

# Liminality and Urban Acceptance: A Case of Majnu ka Tilla, Delhi

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## Abstract

*This paper recognizes liminality as an important urban phenomenon that has an impact on lived experiences in the city. Looking through the lens of liminality allows an incorporation of a multilayered and processual approach that recognizes the in betweenness and ambiguities in the urban. To do so, the Tibetans exile community settlement of Majnu ka Tilla in Delhi, identified to be in a state of permanent liminality that is embedded in their practices of protractedness, is studied. Through an ethnographic research of the settlement, aspects of their lived experiences are examined to look into the political and cultural constructions of spatiality. Findings from the case study suggest that the indeterminate factors of their existence after forced exile have effectuated into a strong cultural resilience led gentrification despite the constant urge for urban acceptance and diffusion, both on paper and in society. This liminality has created a unique paradoxical coexistence of standing out yet urging to blend in, that has significant impact on its growth and identity patterns with respect to the rest of the city. In conclusion, the paper argues that a liminal perspective on complex urban situations provides a more holistic insight into the ambivalence between social, cultural and political relationships, at the threshold of the dualities that usually govern normative urban design praxis and theory.*

**Keywords:** Liminality, urban spaces, Tibetan exile community, urban design theory.

## INTRODUCTION

This paper recognizes liminality as an important urban phenomenon that has an impact on lived experiences in the city. Looking through the lens of liminality allows an incorporation of a multilayered and processual approach that recognizes the inbetweenness and ambiguities in the urban. The paper identifies the unique case of liminality at the Majnu ka Tilla in Delhi which has been in a protracted state of exile from Tibet since the last 61 years, and argues that the liminality induces complex occurrences crucial to develop a holistic understanding of an urban space. Such a conceptualisation redefines the changing dynamics of borders and boundaries that exist within the city and argues for developing a liminal perspective that focusses on the distinct energy and potential of

being in an indeterminate state. It challenges conventional disciplinary techniques and brings to fore the need for a more multi-layered and processual approach in urban design praxis and theory.

The article builds on ethnographic research and interviews conducted over multiple site visits to Majnu ka Tilla, Delhi between September 2021 [1] and February 2024. Discussions and interviews with long term residents and owners of commercial establishments were administered using semi structured questionnaires to chart the trajectory

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of the settlement and gain insights into the various aspects of their identity, history, sociality and culture. The incumbent Pradhan of the RWA was interviewed in his office at the Majnu ka Tilla to comprehend the historical context, the RWA's contribution in the development of the settlement and the latest cultural transformation. Also, an extensive discourse analysis was carried out on the phenomenon of liminality, drawing from the original conceptualisation of liminality by Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner.

The article is divided into three parts. Firstly, it traces the development of the idea of liminality from its conception to contemporary application in various disciplines, and identifies its significance in urban studies. Second, it outlines Majnu ka Tilla's history as it has evolved over the last 61 years and the ambiguities associated with its political, social and cultural constructions. The final section of this paper discusses how the settlement lives through liminality by focussing on the emergence of a paradoxical coexistence of an inside and outside space that portrays narratives of blending in and standing out at the same time with the rest of the city. The study concludes with the identification of a case of urban liminality that provides a more holistic insight into the ambivalence between social, cultural and political relationships, at the threshold of the dualities that usually govern normative urban design praxis and theory.

### **The Lens of Liminality: Looking through and Identifying**

Liminality is an anthropological concept developed by Arnold van Gennep in 1907, that refers to the transitional stage experienced during a cultural or social rites of passage [2]. Although his study was focused on small scale societies, the emphasis on the territorial aspects of passage and on the significance of middle stages of transition, has been understood as an aspect that can be applied to various other disciplines and contexts. The concept of liminality has enriched many other fields of social and political theory ever since, much beyond its original context.

Moving beyond the binaries of the hegemonic paradigm, contemporary understanding of liminality offers to address issues of spaces, processes and events that order and structure social, cultural and political life from the middle. With a focus on processual elements of communities and entities in transition, liminality addresses the experiential aspects of transition, that enables a clearer understanding of not only the *pre* and *post* of the transition but also the *during* phase. This processual understanding brings out the fact that the *pre* has an impact on the *during*, that cannot be looked at in isolation, and together they determine the *post*. This processual understanding becomes relevant in this study of the Tibetan community at Majnu ka Tilla, as they are located 'betwixt and between' articulations of political and cultural identity of their *Tibetanness* within exile. They are a community 'in waiting', and as an outcome of this indeterminacy their experiences and practices differ from those in relatively stable states.

Van Gennep's definitions of liminality, including the ceremonial tripartite of separation, margin or limen and aggregation, were further developed by anthropologist and ethnographer Victor Turner many years later in 1967 [3]. Conceptualizing liminality as the state of being betwixt and between two relatively stable states of being (Figure 1), Turner qualified the liminal to be ambiguous, lost and vulnerable and without any specific status or demarcation. Outlining the liminal to be a powerful period potent with possibilities and potentialities, Turner's study laid emphasis on *Communitas*, comprising of individuals experiencing the liminal stage together. His study expanded the idea to larger contexts and applications, and brought in the ideas of carnival, flow and play as part of liminoid experiences [4] [5].

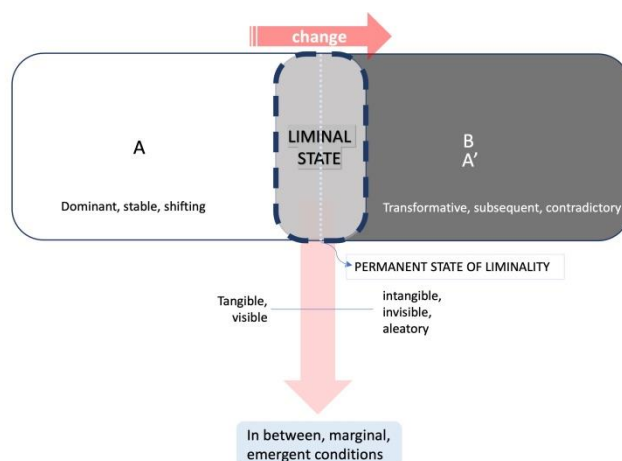
Bjorn Thomassen's *Liminality and the Modern*, in 2014, further develops liminality in the field of social and political theory, building upon the groundwork laid by van Gennep and Turner. His research positions liminality as 'betwixt and between' a situation or object, situated in any in-between place or moment, state of suspense, a moment of freedom between two structured world views [6] and

refers to moments or periods of transition during which the normal limits to thought, self-understanding and behavior are relaxed, opening the way to novelty and imagination, construction and destruction. Thomassens work, in an effort to centralize the idea of liminality from the margins, relates to urban design and architecture with respect to studies in everyday spaces [7], in-between spaces [8] and third places [9], to name a few. It is Homi K Bhabha's seminal work that brings a correlation of liminality to culture and discusses the 'third space', a liminal zone useful for framing cultural hybridity. This space, based on fantastic locations of cultural difference enabled new expressive cultural identities continually opened out performatively to realign the boundaries. Bhabha's reference to the interstitial passage between fixed identifications, what Turner referred to as stable states, opens up the possibilities of a cultural hybridity, that entertains differences 'without any assumed or imposed hierarchy' [10]. The strong Tibetan characteristics of the inside spaces of the settlement are an expression of refugees in exile who want to hold on to who they are, where they came from and where they want to return. This momentary otherness is created on the space that they make third through a specific cultural expression that stands apart from its location in time and space.

The aforementioned studies enable a positioning of why we need to look at the middle as a significant stage and space. Through these studies we understand that liminal entities are the ones which are neither here nor there; betwixt and between positions assigned by law, custom, convention and ceremony [3] and remain outside prior classifications, but still need to be classified anew. The need to focus on the middle, widely perceived as a temporary state which usually end with reincorporation, aggregation or integration back into the original social structure.

There is another extension of the study of liminality that we need to focus on. Arpad Szakolzai, building on the concept of liminality, suggests the possibility of a condition of remaining trapped in permanent liminality [11]. His study indicates that liminality may become a permanent condition when any of the phases in the tripartite sequence freeze, as if a film is stopped at a particular frame in motion. In such a liminal situation, as Bjorn Thommasen also stated, things may also take a dangerous turn [6].

Understanding these ideas of liminality become crucial to defining and analysing transitions, and bring out the qualities of uncertainty, flux, indeterminacy and ambivalence in everyday occurrences. This paper premises itself on recognising the city to be in transition and transformation and in a state of constant flux between established and normative norms and orders. The paper therefore suggests a recognition of liminality, and using it as a lens to comprehend and analyse the city spaces and spatialities, emerging out of the lived experiences [12], especially of liminal persons situated in liminal spaces.



**Figure 1.** Diagrammatical explanation of the liminal state existing between two relatively stable states or conditions.

Source: Author



**Figure 2.** Images Of Majnu Ka Tilla, Delhi Showing the Symbolic Nature of Cultural and Commercial Spaces Within the Settlement (Taken in Sept 2021 and Feb 2024)

Source: Author

### Historical Perspectives and Processes of Self-organisation of MKT

Majnu ka Tilla (MKT, as it is popularly known) is an informal refugee colony of primarily Tibetan refugees, on the banks of river Yamuna in New Delhi [2]. It is a unique repository of Tibetans in exile (Figure 2), the form of which is not replicated or found neither in other Tibetan settlements in India nor in other refugee settlements in India [13]. It also stands apart from other unauthorised colonies in Delhi due to its strong cultural identity [14]. Over the years, it has acquired many names—Chungtown or Changistan, due to the ever popular production of *chaang* here, Sanyeling—a name given as a blessing by the revered spiritual leader Dalai Lama, Majnu ka Tilla based on the gurudwara nearby by the same name, and New Aruna Nagar, a name christened by the then Chief Minister in 2000. The one that is most popular however, is Majnu ka Tilla, allegedly named after Majnu, a fond name given to a sufi mystic saint who ferried people across the river for free, as a service to God.

Around late 1950's and early 60's, thousands of Tibetans along with Dalai Lama were guaranteed asylum as refugees during the war with China. The Indian government introduced a Tibetan rehabilitation regime and set up designated settlements across the country. Administered under the CTA (Central Tibetan Administration), Majnu ka Tilla emerged as a spontaneous settlement. Initially they were accommodated in Ladakh Budh Vihar, a transit point for Ladakhi pilgrims and travellers on the outskirts of Delhi. Tents were set up on a large tract of land along the river. This place, popularly known as 'monastery' today was unable to handle the inflow of Tibetans, resulting in overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. Eventually, land was allotted to the refugees in 1963, on directions of the Ministry of External Affairs, on another tract of land about two miles up north along river Yamuna. There was no formal handover of the land to the Tibetans on paper, and even today the colony's

claims to land remain precarious. Majnu ka Tilla was a spontaneous settlement that was informally inhabited by the refugees, which was different from some of the other settlements that were set up by Government of India on leased or purchased land within the rehabilitation regime of Tibetans in India. Since the 1960's India has set up about 39 designated Tibetan settlements spread across the country under its Tibetan rehabilitation regime [15]. Being refugee spaces, most of such designated settlements were typically bounded spaces with their own dedicated infrastructure of Tibetan schools, monasteries, cultural institutions, healthcare, CTA administration offices etc.

Majnu ka Tilla sprung up as a spontaneous settlement, and that spontaneity has contributed to the shape it has taken today. Meant for the overflow of people seeking refuge in India, it existed outside the otherwise formal framework of rehabilitation, like mentioned before. The spontaneity emerged from the manner of occupation, as it was established on government land within tacit knowledge of the local administrative bodies but without any formal claim to the land. Today, the settlement is largely self-administered through community organisations such as the Residents Welfare Association (RWA), set up in 1965 but registered in 2004 located outside the bureaucratic structure of the CTA. The colony lacked access to any of the municipal services initially but only very recently has been allotted some services officially. The residents, in their interviews attributed much of their uniqueness to the condition of being bound together geographically and yet being free to grow intuitively and spontaneously within it.

In June 2006, a court notice stating that Majnu ka Tilla was to be demolished under the Delhi government's road expansion and Yamuna river beautification was served. The RWA countered this with the authorities, and in 2012 the court order was averted. Soon, under the Pradhan Mantri Uday Yojana, a central scheme that authorises illegal colonies in Delhi NCR to be treated like authorised colonies and its people like any other citizens of the country. Under the guidance of RWA, they submitted documents claiming ownership certificates over their land, asking for *mallikana haq*. Although they have got access to some municipal services after the recent regularization in 2019, this settlement has largely followed its own development trajectory of organic processes emerging out of necessity and needs. Although they devised their own mechanisms for survival due to the lack of formal planning measures, this self-organization did not take away from them the sense of belonging they have had for India. This came across clear when some of the third generation residents spoke about going back to Tibet if it gains freedom, but only to come back to normal life in India after that, which is now their Home.

The settlement is thus 'in waiting' and somewhere between the past life of their homeland, and their unsure future. Being a refugee always remains a strong part of their identity, even though over the years they have overcome differences of dress, language, culture and amalgamated with the vocabulary of the Indian society. The spontaneous origin of the settlement that led to the emergence of *extempore* self-organization mechanisms and growth patterns, and the strong community formation because of the clustering of the refugees together in one geographic location, attributed to its present urban form. This is classified as being in a state of liminality, being in the middle stages of time and space, and bearing characteristics that are both temporal and spatial.

In addition to this, with no immediate hope of return to an autonomous or free Tibet, the liminal period, originally understood as a transitory and short period or state of being has become elongated into a long term and possibly a permanent state. This happens as some of the Tibetan families enter into the third or fourth generation of exile. In this connection, Szokolzai argues against the simplistic tripartite separation to focus academic attention on the live experiences of the transition state that can have dangerous, troubling and anxiety generating implications [11]. Thus the Tibetans at Majnu ka Tilla are living in the protracted liminal stage of exile, that is of a permanent or long term nature. The fractured articulations of remaining in statelessness brings forth anxieties of identity and sense of belonging for the Tibetans living at Majnu ka Tilla in India. The liminality exists between the rupture

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from Homeland and return, and has become a constitutive condition of their exile, permeating into everyday lives through cultural and political identities. This liminal period has extended into an elongated, limbo like permanent liminality characterised by such ambiguities and ongoing-ness.

### **Living Through Liminality**

We will now look at some of the manifestations of liminality on the everyday lives of the settlement and how that impacts the study of the urban environment as part of urban design. The identity of the refugees has been in a liminal state that exists between being politically active as voters but not claiming rights like citizens in India. To start with, the legal framework of India recognizes them as ‘foreigners’, under the colonial era Foreigners Act of 1946 and under the Registration of Foreigner’s Rule of, 1992; and *simultaneously*, as ‘refugees’ in the official Indian administrative discourse in reference to giving them long-term refuge and rehabilitation [15]. The universal exile Tibetan citizenship under the CTA allows them to participate in political activities within themselves, and thereby keeps alive the claims that the exile community is a ‘population in waiting’, expecting to return to their homeland and not merely be treated like a displaced group seeking rehabilitation. They seek/experience a sense of belonging both with the host and with their homeland, the latter including the historical and political associations they hold on to. The production of statelessness thus, is a clear outcome when one looks at the attributes of identity. Over the years, they have been issued a registration certificate (RC) by the RWA, to be renewed every year by making an appearance at the office, another process that keeps alive the claims that the exile community is a ‘population in waiting’. Apart from that, the Indian government has issued a PAN (Permanent Account Number), Aadhar Card (an identity card that every Indian citizen is expected to have) and Ration card (though not much in use now) to all who have been staying long term in India. The latest to this list is voter IDs, which is otherwise issued only to Indian citizens as per law. But does that apart from granting voting rights, equate them with the rest of the citizens in India? The statelessness escalates when, under the Indian Citizenship act, citizenship cannot be claimed as a birthright by those who were not born here, and the country neither denies nor grants citizenship. Refusal for citizenship means they cannot buy property without the cumbersome process of sanction by the Indian government, or apply for regular jobs. Yet, they are issued voter IDs, plainly to facilitate vote banks. The dual control of CTA and the Indian state, the former keeping them close to their origins, has only added to lack of ownership and belongingness to one place.

The RWA that was formed as a self-organization mechanism has played an important role in representing the settlements interest to planning authorities. Preventing the settlement from demolition, dealing with natural calamities like floods, and perusing the common interest of people have been on their cards. The RWA had been working towards the impending regularization of the colony, aiming to get better access and rights to the city, and with an aspiration to align with the other unauthorized colonies. The aspiration towards a stronger sense of belonging to the city and thus a better life for the upcoming generations is prevalent, a fact stemming from my conversations with the locals about their growing associations with India as their home now, especially among the newer generations. Although their associations with Tibet are still strong, they want to feel belonged to the *here*, what they have at present. The liminal period, especially when prolonged indefinitely, becomes uncomfortable and induces anxiety [6].

Meanwhile, multiple self-organization processes emerged out of the lack of any formal processes to administer their growth and development and an anxious need to ‘settle’ and establish some sort of stability. Survival in a situation like this, itself evokes creative and makeshift solutions, and the residents of Majnu ka Tilla were no exception to this. They developed their own mechanisms to cope, most of which were neither totally informal nor formally recognized by the normative authorities. For instance, as their economic status improved, Tibetans used extra-legal arrangements such as *benami* as an informal means to generational claims [2]. This system is not recognized by authorities for land ownership but still has a certain amount of paperwork involved and is not completely informal. Like

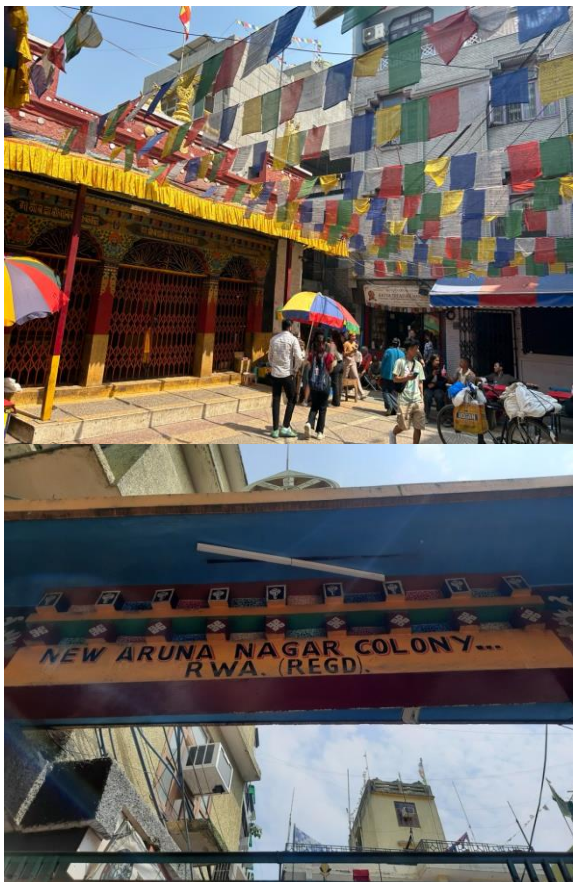
mentioned before, the RWA played a major role in the regularization process, with the intention of getting rid of this inbetweenness at least to some extent and achieving some sort of stability in their lives.

Majnu ka Tilla has been through fluid negotiations between formal and informal spaces, at the helm of its RWA, itself outside of a recognized formal mechanism. With the regularization process initiated, the place has now been (partially) accommodated into formal municipal processes, aligned with other unauthorized colonies of Delhi. In doing so, it has reclaimed its rights more than appeals for refuge, and strategized greater security of tenure. However, this has emerged to be in contradiction with perception that Delhi's urban residents have of their Tibetan identity, which is the basis of Majnu ka Tilla's genesis and survival over the decades and the cornerstone of its recent commercial success, as shall be discussed below.

The recent large-scale conversion of residential properties to commercial use, like cafes, shops and hotels, combined with the rising popularity of Majnu ka Tilla as a city level destination in media reports expose its phenomenal growth and commercialization. A popular destination for both tourists and residents of Delhi, it has in the past decade developed from a purely residential refuge colony into a thriving commercial hub, with a market for Tibetan handicrafts like (stone jewelry, showpieces), street food (*laphing, momos, thukpa*) and fine dining for Korean and Continental delicacies. The place is now strewn with colorful flags, one of the most visible symbols of their culture, and illuminated with Tibetan names of the shops and cafes. Along the edges, many places are getting converted into hotels, complimenting the transit hub to facilitate movement to Dharamshala, that it remains to be. Tibetan festivals are celebrated in full glory and the shopkeepers are seen wearing their local dresses and speaking native language. The transformations of the built become apparent when additions of floors and sections to the floor plate are visible in the haphazard appearances of stairways and entrances. The central spine, along which all the restaurants and shops are lined has penetrations deeper inside. This has opened up Majnu ka Tilla to the outside world now, such that the once private spaces of the inner core are now exhibited as a public spectacle (Figure 3).

Over the last decade, the enterprising attitude of the residents, as is visible from the study, shows how they have brought forward their *Tibetanness* to generate economy. The urban residents of Delhi find much of a 'cultural hub' here, and are fascinated by this 'island' of Tibetan culture, much in contrast to the rest of the city. The meandering inner lanes of Majnu ka Tilla, themselves a novelty for visitors, thrive on a display of this culture using various symbolic forms. Undoubtedly this has created a *spectacle*, a display for the world to see.

Survival, and building economic resilience contributed to this process, as it also helped them stay close to their roots something that their teachers have guided them to do. Sticking to the land was a necessity, but sticking to their culture, especially in the sense of *being seen* as belonging to that culture has become an outcome of this economic transformation. Something that helped in this situation was a change of perception of the rest of the city towards the settlement. Earlier perceived as a place of crime, illegality and sale of drugs [16], the settlement rectified its image by stopping the production of *chaang*, a local wine. The place was earlier visited mostly by students of Delhi University and tourists who were using it as a transit hub to go towards Himachal etc. However, the 'facelift' now is transforming the once intimate hippie, touristy neighborhood into a bustling commercial destination for urban residents of Delhi. It gives them a chance to experience a non-local culture within the city. This has led to two things—one is the centralization of the place which was earlier in the periphery, and second is gentrification. The centralization is visible in the extensively growing number of visitors, large scale media coverage and popularity. The gentrification happened as more and more upmarket cafeterias and shops opened up. [16]



**Figure 3.** Social Spaces within Majnu ka Tilla(above) and the entrance gateway (below) (taken in Feb 2024 and Sept 2021 respectively)

Source: Author

Articles and news reports on social media beckon urban residents of Delhi to Majnu ka Tilla, and the special reference to its unique qualities of Tibetanness is unmissable. Articles swarming various platforms on the internet, refer to it as ‘Little Tibet’ [17] or ‘Microcosm of Tibetan Life’ [18], news articles talk about ‘Uncovering Majnu Ka Tilla’ [19], ‘Best Place for a Tibetan Feel in Delhi’ [20], ‘Shop and Savor at Delhi’s Mini Tibet’[21], ‘Discover the Savors of Santorini In Majnu Ka Tilla Delhi’[22] etc. A commercial transformation is thus visible—on the *inside*, people are resilient and enterprising and cannot get formal jobs; they see the demand for Tibetan culture in the outside world; want to open up to them; which also gives them a sense of belonging. *Outside*, perceptions about the place have changed increasingly after measures like banning of *chaang*, and there is a demand for unique urban experiences to break the mundanities of everyday life, and the qualities of Tibetanness found inside are appealing. The boundary between the inside and outside, therefore is both strengthened and blurred at the same time. In their bid to blend in with the rest of the urban ‘citizens’ of Delhi while, on the other hand, their survival and economic success depends on the qualities of Tibetanness which makes them stand out. The relationship of Majnu ka Tilla with the rest of the city, therefore remains in a blurry state, just like their status as refugees in India.

To elaborate further on these aspects of the relationship of Majnu ka Tilla with the rest of the city, we look at urban theories of carnivalesque and liminoid experiences brought out by prominent urban thinkers. In addition to the outward reach, a simultaneous set of inward formations has been found to occur. Majorly to facilitate the growing interest of the city in this Buddhist pop spectacle, the residents of Majnu ka Tilla, as a coping mechanism are turning more and more inward and making

their cultural narratives stronger within themselves. This may also be seen as an act of securing themselves from the urban segregation that the city is thrusting on them, and the discriminatory planning processes that they feel harassed with. The act of securing themselves, in general, is a bid towards feeling accepted by the city, both in paper—in terms of identity and citizenship; and in the space of the society—as a part of the city spatiality.

Interestingly, in a bid towards attaining *urban acceptance*—being an important aspect that was mentioned by the residents during conversations—has led to, quiet contrary to the intent, ghettoization. This ghettoization is fore-fronting the performative uniqueness of the place, creating a spectacle of the Tibetan culture for the world to see. This is akin to the carnivalesque qualities of limonoid experiences that Turner wrote about in his work, referring to the ‘fascinating shaking of routines’ to create a cultural space of human creativity that takes place in a limonoid. Robinson also writes about [23] the idea of carnival that substituted a double sphere of life creating an alternate space that enabled abundant freedom and equality. However, the carnival is only an example of the celebratory, entertaining [6] and potentially dangerous outcomes of liminality.

The associations that people have in/of the space either due to business, home or simply familiarity with food, challenges the need to be pure in terms of their refuge identity to make their exile relevant as their narrative of return [24]. The idea of third space during liminal situations, discussed earlier in the paper, gets exemplified here with the formation of a unique space that is different from its surroundings and also from its precursor in time. This third space has carnivalesque characteristics that are a performative display of their inherent qualities, like Tibetanness in this case, but are not necessarily a true representative of their beliefs. The residents talk about the impact of naturalizing themselves as citizens in host countries that points towards a certain amount of *cultural dilution* [24]. This cultural dilution contrasts the original intent of keeping their community and culture strong, inward and pure, going by the guidance of their spiritual leaders. So, on one hand the RWA is trying to normalize them as citizens, trying to dissolve the boundaries that exist between them and rest of the citizens, on the other, the ghettoized spectacle is getting created making them more and more bounded and inward, leading to cultural dilution.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper thus identifies the manifestation of the permanent state of liminality on the settlement by looking at three conditions prevalent there. The first is regarding the identity of these refugees that blurs between being voters and non-citizens. The second is regarding the status of the colony in the planning processes of the state, as it swings between being unauthorised and regularized, which has direct implications on the settlement pattern of growth. The third is with regard to the recent extensive commercial transformation and gentrification, typically rooted in the formation of a *spectacle*, emerging from their *Tibetanness*, and the simultaneous struggle to attain normalization into the city of Delhi as any other settlement. The first two, addressing a limbo of identity and planning processes also contribute to the third. This, the paper argues, leads to a simultaneous formation of a strong inside space that is inward and exclusive, which at the same time aims to integrate and normalize with the outside. The dynamic boundary paradoxically beholds the two conditions of blending in and standing out simultaneously. These conditions, being oppositional, materialise liminality on the urban pattern of the settlement further.

These conditions of liminality become important to recognize and acknowledge, in order to better understand the lived experiences of users of the urban environment. Keeping a liminal perspective requires an approach that focusses on the middle, the temporal and the transitory, thereby breaking away from the dualities that dominate conventional urban planning and design practices. The multidisciplinary study of liminality also brings to fore that the definition of space is not just limited to the spatial aspects, but is actually made up of multiple factors as well, that shape it. Using a multilayered and processual approach of looking at urban spaces that are a consequence of various

social, cultural, political and temporal factors from the ground up, allows for a recognition of the inherent processes involved that shape space. This recognition is crucial to effective urban space analysis and design, the absence of which a stumbling block in the design of our cities today. This paper thus establishes the significance of identifying liminality as an urban phenomenon that occurs within it, while also demonstrates the implications of using liminality as a lens, keeping a liminal perspective for spaces to better understand the processes thriving within them.

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