabric of a moral community. The discussions on the importance of the khadi programme became a platform for comparisons of the metropolitan 'ethos' with that of the 'non-metropolis'.[7]

The All-India Spinners' Association, he suggested, could be instrumental in providing

employment to those villagers who, in the absence of gainful employment in their immediate localities, were forced to migrate to the metropolitan cities. He noted that villagers worked in the cities under "immoral" conditions, and returned to their villages "bringing with them corruption, drunkenness and disease" [Gandhi:1927]. The villager here is represented as a passive object who becomes 'infected' with the contagion of the metropolis, a contagion which exists as some kind of an essence apart from the social and political life – the exposed injuries of class and capital and the hidden exploitations of caste – in which the inhabitants of the metropolis are embroiled. The corollary of this view was, of course, that the 'non-metropolis' has its own essence, its own 'spirit'.

In the wake of the adoption of the khadi 'spirit', Gandhi noted, village artisans will find local employment, and

> ...will then find themselves reinstated in their ancient dignity, as is already happening wherever the spinning wheel has gained a footing [Gandhi 1927].

Gandhi was not, of course, the sole contributor to the objectifying metropolis versus non-metropolis discourse. His colleague and fellow nationalist, C Rajagopalachari asserted that "the peasants of India,..., are gentle, industrious and good folk", and that their enforced migration to the cities had turned "such people" into "victims of vice" with debilitating effects on the "national programme" [Gandhi 1928:756].

In this defence of the 'non-metropolis', the subjectivity of those who occupy it is, as if, effaced from the scene of action and become merely objects constantly acted upon. Their defence by Gandhi and Rajagopalachari becomes the defence of a timeless essence. In turn, they become strategic caricatures upon the surface of a montage of the 'pre-modern' which it becomes the urgent task of modernity to transform. The sympathisers of the 'non-metropolis' can be seen, in this way, to be complicit in the political and cultural processes of modernity which the sponsors of the metropolis see as the necessary corollary to the task of constructing a nation.

Objectivism, Bourdieu suggests, subjects practice to a "fundamental and pernicious alteration", and through "withdrawing from [the action] in order to observe it from above and from a distance, [it] constitutes practical activity as an *object of observation and analysis, a representation*" [Bourdieu 1977:2. Italics in the original]. In the Indian situation, the contested terrain of national identity – metropolitan versus non-metropolitan, 'modern' versus the 'pre-modern' – was, paradoxically, queered in favour of the metropolitan/modern by those very groups who sought to present an alternative to the dicta of 'modernity'.

The championing of the khadi programme, in itself a fundamental critique of the organisation of civil society and the pauperisation of large sections of the non-metropolitan population, was elaborated through an essentialist moral schema which reduced its 'constituents' to the state of passive observers, the noble primitives. The post-colonial Indian state, administered by the potentates of an intellectual estate with its chiliastic shrines to the 'scientific attitude' and 'progress', found the task of constructing its Other already accomplished; its putative quarry turned out to be a mere shadow of the active subject, instead of the "ever-baffled and ever-resurgent [agent] of an unmastered history" [Thompson quoted in Metcalfe 1988:211].

One of the ways in which we might visualise the relationship between men such as Gandhi and Rajagopalachari and the non-metropolis they sought to represent (that is, 'defend') is through reference to the established relationship, increasingly under scrutiny, between anthropologists and their 'villages'. A recent example of the ongoing critique of the house that anthropology built is provided by Gupta and Ferguson who note that "representations of space in the social sciences are remarkably dependent on images of break, rupture, and disjunction" [Gupta and Ferguson 1992:6]. The social sciences, they suggest, posit "the distinctiveness of societies, nations and cultures upon a seemingly unproblematic division of space, on the fact that they occupy naturally discontinuous spaces" [ibid:6]. The lack of a problematisation within anthropology of a "spatialised understanding of cultural difference", they further argue, has, notwithstanding "sensitive" efforts to the contrary, led to a subtle nativisation of 'the other'; the latter has come to be straitjacketed through its confinement "in a separate frame of analysis" [ibid:14].

In keeping with their professed empathy and concern to give the non-metropolis a voice, we could figuratively refer to Gandhi and Rajagopalachari as its anthropologists. The 'inherently fragmented' space assumed in their discussions of their 'villages' and the city denies the inter-connected nature of the two and, along with it, the possibility of questioning the "radical separation between the two that [made] the opposition possible in the first place" [Gupta and Ferguson 1992:14]. The case 'for' the non-metropolis, as presented in Gandhi's dialogue 'against' the city elides, in other words, a more fundamental critique of the particular sensibility of space which characterised the debates on national identity; what was sidestepped was the issue of "exploring the process of *production* of difference in a world of culturally, socially, and economically interconnected and interdependent spaces" [ibid: 14. Italics in the original].

In other words, a radical critique of 'separateness' in the Indian case would have concerned itself not with 'villagers' as 'a people' 'native to the village', 'but as a historically constituted and de-propertied[8] category systematically relegated to the [village]'. Human social experience, as Raymond Williams (1975) suggests, cannot simply be broken down into distinct "singular forms" such as "town and country"; it consists, on the contrary, "of many kinds of intermediate and new kinds of social and physical organisation". The metropolitan idea elaborated in several diverse ways at the Doon School derives its sustenance from a history of objectification of non-metropolitan entities which has, quite successfully, managed to singularise experience. And, paradoxically, those opposed to the pernicious aspects of the Indian modernist project have contributed to this history as much as those who championed it.

III
Post-Coloniality and Production of Desirable Spaces

The city in the post-colonial context is the logos of the erasure which the modern nation-state seeks to effect upon its 'primitive' spaces, and upon its, equally intemperate, 'pre-modern' temporality. The metropolis is not just a category of a simplistic sociology, but also an image of, or at least the desire for, of the coming of age of the nation; not merely a physical space, it is also a category of thought.

Jawaharlal Nehru's masculine explorations in *The Discovery of India* – "it was presumptuous of me to imagine that I could unveil her and find out what she is today and what she was in the long past" (1960:113) – were part of the discourse which saw the nation-state's future as one inextricably enmeshed with the vista of the metropolis. B G Verghese, a student at the School from 1936 to 1944, then at Cambridge University, and who later served as the editor of the *Hindustan Times* and the *Indian Express*, was another such 'modern' Indian involved in the process of discovering a very specific India. In the mid-1960s, he criss-crossed the country writing of his travels in a series of newspaper articles. A quintessentially utilitarian 'modern' journey, Verghese's directed wanderings from this factory to that laboratory were in the nature of a progress report on the post-colonial nation-state: he aspired "to report on economic development and social change after almost 15 years of planning" [Verghese 1965:vii]. En route, the traveller "rediscovered an immensely

exciting country pulsating with life and vigour, a country in which great things are happening and one full of abundant promise" [Verghese 1965:vii].

The sanguine inventory of these 'great things' and 'abundant' promises is undertaken with the cache of tools which, as Foucault puts it, has ostensibly enabled contemporary historians to uncover the "unmoving histories" concealed "beneath the rapidly changing history of governments, wars, and famines" [Foucault 1982:3] favoured by traditional history. Hence, despite the unsettling turbulence of events on the surface, the Chinese attack in 1962, Nehru's death, "and the present economic crisis", Verghese suggests that India "is resurgent". The tools of his analysis match the inventory outlined by Foucault: "models of economic growth, quantitative analysis of market movements, accounts of demographic expansion and contraction, the study of climate and its long-term changes, the fixing of sociological constants, the description of technological adjustments and of their spread and continuity" [Foucault 1982:3].

The underlying and consistent tendency towards 'progress' that Verghese discovers submerged under the capriciousness of surface events emerges from a survey and valorisation of a very specific landscape: "The assignment", he says, "took me to farms, factories, mines, dams, power stations, research establishments, zila parishads and co-operative offices, industrial estates, technical institutions, housing developments ...defence establishments, large and small industry, and co-operative enterprises" [Verghese 1965:x]. The overwhelming presence of the metropolis is too obvious to be belaboured in this enumeration of the topography of 'nation-building'. Indeed, the *Geist* of metropolitan existence, Verghese suggests, can even be utilised to transform the 'non-metropolitan' impediments to modernity into the foot-soldiers of a technocratic regime. The 'tribals' of Orissa, he argues, can easily be 'de-tribalised' through "large residential schools with mechanical workshops" which will enable them "to participate fully in the industrial civilisation developing around them" [Verghese 1965:110-11].

'City', as Raymond Williams tells us, is derived from civitas "which was in its turn derived from civis (a citizen in the sense of a national)" [Williams 1975:307]. The analytical importance of the post-colonial metropolis lies in its role as complementary trope to the 'modern' nation-building project; as an abstraction from the urban contestations of space and place. This contestation – "the coming together of two complex worlds, interacting in major ways in a division of labour yet distanced and differentiated from one another [in which] the urban poor subsidise the city in terms of services, the provision of casual labour and yet are slated to live out their lives outside the enclosure of the formal city" [Chandoke 1991:2871] is the uncomfortable reality of the metropolis. However, in the dialogue of the nation it is the sentiment of the metropolis, its metaphysics that predominates.

To return to Lefebvre (1991), we might say that in the discourse of the post-colonial nation-state the spatial practice of the metropolis ("which embraces production and reproduction") is 'overwhelmed' with the onslaught of representational spaces. These representational spaces constitute the scattered canvases for the murals of the nation-state in which imagination becomes substantially free from the constraints of experience. As far as nationalist narratives are concerned, the 'inconvenience' of spatial analyses which deal with the metropolis on a different level is that "they take on specific meanings and these meanings are put into motion and spaces used in a particular way through the agency of class, gender, or other social practices" [Harvey 1989:264]. A consciousness of the metropolis expressed in the lexicon of the material and physical flows which order its existence, and the antagonisms of class, gender and ethnicity which vein its social fabric, threatens the integrity of the 'wholesomeness' of its image, and that of the post-colonial nationhood itself.

Valorisation of the sentiment of the metropolis – celebrations of 'progress', and 'civilisation' – have not, of course, been confined to the post-colonial context but in this case they are embroiled within the poignant politics of the representation of the 'modern' self. In other, non-colonial contexts, the 'city' becomes the battleground, both figurative and literal, and the descriptive trope for a different set of meanings and images. For Baudelaire, for example, the metropolis – and the 'modern' ethos which makes it what it is – is experienced not as a social project, the anthropomorphic transmogrification of a social milieu into the concrete 'modern' citizen, but, rather, as a strictly personal consciousness. The crowd which occupies the spaces of his metropolis consists of abstract figures, and not the exemplars of the 'citizen'. The 'metropolitan masses' which surged through Baudelaire's pages, as Walter Benjamin pointed out, have no specific identity: "They do not stand for classes or any sort of collective; rather they are nothing but the amorphous crowds of passers-by, the people in the street" (Benjamin 1985:165). Such non-utilitarian pleasures, I would suggest, are scorned by our post-colonial 'nation-builders' for whom the metropolis is an *episteme*.

IV
Contractual Space of the Little Republic

Perhaps one of the most articulate examples of the conflation of the metropolitan sentiment with the ideal of the post-colonial citizen comes to us from the autobiography of the turn of the century Bengali nationalist Bipin Chandra Pal. His journey from the provincial backwaters of his home town of Sylhet to Calcutta in order to pursue a tertiary education in one of the premier colleges of the colonial metropolis was also for him a journey to the realm of a new ontology. Pal departed Sylhet towards the end of December 1874 to join the Calcutta's Presidency College on a government scholarship. His recollections of city life, noted in his autobiography written some 50 years later – after his own transformation into the archetypal metropolitan – provide a useful contrast between views of the metropolis in colonial (and post-colonial) and in other situations.

Upon arrival in Calcutta, the relatively prosperous Pal joined the Sylhet 'mess', one of several such establishments, organised along regional lines, catering to the eating requirements of (male) students from outside the city. The messes also functioned as centres of social activity where prospective doctors, lawyers, civil servants and others – the colonial intelligentsia – made each others acquaintance and, quite often, formed life long friendships. The membership tended, largely, if not exclusively, to be from the higher castes. It was at the Sylhet mess, Pal says, that he had his first 'taste' of city life: the stark atomism of metropolitan existence versus the communal ethic of the non-metropolis. Whereas in his father's house everybody, "whether master or servant, had the same kind of food", at his mess – "for the first time" – he saw that

> my neighbour had fried eggs which were not served to me. Another gentleman had ghee with his dal, which he did not share with anybody else; and someone had curd which was not given to others [Pal 1973:156].

Located at the intersection of fragmentary existence and non-traditional aspirations, the student messes of Calcutta were metropolitan inventions *par excellence*; and it is the sentiment of the metropolis – as anticipation of the post-colonial nation-state – which is expressed in Pal's subsequent portrayal of their functioning:

> The student messes in Calcutta [he writes], in my college days, 56 years ago, were like small republics and were managed on strictly democratic lines. Everything was decided by the voice of the majority of the members of the mess.

...almost in everything that concerned the common life of the mess, the members had a supreme voice. If a seat was vacant applications for it came before the whole 'House', and no one was admitted into the mess unless he was known to or certified by responsible people to be a decent and respectable fellow. ...Disputes between one member and another were settled by a 'court' of the whole 'House'; and we sat night after night, I remember, in examining these cases; and never was the decision of this 'Court' questioned or disobeyed by any member.

We made from time to time laws and regulations for the proper administration of our little republics... (1973:157-58).

That the author means to present the "little republic" as a microcosm of the life of the city itself [9] – as distinct from the ethos of the provincial places of origin of its members – is somewhat clearer in his discussion of the "compromise" over food between "the so-called orthodox and the Brahmo and other heterodox members of our republic." The "republic", Pal says, passed a rule by unanimous vote "that no members should bring any food to the house (except, of course, loaves and biscuits that had commenced to be tolerated by the orthodoxy of the Metropolis) which outraged the feelings of Hindu orthodoxy" [Pal 1973:159]. Pal's fond remembrances of the student messes of his youth seem directly linked to his conception of the hopes and desires a modernising society may place in the milieu of the metropolis; the student mess is a metropolitan artefact in the sense that it mirrors the larger milieu of which it is a geographical and cultural subset.

In the city Pal meets individuals actively involved in the process of transforming the Gemeinschaft rigidities of native existence into the Gesellschaft imperatives of a new age. Among others, there was Babu Pyari Charan Sircar, "the man who had the greatest influence over forming my mind and character", who had worked tirelessly in the cause of widow remarriage among upper caste Hindus. For Pal, the influence of the metropolitan milieu was also crucial in transfiguring the intimacy of his mother's death into his own personal passage to a different, public, realm. There is a piquant sense in which the gathering sentiments of the metropolis in the young Calcutta student come to signify the substitution of the biological mother with a new maternal ideal; the corporeal ideal, bound in tradition, is replaced by an abstract entity – the city itself – aligned to 'progress'. The open breach which was to later eventuate between Pal and his father over the former's rejection of Hindu orthodoxy first appeared as a crack in the context of his mother's death. For nearly a year after her death Pal reports that he dutifully performed the 'shradh' ceremony in strict conformity with Hindu tradition. However, the force of metropolitan influences determined a different course of action and,

Towards the close of the year, and before the day of the first anniversary of my mother's death came I had openly rebelled against the old faith and society, and thus gave it [the shradh ceremony] up. That was the first cause of open rupture between father and son (1973:179).

The metropolis as the expatiatory scene of modernity – the redemptive rupture with a 'primitive' past and the eager union with a 'progressive' future – is also the theme of a series of post-independence publications entitled the *Bombay Citizenship Series*; the nomenclatural embrace between 'citizenship' and 'city' is worth noting. The narrative of the metropolis employed in the book slips in and out of a discourse of nationhood with relative ease. We are presented with a meta-vision of the national future determined by the civil society of the metropolis: a homogeneous history to be made by the secure classes of the city in the absence of proper judgment and suitable faculties on the part of the provinces.

Here, the nation-city identification takes a perennially evocative route through a borrowing of the vocabulary of nationalism itself. Bombay is described as the "mother city' [Bulsara 1948:vii], a template whose manner of life and culture is put forward as the exemplar of nationhood; the 'non-metropolis', in turn, is the palimpsest, the site of a new inscription of identity eagerly attempting to emulate the ways of the 'mother'.

However, the civilisational destiny of the metropolis – as the template for the 'national' – is constrained by the physical presence within its very boundaries of refractory sentiments which belong to another space:

...merely removing or cleaning up dustbins, refuse sheds and dirt carts from the city will not keep it clean, so long as the people, who create the conditions of filth, *remain in the same primitive mental condition*. Our trouble is not merely physical or external. It is *psychological, social and internal*. We suffer from a preponderance of illiterate populations, which we recruit year by year from our numerous villages. Its mind is still largely rural. It is almost completely undisciplined. ...we have to instil in this population a sense of civic consciousness, which demands a mind trained to the restraint of co-operative living. Their illiteracy and profusion of dialects is a hindrance in the path of quick progress [Bulsara 1948:19-20. All italics in the original].

From the earliest days of Doon School's existence, its students, and especially those who had travelled overseas with their parents, learned to imbibe sentiments of the metropolis at a young age. One of these was 18-year old recent graduate of the School, GSB, who accompanied his diplomat father to the US in 1942 and recounted the experiences of his journey in an open letter to the School published in the School Weekly. The letter is in the form of an itinerary of colonial desire tracing, as it does, the journey,[10] via many secondary ports of call, to the 'true', metropolis; the concrete fruition of an abstract excursion made in thought many times, and in many ways. The moment of encounter with the exemplar proves in every way to be a fulfilment of the abundant promise of the wait:

We docked at Hoboken, New Jersey... I have some vague, but never the less vivid mental pictures of London and Paris, but New York is in a class by itself. A majestic monument to man's engineering genius. I cannot ever hope to put down in this letter even a small description of New York, or give an idea of the emotions which I felt when I saw this city [*The Doon School Weekly* 1942, April 4].

But the passage to the metropolis of ineffable emotions was littered with provincial outposts of the global economy, and this traveller, for one, noted their presence with the acuity of a pilgrim bound to the centre of a 'true' civilisation:

[After Capetown]... The next stop was Trinidad. I was particularly looking out for the various landmarks which had been made familiar to me by Mr Gibson's strenuous efforts to instil some geography into our arable heads. ... I cannot say that I particularly liked Trinidad. It is a dreary place with a lot of rain, tropical vegetation and a whole lot of rum-swilling planters: the most inefficient and oppressive Negro waiters who breathe onions and garlic down your neck, but rather meek and polite Indian taxi drivers (there are quite a number of Indians there). I was certainly glad to get away [*The Doon School Weekly* 1942, April 4).

There were, it would seem, undesirable provincials and 'primitives' everywhere.

The idea of the School as the microcosm of metropolitan existence is itself reiterated through the theme of what might be called the community of contract: the School's attempt to reproduce one of the aspects of the 'progressive' ethos of the city through the completely arbitrary manner in which its own community is constituted; and this is attempted not just through the absence – in principle – of prohibitions on who may or may not join the community – regarded as an aspect of 'pre-modern' existence – but also the heterogeneity which is a definitional characteristic of modern, metropolitan, life. In the city, Engels was to write in a different context, one may see the "hundreds of thousands of all classes and all ranks

crowding past each other" [Engels quoted in Williams 1975:215].

The depiction of the metropolis as the space of individualistic existence unfettered by the oppressive demands of custom and tradition which characterise the 'non-metropolis' is one of the most lasting formulations of the creed of modernity which itself constitutes the ideological crutch of twentieth century capitalism. The "essentially intellectualistic character of the mental life of the metropolis", Georg Simmel was to say, is in contrast to "that of the small town which rests more on feelings and emotional relationships" [Simmel 1971:325]. It is precisely this move away from 'primitivism' that the Doon School wishes to convey through depicting itself as a community of contract rather than one of prescribed association; "we pride ourselves" a School publication comments, "in the fact that two boys can sleep in adjacent beds for six years and be friends without even finding out each other's background". The School as the embodiment of the 'progressive' anonymity of metropolitan space is nowhere made more explicit than here.

The metonymic juxtaposition of the milieu of the School and that of the metropolis – as communities of contract and coincidence – was present, at the very outset, in the Constitution of the Indian Public Schools Society, the organisation which administers Doon. Among the objects of the Society listed in its Constitution is the founding of "Schools in India... without distinction of race or creed or caste or social status" (Indian Public Schools Society [1936]:1986). However, if the post-colonial metropolis is to serve as the prototype of the national community, then the heterogeneity which is a characteristic feature of 'modern' existence must also be tempered by the needs of 'co-operative' existence. Another School publication contains the following passage: "Boys from all parts of the country, from all castes and religions mix together and lose their regional and religious identity because the School deliberately plays down these differences by a common uniform/ the same food/the same facilities".[11] The heterogeneity of the School's population, which aligns it to the image of the city, is first constituted, and then surrendered, much as the author of the Bombay Citizenship Series believed it should be, in favour of constituting an ordered, co-operative, civil society: the ideal metropolis.

The ostensible reproduction of the conditions of 'modern' life within the School's boundaries – the multiplicities of cultural, social, and economic backgrounds – also has its corollary in the field of the 'political': the representation of the School milieu as a training ground for the future citizens in the theory and practice of 'democratic' existence. The School council at Doon is an important part of the representational pastiche through which the School seeks to secure its place in the grand narrative of the post-colonial nation-state. Chaired by the headmaster, the council is the "apex student body of the School" [Singh 1985:62] and meets every month to "consider all matters which affect the discipline, manners and amenities of life at School" [Singh 1985:62]. The 'minutes' of the council meetings are published in the School Weekly and student members 'represent' different forms (grades) as well as different areas of school activity.

The sentiment of civitas at the School is a differentiating sentiment: it seeks to both establish the future of the nation-state as well as the identities of those most 'qualified' to be at its helm. In this sense, all cultural history of 'India' is that of the state [Chakrabarty 1992] and that of those trained in its punctilios: others – 'tribals', 'provincials', women (as I discuss later) – provide the peripheral backdrop to the essential procedures and groups of the nation;

> [The School Council]... has a written constitution... [and] ...endorses each year the award of School colours for good citizenship.
>
> The working of the School Council and the freedom allowed to the Weekly are, in a sense, training for the wider world, when the boys are expected to be knowledgeable, responsible and active citizens of a democratic country [*The Doon School Book* 1948:62-63].[12]

The city-state milieu of the School casts its redemptive spell on many a pilgrim. Karan Singh, son of Maharaja Hari Singh of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, and later a minister in the Indira Gandhi government, was a student at the Doon School from 1942 to 1946. The School is presented in his autobiography as the 'sacred' ground of a rite of passage, the very site of the birth of the modern man. He speaks of his father's decision to send him to Doon rather than one of the many Chief's Colleges established by the British for the Indian aristocracy as "imaginative and forward looking" [Singh 1982:24]. His years at Doon made it possible for him, he further notes, "to make the crucial transition from feudal to democratic life" (1982:24).

V
Heirs Apparent, Minions of Destiny, and Vertical Invaders

Alongside evocations of the metropolis at the School exist those which serve as its negative reflection. There are two 'types' of teachers at the School: those who consciously chose to teach at the Doon School, and others who are there due to circumstances quite beyond their control. It is the latter group which constitutes one of the fragments of otherness against which the official ethos of the School both defines and differentiates itself through an explicit dialectic. I will deal with the former group which is part of the metropolitan milieu of the School first. DL was a teacher at the School from 1984 to 1991. Before joining the School he had been an executive with the Indian subsidiary of Penguin Books in Calcutta. An MA in history from the prestigious St Stephen's College in Delhi, he also studied at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. The avenues of social and economic mobility open to an individual such as DL in Indian society would seem to be almost infinite; and yet he made a conscious choice to opt for a career which many Indians would regard as the last resort of the desperate and the unemployable.

The low regard in which the school teaching profession is held in India is fairly well documented in educational studies literature and needs no detailed elaboration here. "With the advance of the colonial system of education", Krishna Kumar notes, "the school curriculum became totally disassociated from the Indian child's everyday reality and milieu. ...Moreover, the teacher had no say in the selection of knowledge represented in the school curriculum. His low salary and status ensured that he would not exercise any professional autonomy or even have a professional identity" [Kumar 1991:14]. The post-independence situation in India represents a variation on the same theme.[13]

So why does someone like DL, socially and economically a part of the metropolitan spoils system in India – the 'right' type of education and the 'right' sort of contacts – willingly opt for the life of a school teacher? The reason, I suggest, lies in the existence of an informal 'reservations' system in the public school system in India with respect to the 'best' jobs, i e, headmasterships of other, major, public schools. Through this system the top jobs at important public schools circulate among a small group – the culturally metropolitan – on recommendations from others of similar background who have preceded them; and the headmastership of a prominent public school – the maturation of the investments in metropolitan cultural capital – carries with it the benefits of both an immediate and concrete nature and of the more distant and abstract social capital.

The headmaster of a school such as Doon enjoys a lifestyle which parallels that of a very senior public servant or corporate executive: a colonial style bungalow with extensive and beautifully manicured grounds, a number of 'retainers' for their upkeep, a car, an 'entertainment' allowance, travel

allowance, and several other perquisites that make for a life of considerable luxury. These are, of course, in addition to the facility of free education at the school for the headmaster's children. In his professional life, the incumbent makes the acquaintance of a wide cross-section of parents who are often some of the most influential people in the country – politicians, senior bureaucrats, corporate chiefs, industrialists, officers of the defence forces, university vice-chancellors,[14] and journalists, to name just a few. We may usefully speak here of the benedictory web of social capital. "Social capital", as Bourdieu put it, "is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition... which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital" [Bourdieu 1986:248-49].

That the greatest responsibility for the maintenance and advancement of an institution which defines post-colonial citizenship in terms of a 'metropolitan' identity should be seen to devolve upon those identified as 'metropolitan' is not, perhaps, surprising. In this manner the metropolitan ethos – defined and elaborated at schools such as Doon – continues to be both reproduced and valorised. During 1991, after just seven years as a schoolmaster, DL left Doon School to take up the Headmastership of a well known public school in South India. By any yardstick, he had made exceptional progress through the 'ranks' to the new position he now holds. The majority of teachers resented this, but also recognised that "people like DL are destined to progress rapidly".[15]

Of course, not all 'metropolitan' teachers at Doon necessarily go on to headships of other public schools. The point is, however, that they form a distinct substratum of School society. They are regarded by others, the 'provincial' teachers, as enjoying the privileges of those charged with the responsibility of 'representing' the 'ethos' of the School: possessors of *plena potestas agendi et loquendi*. They are 'organic intellectuals' in Gramsci's terms, charged with the duty and authority of propagating a cultural programme of a 'national' self. The most powerful signifier of the privilege that this 'metropolitanism' bestows upon its acolytes, as far as the 'non-metropolitans' at the School are concerned, comes in the form of a dispensation: the relative ability to determine one's own destiny.

PK, the geography teacher, is from a small town in Kerala. His journey from his home state to the Doon School is also the narrative of the cultural economy of the post-colonial nation-state in India; an epigrammatic rendition of the multitude of several such journeys undertaken by all those of PK's peripheral cultural circumstance to the cultural nuclei of the nation-state. A 'gold medallist' from his home town university, his reasons for accepting a position at Doon constitute reflections on the cultural and economic constraints faced by the group of teachers at Doon I will refer to as the 'non-metropolitans'; and they were offered to me both in a tone of resignation and that of anger which comes from a perception, no matter how dim, of the double bind of human existence.

In 1979, PK's father, a junior police officer, retired from the Force and, in the following year, died of a heart attack. This forced PK into a profession "which was certainly not my first choice". But the oppressive compulsions of economic need form only a part of the story of how men such as PK come to be at Doon: there is also the determining force of cultural capital which constitutes that insuperable difference between the metropolis and the province. For the majority of the teachers at the School, teaching was not a "first choice". Almost all members of this group have come from an educational and cultural milieu which has experienced systematic devaluation in the metropolitan 'nation-building' agenda of the post-colonial state. They have studied in schools where the medium of instruction has either been Hindi or one of the vernacular languages, and have graduated to universities which occupy a similarly enervated space of 'linguistic backwardness'. At Doon, they are the butt of the student's jokes: for the manner in which they dress, for their attempts to rid themselves, much like the young Bipin Chandra Pal, of their provincial patois, and for their attempts, taken as parody, to mimic the 'life' of the metropolis.

I do not mean to use 'mimicry' in the sense in which Homi Bhabha speaks of it (Bhabha 1984). The 'mimic-men' role which is the lot of the non-metropolitan teachers at Doon is both prescribed – for metropolitanism needs its Other to authenticate itself [16] – and adopted voluntarily by the non-metropolitans as a strategy of negotiating their position in the School. The mimicry of the Doon School teacher is the metonym of a mortal wound of identity. In private conversations with me these teachers made it clear that in this way they masked their 'real' beings. Where the non-metropolitan is 'forced' to mimic the metropolitan, to measure up to the definition of the 'ideal' and live a 'double' existence, mimicry is the manifestation of the purgatory of identity; "we have to act like some one else", as PK once said to me, adding that the only way for him to be his 'real self' was to go back to his home town and "get a job there".

But for most of the teachers of PK's background, the dreams and plans of returning to a place where they are not the constant objects of a 'normalising' gaze [Foucault 1979] turn out to be illusory. "The final return", John Berger says of the yearnings of the 'provincial' migrant worker in metropolitan Europe, "is mythic. It gives meaning to what might otherwise be meaningless. It is larger than life. It is the stuff of longing and prayers. But it is also mythic in the sense that, as imagined, it never happens. There is no final return" [Berger 1989:216]. For, despite the strong expressions of outrage at the perceived ignominy of their life at School – 'disrespect' from students and 'metropolitan' colleagues, poor prospects of 'moving up', lack of any voice in the running of the School – very few actually 'return'. In the helpless embrace of a double bind – "wanting and not wanting a relation" [Metcalfe 1988:197] – they barter their ignominious present for a more hopeful future.

This 'future' is that of their children who are entitled to free education at the School. Through this education the latter are able to join the circuit of the metropolitan cultural capital whose lack in their parents has condemned them to their present, strongly perceived, ignominy; Doon School education is beyond the means of men such as PK and teaching at the School is the only practical way acquiring the cultural and social capital of the metropolis for their children. For this reason, the majority of the teachers who have a clear perception of their own 'invisibility' and fundamental marginality as autonomous agents at the School do not, in fact, leave once they have "qualified for a pension". The concern with ensuring their children a foothold in the cultural world of the metropolis – was constantly reiterated in my conversations with some of the older teachers at the School.

To use a phrase John Berger (1965) employs to describe Picasso – the European provincial who conquered Paris – these children are the "vertical invaders" who arrive at the cultural metropolis through the "trap door" of the School. And for this ontological leap, their parents must pay through bartering their 'real' selves.

The children of the Doon School teachers move 'up' into the circuit of the metropolis through the 'trap-door' of the School but, like Picasso, they too remain conscious of being vertical invaders. They share this consciousness with another group at the School also constituted as its non-metropolitan Other: the so-called scholarship students funded by the central government. The scholarships are means tested, the ceiling on parents' income in 1992 being Rs 25,000 per annum; for the same year the annual fees for the School amounted to some Rs 20,000. The awards are made on a competitive basis through a series of tests.

The visibility of the scholars' separation from the various aspects of school life is particularly marked: they tend to congregate with other scholars, have very few friends from among the category of 'metropolitan' students and are the frequent objects of their humour. That the scholars form a distinct community within the School is recognised by both their teachers and their parents. The former speak of "adjustment problems" these students face at the School and the delicate, often overwhelming, nature of the mediation they must effect between the two very different environments of their home and the School. There is about them the eternal heaviness of lives lived in two distinct but unconnected worlds.. where to pledge commitment to the 'modern' world of the School would mean abandoning, or at least substantially abandoning, the affective ties of family. These students mostly avoided any open criticism of the School in their conversations with me although there were certain occasions on which they expressed the alienation the School milieu imposed on them. Their parents, however, were less inhibited in discussing the 'problems' faced by their sons at School, constantly characterising their children as 'outsiders' in the Doon School milieu.

It is in this sense that I wish to compare the teachers' children and the 'merit scholars' to Berger's portrayal of Picasso as a 'vertical invader'. Each remains "conscious of being a vertical invader, always [subjecting] what he has seen around him to a comparison with what he brought with him from his own country, from the past" [Berger 1965:41]. This consciousness is manifested in the conciliation which both the above groups must effect in order to come to terms with an environment which, whilst making of them objects of jest, also holds the only possibility of a future more prosperous than that which was the lot of their parents; their affections for the School, unlike their metropolitan counterparts, are guarded, and they speak of it as a staging point, rather than as 'home'. They live out their school lives – playing, eating, and studying – in tightly knit congregations of their own, speaking, sometimes, of parents too inti-midated to be regular visitors. This private consciousness of Otherness is voiced warily in public, lest its articulation obstruct their passage to the new shores of 'citizenship'.

But for the non-metropolitan teachers of the School – their children launched upon new lives – life must be lived in the debris of 'backwardness' and 'unsuitability'. It is of them that SS, a Doon ex-student and now himself a public school Headmaster, speaks when he says that schools such as Doon are "no longer getting good teachers... these are people who have ended up here after having tried everything else... quite second rate people".

If Picasso's ascent into the European metropolis is the image appropriate to a section of the student population at the School then the situation of men such as PK may be compared to the case of one Herbert Sherring, applicant to the position of Headmaster at the boarding school for Indian princes, the Mayo College in Ajmer in 1907.[17] This was a position reserved for Europeans, and Sherring, an Englishman born in India, was denied the position, as his files indicate, because he carried the taint of having been born in the colonies. His was a 'lack' for "having been brought up in this country" (NAI). The distance in time which separates Sherring from PK does not, I think, invalidate the comparison; my intention is to point to those "counterintuitive imaginings that must be grasped when history is said to be remade, and a rupture is too easily declared because of the intuition of freedom that a merely political independence brings for a certain class" [Chakravorty-Spivak 1989].

In the context of the Doon School and its citizenship project, men such as PK are the post-colonial Creoles: those who travel 'up' to the 'metropolis' in the hope of a brighter future, but who must then spend their lives there irreparably marked by the cultural and social 'affliction' of "having been brought up in this country" .

Recently, there has been scathing criticism of the "decline in prestige" experienced by 'memory' during 'modern' times [Casey 1987]. "The fact is", Casey says, "that we have forgotten what memory is and what it can mean; and we make matters worse by repressing the fact of our own oblivion. No wonder Yates can claim that "we moderns have no memory at all" [Casey 1987:2]. Yet it is precisely through a Nietzschean "active forgetfulness' [Nietschze 1983], a practice Casey disparages as inducing a state of 'half-reality', that the 'non-metropolitans' of the Doon School come to terms with the overwhelming burden of their invidious place in the School community.

"Active forgetfulness" is a corollary to the situation of the double bind. Many of the older 'non-metropolitan' teachers at the School, now in their fifties, have spent almost their entire working lives at the School, but still do not share the rapport the 'metropolitan' teachers have with both the students and the power structure of the School. Yet their talk of the School – memories of their early days, dialogues about the present – is animated by an almost unbridled enthusiasm. 'Forgetfulness' in this context is the negotiation and a vehement appropriation of a space of dignity; it is the creation of a forgetful memory through which dignity is salvaged by discarding the experience of pain lest it become overwhelming.

VI
Gendered Localities

I will conclude by returning to the image of the School as a microcosmic representation of the metropolitan milieu and to my earlier discussion of the connection between the metropolitan 'sentiment' and sentiments of the civil society.

I have argued in this paper that the citizenship project at the Doon School is one whose philosophical underpinnings lie in the ethos of metropolitan and technocratic existence and that those who are seen to belong to other milieux become the Other of this project. The contractual foundation of 'modern', metropolitan existence stands in direct contrast to the milieu of the "small town and rural existence... rooted in the steady equilibrium of unbroken custom" [Simmel 1971:325]. The most salient characteristics of the metropolitan ethos are "punctuality, calculability, and exactness, which are required by the complications and extensiveness of metropolitan life" (1971:328). "Cities" Simmel suggested, "are above all the seat of the most advanced economic division of labour. It [the city] is a unit... which is receptive to a highly diversified plurality of achievements" (1971:325). Contract provides the means through which the diverse elements of the metropolis interact 'free' from the "trivialities and prejudices which bind the small town person".

The image of the contractual settlement is also central to the School. Prior to its establishment, the School would like to claim, Indian educational institutions functioned within the "sensory-mental phase of small town and rural existence" [Simmel 1971:325], resulting, as Doon's official history puts it,

> ...in a variety of institutions... which reflected the social environment in which they existed. There were Hindu tols and Muslim madarasas, both of which imparted learning in their respective religious traditions. There were [also] the newer Christian mission schools....
> The System established at these and other institutions did not seek to educate their students for the challenges of the future. Instead they maintained the status quo, instilling in their students all the taboos and conventions of a rigidly structured society [Singh 1985:9].

This, then, is 'the mental life' of the 'non-metropolis', resting "on feelings and emotional relationships. These latter [in turn] are rooted in the unconscious levels of the mind and develop most readily in the steady equilibrium of unbroken custom"

[Simmel 1971]. "Lasting impressions", Simmel says, "the slightness in their differences, the habituated regularity of their course and contrasts between them" characterise the life of the 'non-metropolis'. The Doon School, on the other hand, is marked by the unmistakable signs of metropolitan life: diversity of population; wilful arbitrariness in the selection of this population; lack of barriers to entry; the intrinsic "punctuality, calculability, and exactness" of its daily routine; the prolific elaboration of the acts of that daily routine. Within it we find a "rapid telescoping of changing images,... and the unexpectedness of violent stimuli... [a] psychological condition [created] ... with... the tempo and multiplicity of economic, occupational and social life" [Simmel 1971:325] The School reproduces the conditions of the metropolis through a metonymy of content: gathered here are "children of all castes, creeds, religion and colour, without distinction" [Singh 1985].

The metropolitan imaginary finds play at the School, then, through both abstract and concrete acts which attempt to mime the metropolis. The abstract elements may be grouped under the rubric of 'school ethos': the reiteration of the idea of the 'free' flow of people and knowledge within the School's domain, for instance. The materiality of metropolitan life is represented through the scattered tableau of archetypal metropolitan spaces: the library (with its extended opening hours) and the Rose Bowl amphitheatre for the gratification of 'civilised' senses, the utilitarian red-brick presence of the School's main building (once a laboratory), the dormitory accommodation with its 'anti-status' (that is, 'anti-primitive') connotations and the School council as a manifestation of the contractual-democratic existence.

As well, the School's metropolitan imaginary is also constructed through an articulation of its 'negatives' and a conscious strategy of delineation. The 'non-metropolis' at the School – the non-metropolitan teachers and the scholarship boys – is confined to the borderlands of School life. These define the School's metropolitan consciousness through being confined to the margins of its existence. The technique of 'bordering' is, of course, intrinsic to defining the centre

The "stories of the origins of civil society", Carol Pateman says, can be found "in the classical social contract theories of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" [Pateman 1980:33]. It is in this sense that the Doon School can also be seen to represent its metropolitan ethos as constituting a vital ingredient of post-colonial civil society; and it is precisely here that we must Pateman's own 'story' regarding the silences "about the part of the story that reveals that the social contract is a fraternal pact that constitutes civil society as a patriarchal or masculine order" [Pateman 1980:33]. The modern metropolis, inasmuch as it may be seen as the concrete form of the contractual civil society, is a settlement of contemporary patriarchy. It is founded on the rejection of the 'paternal' forms of 'non-metropolitan' existence, whilst absorbing and "simultaneously [transforming] conjugal, masculine patriarchal right" [Pateman 1980:37]. We may say, along with Pateman, that if metropolitan life, through the notion of the social contract which provides its philosophical underpinning, represents the 'overthrow' of the rule of the father, then the " 'natural foundation' [of the metropolis] has been brought into being through the fraternal social contract" [Pateman 1980:43] – the rule of sons and brothers.[18] It is in this sense that the project of citizenship at the School lies deeply lodged in the interstices of a patriarchal logic and a masculine order. The logic of masculinity at the School inheres not so much in the emphasis on physical activity, adherence to which on the part of the students is erratic at best, but in the very metonymy of the metropolitan presence within the campus; it is the metropolitan *Geist* which saturates the being of the School, which simultaneously and unequivocally defines the 'citizen' as a male subject. In this way the sentiments of the metropolis speak of the settlements of the civil society as gendered localities.

The Doon School was part of the process of the fabrication of the dichotomised realms of the Indian 'home' and its antithesis: the 'rational', public world of institutions such as itself. Parents who had accompanied their children to the school on its opening day in 1935 had been "warned in advance" to "hand over" their wards to School authorities in the morning and to "keep away from them till the evening" [Doon School Book (DSB):3][19] when they would be invited for "tea" on the school campus. And when the parents joined their newly enrolled sons for afternoon tea, the latter would already be part of another world. For, "their measurements had been received in advance" [DSB:3-4] and "in the afternoon when the parents arrived, they found their boys all playing games in their school clothes" [DSB:3-4].

The resolution of "the problem of the nationality of Indians" was to be achieved, then, through handing over future citizens to the care of men (or fathers) and away from the pernicious environment whose chief guardians (in this line of thought) are women. Men would look after the well-being of the civil-society-to-come through their own institutions which in turn would reflect civil-society itself. The school uniform episode presented above can be read as part of the process of effecting a break between the world of men and that of women (of course, it also symbolised the passage from the 'native' to the non-native realm). The patriarchal compact through which the national project at Doon School was launched continues to both echoes and influences larger public debates about Indian nationhood.

It is here that the multiple strands of my article converge. Manifestations of masculinity at the School are not primarily expressed through techniques of the corporeal self; rather, they are elaborated through alignments with 'new' knowledges and 'new' forms of community, the idea of the contract. It is these that articulate the imaginings of a specific national community through the vocabulary of difference. This specific form of post-coloniality inscribes its territory against its various Others: so, not for it the masculinity of brute strength, for that belongs to the realm of one of its 'primitive' pasts, the feudal nobility which patronised the Mayo College at Ajmer. Its realm lies in the flux of 'pragmatic' actions and 'scientific' thoughts, contractual existence and the 'equality principle', for these signify a masculinity which sets it against the identities of the 'natives within'. This process of differentiation – of outlining a masculinity marked by the conspicuous absence of the body from the scene of robustness – is also the articulation of an insistent dialogue on the functioning of capital; it outlines both the 'requirements' of life under the regime of capital and the marginal fate of those who are seen to fall outside its ken.

Notes

1 The cultural and historical significance of the Doon School is fully outlined in my PhD thesis [Srivastava:1993a].

2 See my 'The Management of Water: Modernity, Technocracy and the Citizen at the Doon School' (1993b).

3 I have canvassed these issues more fully in my thesis [Srivastava 1993a].

4 I mean to point here to the lives of several prominent Samajis who combined thejr Brahmo religiosity with outstanding careers professional scientists and industrialists [Srivastava: 1993a].

5 This is part of Lefebvre's critique of the treatment of issues of spatiality by writers such as Julia Kristeva, Jacques Derrida, and Roland Barthes – that school "whose growing renown may have something to do with its growing dogmatism" [Lefebvre 1991:5]; inasmuch as these comments point to the 'disappearance' of the concrete subject, they are also applicable to discourses on the metropolis.

6 I use 'Gandhi' merely as a convenient shorthand to indicate an attitude. Clearly, Gandhi was not the only one who espoused 'anti-metropolitan' views.

7 I use this somewhat clumsy term 'non-metropolis' in preference to something more

clear-cut as 'rural' or 'provincial' in order to reflect the complexity of the Other of the metropolis in the post-colonial context. In many ways the culture and 'ethos' of the provincial town in India cannot be sharply differentiated from what may be referred to as 'rural ways'. The cultural continuity between the provincial city and the surrounding rural milieu, at least for north India, is an observable fact of provincial urban existence. It seems best, therefore, to express the opposition as that between the metropolitan milieu and that of the non-metropolis.

8 'De-propertied' in the Indian context should be seen to imply a larger process than that connected with personal possessions: it is the process of the cultural and economic disenfranchisement of sections of the population that is at stake here.

9 It could be suggested that this is a misreading of Pal's discussion of city life and that his 'little republic' derives from the 'village republic' idea popularised by, among others, Sir Charles Metcalfe [Inden 1990]. However, though Pal uses similar terminology, his intentions were, as this discussion suggests, quite different, and he quite clearly meant to convey the image of a metropolitan rather than a rural community. He had, after all, explicitly severed binds with the province. I am grateful to Jim Masselos for raising this issue.

10 My debt here to what Benedict Anderson calls the 'secular counterparts' [Anderson 1983:56] of religious pilgrimages should be obvious.

11 Document entitled *Innovative Leadership Provided by the Doon School* and published by the Doon School.

12 This is the earliest official history of the School.

13 This sorry state of affairs was also reiterated by the Report of the Education Commission of 1966.

14 One position on the School's Governing Council is reserved for an 'educator', usually the vice-chancellor of a prominent university.

15 There were several others of a similar background and 'prospects' to DL at the School during my stay there. I use his case as shorthand for all such teachers.

16 "As a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite", as Bhabha puts it [Bhabha 1984:126].

17 Foreign/Internal A File, December 1907, Nos 28-38. From E Giles, Director-General of Education in India to E H S Clarke, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department (National Archives of India, New Delhi. Hereafter NAI).

18 Of course, I don't mean to suggest that a large city may not provide more 'freedoms' for women in practice; my intention is to explore the philosophical moorings of the metropolis as an idea.

19 *The Doon School Book* (DSB) was an official history of the Doon School published in 1948.

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