Dundee, migration, and the historic jute trade: interweaving Bengali-Dundee cemetery practices and spaces

Chapter 5
Dundee, Migration, and the Historic Jute Trade: Interweaving Bengali-Dundee Cemetery Practices and Spaces

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5.1 Introduction

In the summer of 2020, in the wake of the US Black Lives Matter movement, a series of protests emerged in cities across the world. In Britain, considerable attention turned to the material representations of the nation's imperial colonial past. The Leader of Dundee City Council, John Alexander (Scottish National Party), was said to be "'horrified' to learn of the city's historic ties to the slave trade" (Dundee Courier, 2020). Alexander was specifically responding to George Kinloch, memorialised in 1872 by the first statue erected in the city of Dundee. Underneath the statue, the plaque includes a section of his address of 1831 where he stated, "I am an enemy to slavery in all its forms." Less remarked upon was his inheritance of the Grange estate in Jamaica, a slave plantation he inherited from his uncle and later sold.

The city of Dundee is the fourth largest city in Scotland located on the northern banks of the River Tay with an estimated 2020 population of 148,820 (Scottish Government, 2021). Currently, Dundee is a city of two halves, with the wealthiest neighbourhoods rising and the poorest neighbourhoods moving downwards in the most recent Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2020); a third of the city's localities are considered amongst the most disadvantaged in Scotland, and many

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A. Maddrell et al. (eds.), *Mobilities in Life and Death*, IMISCOE Research Series, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-28284-3_5

poverty indicators show Dundee to be below the Scottish average (Dundee City, 2019; Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2020). The city has been the home for varied groups of immigrants and refugees including a Jewish community established in the city during the nineteenth century. Whilst Dundee is a predominantly white city (94%), British South Asians are the largest ethnic minority population in the urban area. About 2.6% of Dundee's population identifies as South Asian: ethnically Indian (1%), Pakistani (1.4%) and Bangladeshi (0.2%). The Hindu and Muslim faiths are most commonly associated with Dundee's South Asian community (Muñoz, 2011). The Scottish Muslim community is about 1.4% of the national population according to the 2011 census and primarily located within urban clusters in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Dundee.

Historically, Dundee held an active role within the British Empire, particularly through the trade in and production of jute from and with Bangladesh. The imperial networks between these two locations precipitated the two-way movement – imperial mobilities – of jute, people, and expertise. In contrast there has been an active distancing of contemporary British society, particularly within Scotland, from legacies of imperialism to the extent that a recent legal challenge from the Scottish government argued it had been a victim rather than enthusiastic protagonist in colonialism. Dundee has rarely been discussed as a postcolonial city despite the interwoven imperial past that created the wealth of Dundee "jute barons" alongside working-class deprivation (see Cox, 2013) or the development of a Bengali community in the city to work in the jute mills from the 1960s and 1970s (Jones & Davenport, 1972). Thus, to engage with Dundee as a postcolonial city is to engage with the histories of British Empire. Our chapter contributes to work that critically assesses ethnic minority experience in Scotland, casting light on questions of diverse ethnic identities, mobility and citizenship (Ansari, 2007; Bond, 2017; Davidson et al., 2018; Harris, 2018; Hunter, 2016; Hunter & Meer, 2018; Jassal, 2015; Muñoz, 2011; Saeed et al., 1999).

We draw on both postcolonial and mobilities scholarship, situating mobility and migration within a long historical context, engaging with the neglected intersections between mobilities and colonialism. Specifically, we argue this colonial legacy set the conditions for present day Bengali and other Scottish Muslims to create their understandings of home and belonging. We explore this idea through the development and negotiation of Muslim burial space in the city, and see how the claiming of rights, in this case the right to a dignified burial, is entangled with multigenerational senses of belonging, practices of faith, and experiences of bureaucracy. Whilst citizenship rights have most usually been explored in terms of legal rights, lived practices, and the right to live with dignity, greater attention is turning towards how citizenship is enacted or limited in relation to death and associated spaces and rituals (Hunter, 2016; Jassal, 2015; Maddrell et al., 2021). Our work focuses on the lived experiences of community members and how these have shaped community organisation around burial practices.

In this chapter, we first explore the legacy of colonial connections between Dundee and the Bengal Delta and outline the history of the jute trade between these regions. After a brief discussion on methodology, we secondly discuss Dundee's

Muslim communities and their histories and experiences of migration. Finally, we trace the development of Muslim burial in the city to situate ethnic difference within a wider landscape of citizenship and belonging. We argue that through situating the death practices and decision-making of ethnic minority communities within a wider understanding of how mobilities impact upon their life experiences, and within a larger postcolonial context, we understand spaces of death as part of the making of minority identities in Scotland.

5.2 Jute, Identities, and Mobilities

Re-evaluating understandings of the nation state, citizenship, and representations of history are complex processes. However, without critical examination of the legacy of colonialism, our understanding of the presence of ethnic minority groups in the UK remains partial. The continuing political framing of Black and ethnic minority identity as outside of the nation state has acted to place their needs as outside those of commonplace Britishness (El-Enany, 2020; Gilroy, 1987). Despite the various reformulations of a visible minority population through multiculturalism to integration and cohesion, minorities have struggled to have their claims recognised as full members of British society (Worley, 2005). In the wake of rejecting forms of state multiculturalism, British South Asian communities in particular faced stigmatisation for their failure to integrate and the living of "parallel lives" (Cantle, 2001). Islam in particular has been subject to ongoing criticism within Europe as incompatible with asserted ideas of European culture (see Kundnani, 2007 for a discussion). Yet Muslim communities, particularly through colonial legacies, have been part of British culture for centuries.

The "horror" John Alexander, Dundee City Council's Leader, expressed to learn about Scottish, and specifically Dundonian, lineages to slavery reflects a wider political denial of Scotland's involvement in the British colonial project. Dundee's place within imperial networks is clearly indicated in the city's place identity captured in the alliterative phrase "jute, jam, and journalism," coined as a reminder of the three principal industries that established the city's wealth in the industrial era. Historical evidence shows Scotland's extensive active participation in colonialism (MacKenzie & Devine, 2011), such as large proportions of Scottish civil servants in some sectors in the British Bengal (Devine, 2003, p. 250), and large numbers of East India Company trade permits given to Scottish merchants (Linpää, 2018). Given that the ideal growing conditions for jute are "tropical rainfall, warm weather, and high humidity" (GoJute, n.d.), its connections to Dundee are through colonial trade routes. The Bengal Delta is intertwined with Dundee and British colonialism, with samples of jute taken from there and sent to Kew Gardens as part of the accumulation and scientific sorting of the resources of the British Empire (Cox, 2013). It was in the 1850s that jute became central to the British textile industry, and in the ensuing decades, jute weaving became one of the principal industries in Dundee and the Bengal Delta, deeply linking these two places (see Lenman & Donaldson, 1971).

In addition to local labour exploitation, the jute trade held an even more disturbing dimension in the wider framing of its production; the woven jute cloth that Dundee is famous for is directly connected to practices of slavery. Although commonly known for its usage for ship sails and sacks, one of the other main usages of this rough and uncomfortable cloth, that required the addition of whale oil to make it flexible enough to weave, was to clothe enslaved people. In this way Dundee directly benefited from slavery and the mill owners of Dundee strongly opposed abolition: "The linen manufacturers were ardent supporters of slavery, which they viewed as integral to their trading relationship with the plantations, and they fought furiously against its abolition" (Cox, 2013, p. 16). Although both at that time and in the present time there are significant inequalities in the wealth distribution in the city (see above), Dundee's industrial era wealth, which has legacies that stretch into the present is, to a large extent, built upon colonial trading and exploitation of the Bengal region through jute mills and the movement of individuals, capital, and expertise mobilised within the nexus of slavery and wider colonial exploitation.

Given these very direct and wide-ranging connections to the jute trade, the lack of knowledge of Dundee's imperial history of colonial exploitation seems more than an oversight or the vagaries of an obscure history. It enables a continuing narrative of British history that downplays the brutal dimensions of colonialism. Moreover, ethnic minority groups with ties to former colonial territories are framed as outside Britishness and considered immigrants. These narratives situate them as 'arrivals' rather than intermeshed with and territorially connected to the British metropole through colonialism. The current trend of placing of ethnic minorities as recent arrivals with uncertain relationships to Britain, denying those postcolonial ties, acts to frame their inclusion as a problem or challenge to the ordering of the nation state. Such a temporal-geographical framing separates the past and the present, and the metropole and the colony, which in fact have developed as connected fields of operation for centuries (Ogborn, 2007). Whilst there are varied definitions of postcolonialism and postcolonial cities, the historian Anthony King (2016) reminds us that one type of postcolonial city is one that is situated within the former colonial metropole. It is precisely these historical connections through the jute industry that contributed to the Bengali community that has settled in Dundee from the 1960s and 1970s, even during the decline of the Scottish textile industry, as political unrest unfolded in postcolonial South Asia.

Englishness, particularly under the Conservative governments that have put Theresa May and Priti Patel in the Home Office and have encouraged a "hostile environment" for migrants (El-Enany, 2020), has become associated with toxic forms of nationalism and far-right activity. In contrast, Scottishness has been politically embraced as a form of identity considered more racially tolerant than the English. Yet there is a need for caution in these representations and how their interrelationship with Scottish nationalism has been considered a progressive force. The basis for such claims are unclear and raise questions about the narrative that is being crafted (see Valluvan, 2019). Harris explains:

> There are various social and political factors that have contributed to such an attitude, for instance historical 'amnesia' regarding Scotland's role in British colonialism and imperialism, and the centrality of sectarianism and nationalism in Scottish politics, which some have argued has pushed racism off the political agenda. (Harris, 2018, p. 115)

The obscuring and distancing of Scottish imperial history has enabled the promotion of claims that there is less racism in contemporary Scotland than in England. More recent interventions have challenged the claim that Scotland has managed to create a non-racist society north of the border with England and that Scottish Asians can experience a life relatively free of racism (Davidson et al., 2018). On the other hand, scholars note that less research has engaged with racism and discrimination in Scotland compared to England and Wales (Hunter & Meer, 2018). Our work thus contributes to these wider debates around ethnic minority experiences in Scotland.

The mobilities turn within geographical and social science has generated an extensive literature. As we see throughout this volume, a key focus has been migration, with the argument that mobilities work aids in disrupting ideas of the nation state as a bounded and fixed territory (Hannam et al., 2006). It also considers how the experiences of mobile people or migrants vary and are infused with power relations not restricted to gendered and racialised identities and "this implies attending to obligatory as well as voluntary forms of travel" (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 10). However, less work has considered how mobilities might illuminate our understanding of the (post)colonial as an interwoven trajectory of peoples, materials, ideas, and expertise.

Established accounts of ethnic minority presence in Britain often turn to post-war migration as the starting point of ethnic change; the 1948 Windrush generation onwards – people who arrived to the UK from former British colonies in the Caribbean between 1948 and 1971 to fill post-war labour shortages (see British Library, 2021) – are often situated as the first point of British immigration. This is despite growing calls for Britain to engage with the longstanding Black presence in Britain and Europe (Olusoga, 2019) and to engage with its colonial history, including historical migrations and mobilities across the British empire (Ansari, 2007; Cresswell, 2010). Lakbir Jassal's (2015) work has been significant in linking death studies with mobilities. Focusing on non-Abrahamic Indian and Chinese minorities, she notes how bodily remains can be mobilised in different ways and that these mobilities can be a 'spatial tactic' for negotiating unsatisfactory necroregimes.

Other recent work has engaged with how Muslim communities' changing preferences to be buried in the UK are entangled with ideas of citizenship. Alistair Hunter's work in Glasgow showed how the search for a burial site for the Muslim community was met with hostility, with some opponents calling for bodies to be buried in Pakistan (Hunter, 2016). As Hunter (2016, p. 254) notes, "such discourse clearly expresses the governmental mode of belonging … a managerial attitude about what forms of otherness are to be permitted on national soil." For many people holding the Muslim faith it is important for a body to be buried as quickly as possible. Here mobility sheds light onto the multiple and complex attachments to a variety of places, and that burial intersects with closeness to living family members,

particularly children. The mobility of former migrants differs to those of British born children or those who have lived most of their lives in the UK. Both groups may be connected to an ancestral home but these ties are different. Yet these complexities are often lost in discourses of belonging and exclusion. Restrictions on mobility have often been deployed in relation to perceived racially different populations, particularly as a response to the immigration of former colonial subjects to the metropole (Miles, 1993).

The sociologists Gurminder Bhambra (2017) and Anne-Marie Fortier (2006) have both critiqued contemporary understandings of European identity. A contradiction emerges between the geopolitical project of Europe as one where those already within the EU have rights of movement and those without have no right of entry. Fortier raises a series of concerns about the project of Europe and how mobilities become fixed in place. She considers the emergence of an incompatibility for those with "diasporic connections" and a project that centralises local space and place attachment:

> 'Active citizenship' is defined through a scaled definition of practices: it requires the full presence of local residents so that their identities and attachments will be place-based; place of residence and place of belonging are aligned as coterminous, shutting down the possibilities of diasporic belongings that include, but are not bound to, the immediate place of residence. Consequently, migrants' multilocal ties deem them out-of-place because they are not 'here' although they should be. (Fortier, 2006, p. 316)

Mobilities do not flow in the same ways for all people but former migrants are a locus of suspicion or evidence that they can only ever partially belong in their place of settlement. European migration debates have tended to contrast a pre-existing imagined community (Anderson, 1983) with some form of homogeneity that is changed or disrupted through post-war migrations. In contrast, majority white communities are often considered static rather than mobile subjects, with their identity linked directly to local sites and the right to stay. Of course, other Muslim communities live in Europe, such as Turkish 'guest workers' who arrived in Germany and the Netherlands to assist in the post-war European construction. Postcolonialism provides a useful lens here, given the weight of Eurocentricism and the racist hierarchies that undergird colonialism (see Beebeejaun, 2022). European nation states have valorised whiteness and "othered" people of colour within racial grids that have drawn on colonial antecedents (Bhambra, 2016).

Dundee's historical jute trade, a part of the city's identity, has created deep ties between the city and the Bengal Delta, but the people that moved alongside the jute are often disconnected from this long and complex legacy. The contemporary manifestations of English and Scottish identity can work to portray Scotland as detached from the British imperial project, and mobilities work can also overlook postcolonial trajectories. In the next sections of this chapter, after a brief discussion of our methodological approach, we turn firstly to our biographical interviews to open up how some of the Scottish Muslim community arrived in Dundee. We then trace the development and negotiation of Muslim burial space in the city to demonstrate how the colonial legacy set the conditions for a sense of belonging in the Bengali community.

5.3 Methodological Approach

The research was conducted as part of an EU funded project researching cemeteries and crematoria as public spaces of inclusion within Europe (CeMi, see Introduction to this book). This research consists of qualitative fieldwork conducted in Dundee with a range of respondents including funeral directors, local government officials, staff within the burial service, community and religious representatives, and individuals from ethnic minority groups. In addition to semi-structured interviews with the aforementioned stakeholders, we conducted biographical interviews with community group members. Our first phase of research was conducted in Dundee in late 2019 and we followed up with online work between March to December 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This phase included virtual focus groups and telephone and Zoom interviews. In total, we conducted seventeen stakeholder interviews, eight biographical interviews, and one focus group, of which four biographical and four stakeholder interviews were with the Muslim community. The majority of these people were of Bangladeshi heritage (born, or Scottish Bangladeshi). Others were Scottish Pakistani and of African Asian heritage. The majority of stakeholder participants were white Scottish. Like many researchers our work was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and our planned second phase of work had scheduled focus groups which we were not able to convene. Due to this change of events, our second stage of research addressed the impact of the pandemic on experiences of bereavement and death management, although this is not the subject of this chapter.

We used topic guides for stakeholder and biographical interviews. For the former we asked respondents to discuss their background and their role, then moved to understandings of migrant and minority communities and their specific needs, and the usages of cemeteries and crematoria as a form of public space. The biographical interview guide addressed questions about the respondents' lives, their experiences related to death remembrance, and their usage and perceptions of cemeteries and crematoria. The use of biographical interviews has been considered an effective mechanism to understand migration and identity precisely because they bring together wider societal understandings or stereotypes of migrants with the diverse lived experiences and reflections of individuals. Elise Pape and colleagues note there are limited empirical studies of migrants that draw upon biographical studies, but that these offer the opportunity to gain nuanced perspectives on lived experience:

> Biographical analysis allows for an exploration of migration and integration processes by focusing on how they are formed, experienced, and interpreted by involved migrant subjects themselves … Biographical approaches further underline the need to understand how individuals – when confronted with challenging political circumstances – react by adapting and developing their (more or less strategic) agency. (Pape et al., 2021, p. 372)

Through engaging with biographical interviews, there are opportunities to understand the everyday negotiation of identity and incorporate the voices of minority communities.

The material was transcribed verbatim by the researchers and then coded inductively in Atlas.ti. These codes were then developed in dialogue with other research associates working across the CeMi project. All transcripts in the CeMi project were additionally coded for comparative analysis. In this chapter we only use transcripts from Dundee that specifically mention Muslim burial or community needs.

5.4 Dundee's Muslim Communities: Trajectories and Mobilities

As noted earlier, around 2.6% of Dundee's population consider themselves to hold a South Asian identity. Much of Dundee's South Asian population arrived from the 1950s onwards with significant arrivals in the 1970s and the 1980s. The city also has a substantial international student population. The Dundonian ethnic minority population is a complex one that has followed many different trajectories. Ibrahim,[1] a local imam we interviewed, noted that his mosque had over twenty nationalities in attendance with many of their congregants studying at the university or associated with the oil and gas industry. However, these congregants represent a changing demographic compared to the 1950s when many of the arriving migrants came from South Asia, often studying and working in the jute industry.

Mobilities are often divided in the literature between choice and necessity, however, forced migration does not provide an adequate lens to discuss South Asian migration to Britain. Our biographical interviewees engage with the complexities of this decision-making. The ongoing political conflict and violence in former East Pakistan (contemporary Bangladesh), resulting first from the British withdrawal from India and the country's partition and then from the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War gaining independence from Pakistan, combined with the post-colonial connection between Bengal and Dundee and opportunities for study, were given as reasons for migration to the city. Ansha, a Muslim Bangladeshi woman in her 60s, notes the personal difficulties she and her husband faced, and his brother's murder during the 1971 war:

> My husband came to Dundee in 1969 to study jute engineering. Most of the senior citizens from Bangladeshi origin in Dundee came to the UK to study or work in the jute industry. Then the chaos had started in Bangladesh prior to the liberation war. … My husband wanted to go back after finishing his studies, but his brother's assassination had changed everything. He did not go back until 1976 for safety because he was politically connected in Bangladesh. He got permission to stay in the UK because of the war situation in Bangladesh.

Yet the connections are manifested within the physical landscape of both Dundee and Bangladesh. Ansha continues:

[1] For reasons of confidentiality, interviewees and other research participants have been given pseudonyms, unless there is a specific agreed reason to name a participant.

> There were more than 35 huge industrial jute factories in Dundee which had remained abandoned for many years. I saw big ships full of raw jute come from Bangladesh to Dundee port. When I came in 1976, I saw those empty and dilapidated industrial structures, most of them are now demolished and replaced with residential flats. After the liberation war of Bangladesh, the supply chain was disrupted and gradually all factories were closed down. Narayanganj [a city near Dhaka, former home of the biggest jute mill in Asia] is still known to some people as Asia's Dundee.

South Asian migration to Dundee occurred in the face of a declining industry in the post-war period. The material legacy of the jute industry in Dundee is evident in the urban fabric. During the interview with imam Ibrahim he gestured towards the area surrounding the mosque: a landscape of abandoned warehouses of the industry – some being converted.

Another of our respondents, Shrivali, told us that her husband had come to Dundee in the 1960s before returning to Bangladesh to get married. She arrived with him in the late 1970s and her experiences point to the treatment of minorities as well as the severe deprivation in the city. Firstly, she notes that while in principle Bangladeshis had the right of full British citizenship, meaning they had historical rights of settlement, their everyday experiences were different. For her, a Muslim Bangladeshi woman now in her 60s, the ways in which her husband was excluded from many industries emphasises the structural racism they experienced:

> Bangladeshis in Dundee did not get other opportunities [besides accommodation] to enjoy full citizenship in Britain. The Bangladeshis are considered as outsiders and government did not help them in employment, financial support etc. and they remained disadvantaged and excluded in various ways. My husband tried decent jobs, but he was not successful. He did restaurant jobs, later started a restaurant business with Bangladeshi people.

Shrivali notes that they had emphasised the importance of education to their children in order to improve their opportunities and how they were all now professionals in their adulthood.

Ranesh, a Muslim Bangladeshi man in his 60s, also reflects the complexity of mobilities. Beyond the transnational journey, the interviewee talked about the various places he had lived following work opportunities and then through marriage:

> There was labour shortage in the factories and so I got opportunities to work in factories across the English cities, first Manchester, then London, Bristol. Later I moved to Glasgow for work and I met my wife there. We got married in 1974/1975. My wife is white-Scottish, and she is originated from Dundee; she wanted to be around her extended family and so we moved to Dundee in 1978. I started to work in a jute factory in Dundee, but the jute factory was closed afterwards. Then I started to work in restaurants and also have started my restaurant business.

Many of the people that migrated to the UK from Bangladesh struggled to find good economic opportunities and faced forms of direct and structural racism, and research shows Bangladeshi groups are one of the most economically disadvantaged minorities in the UK (e.g., Li & Heath, 2020). Experiences, such as being informally barred from professional work or work controlled by trade unions, had profound impacts on life choices.

There is, therefore, a long-standing connection between jute and the Bengali community in Dundee, and mobilities have impacted upon their life experiences within this larger postcolonial context. Our respondents' experiences of exclusion and discrimination when they migrated in the 1960s and 1970s to work in the jute industry are an important frame to understand the claim making process of burial we explore in the next section, because the colonial legacy set the conditions for present day Bengali and other Scottish Muslims to create their understandings of home and belonging. We now, therefore, turn to explore the development and negotiation of Muslim burial space in Dundee, and see how the claiming of rights, in this case the right to a dignified burial, is entangled with generational senses of belonging, practices of faith, and experiences of bureaucracy.

5.5 Changing Muslim Burial Practices in Dundee

Death rituals and practices are situated within religious, ritual, family, and personal preferences but they cannot be understood outside the individual life experiences and journeys of Dundonian Muslims. To call a place home is complicated and revolves around contingent as well as strategic choices. Formal Muslim burial in Dundee dates back to 1967 (this is the earliest date of a burial in the Muslim section in the Eastern Cemetery lair book which holds the records for the cemetery manager) – where a small section of a municipal Victorian cemetery was dedicated to Muslim burial – and develops through to the establishment of a private Muslim cemetery in 2014. Tracing the changes in Muslim burial in Dundee from this first known burial to the current day enables us to see how citizenship and belonging are experienced and develop through burial. It is the colonial legacy that shapes the possibilities and challenges of belonging in this context, and Muslim, or specifically Bengali, burial is one way in which we can see and explore this.

The history of Muslim burial in the UK more broadly dates back to the nineteenth century. Lascars, South Asian seamen, settled and passed away in British port cities, including London, Liverpool, and Glasgow. Yet others passed away on ships and those left responsible for the deceased struggled to bury them due to a lack of provision for Muslim burial. The burial of lascars within local communities is part of the lineage of Muslims who died away from ancestral homelands. Many of the early graveyards provided for lascars were lost and their graves unmarked (Ansari, 2007, p. 565).

In Dundee, Muslim migration centres around the 1960s and 1970s, when people from Bangladesh came to work in the jute industry. Amir, a member of the Muslim community, explained the context of the first known Muslim burial, which created the first Muslim cemetery section in Dundee:

> I'm gonna go back into the history of it a wee bit if you don't mind? So it gives you an idea how [Muslim burial] started up in Dundee. We used to get ships in from Bangladesh … for jute. And one occasion there a ship came across and a Bangladeshi or a Muslim passed

> away, that came up on the ship. And when they came and docked up here someone from the Council or the port actually said look who do we get in contact with. In those days there were very few Muslims working in the city but they got a hold of someone working in the factories and they said look we've got a Muslim person who's passed away, what shall we do? And that's where it came from, the area for Muslim burials. (Amir, Scottish Bangladeshi man, 50s)

The area Amir is referring to is a small section of Eastern Cemetery, a Victorian cemetery in the East of Dundee, opened in 1863. The earliest burial recorded at this section dates to 1967, who we may assume was the man referred to by Amir in the story above. There are now 94 graves in this section. The costs of burial for this man were covered by the Muslim community that was present in the city at the time, and the culture of mutual financing soon established itself:

> And what stemmed from that [the death of the Muslim man and the provision of a Muslim section] was that the [Muslim] people who were working, they actually contributed towards the cost of that burial basically. And from then, after some years it was: 'Why don't we have an organisation where we put money in each year, a small amount, in the pot, and if any burials come about we can pay for any members that are there or anybody else that comes about.' (Amir, Scottish Bangladeshi man, 50s)

The establishment of support through burial councils or mutual community organisations is a connecting dimension of Muslim provision for death (see Beebeejaun et al., 2021). As Ibrahim, the imam we interviewed, explained:

> There are some elder people in the community they have this pot that every month they put some money in it, and then anyone from the group of friends who donate to it passes away, then they use it from that pot. And this is quite traditional. If you go to Pakistan it's very common there, and some even, not just for burial but for everyday life, you get together friends maybe 15/20 of them every month they put in £100, and then once a month everyone gets the chance to draw down on it if they need it.

By the 1980s the Muslim burial section at Eastern Cemetery was largely full, and the Muslim community in the city had grown and was in need of further burial provision. More recent work has shown a growing desire to be buried in England as British Muslim identity has strengthened and children and grandchildren are born in Britain (Ansari, 2007; Maddrell et al., 2021), although repatriation was a common practice in the past. In the 1980s the City Council built Birkhill cemetery, a large cemetery on the northern outskirts of the city, which was designed to provide a variety of burial and dispersal needs such as cremated remains sections, ash scattering, family plots, and semi-private plots (what would have been known as social or paupers' graves), reflecting changes in trends around desired burial. Records show that in 1999 a section at Birkhill was designated for Muslim burial, and then in 2003 a further section was designated, doubling the provision (according to Graham, a cemetery manager we talked to).

These sections came about through processes of claim-making and negotiation between the Muslim community, via Mosques, and the City Council (interview with David, a burial service manager). Amir, who grew up in Dundee, explained the section at Eastern cemetery "got used up way back in the 1980s, so the City Council [had] opened up the cemetery in Birkhill and they gave us a large section of the

ground for Muslim burials." Around half of the provision at Birkhill has been used, but there has been an issue with groundwater in the lairs which has been a problem for the community. Amir continues:

> Underneath the ground there is actually a burn that springs beneath the ground. And every time you opened up a lair you'd have water sitting in the bottom of the lair. This went on for a number of years, you're talking I don't know fifteen or twenty years. […] Occasionally you'd have maybe an MP [Member of Parliament] or someone come in and you'd say something to them, but nothing really got done. (Amir, Scottish Bangladeshi man, 50s)

Responding to the inevitable need to plan for further future burial space, and the issue with the waterlogged lairs, in 2013 the Muslim community, through organising within and between the Mosques, purchased land and created a private Muslim cemetery which opened in 2014. Imam Ibrahim explained:

> There was need for future [burial space] as well. The lairs or the ground there [Birkhill] was being used up, so they thought you know what we might as well start discussing it and getting our own space. Because most cities around the UK they're also having their own space. So if we have the space from now it will last for a long time in the future. In the next ten years anyway we'd have had to get new space so we can start the process, the earlier the better.

Before purchasing the land, the City Council advised the community to set up an independent organisation that could negotiate with the Council and represent the whole community across all the Mosques in the city. They established the Dundee Muslim Cemetery Trust, with six representatives chosen by the three main Mosques. The Trust then set about to work out a financing plan and negotiate with the City Council. Amir, who is a member of the Trust, explains:

> We were lucky because [name] who was the Chief Exec of the City Council, he understood the problem and he understood it many years ago. And he kind of agreed, okay, something has to be done, so from the top we had someone who understands the problem. (Amir, Scottish Bangladeshi man, 50s)

Ultimately, the Trust purchased land off the Council that was an underused football pitch adjacent to Eastern cemetery. To fund the purchase of the land, as well as accepting donations the Trust sold lairs 'off plan': "People would pay that amount and reserve a lair. Not an exact space but just a place there" (interview with imam Ibrahim). In this initial fundraising, to encourage purchases, the lairs were sold at £600, similar to the cost of a lair in a Council cemetery which is currently £656 for the lair and £69 for the title deed. But after 3 months they increased the cost to £800. They did not want to sell all the lairs in advance, to have at least 50% of them available for purchase into the future. In addition, for burial in the private Muslim cemetery people still need to pay the Council's 'perpetuity fee,' a one-off cost of £632 to cover the maintenance of the lair and wider cemetery (interviews with Amir of the Muslim Cemetery Trust, and David, burial service manager).

The Dundee Muslim Cemetery Trust established a constitution for the management of the cemetery. They own the land and are able therefore to regulate it as they see fit, including on issues such as memorials, lair purchasing, and as we have seen,

price. They have placed greater restriction over headstone and memorial style than in Council cemeteries, creating a uniform design through the colour of stone, limited choices on font colour, and on headstone height and shape. They also do not allow people to choose the location of their lair, even if bought in advance people are given the next available lair for immediate burial. These regulations are seen by the Trust as a way to make the cemetery fair and equal:

> Anyone wants to put a headstone up it'll be the same size and the same colour now, and that way it looks the same no differences. […] Islamic teaching is basically simplicity, and equality, so that's how it formed. (Amir, speaking as a representative of the Muslim Cemetery Trust)

Imam Ibrahim who was involved in establishing the Trust explained:

> We all came together and said, because obviously you're going to have some want a very small one some want a big one. And it kind of doesn't create a balance. So we said ok come together, and we'll have a standard set, headstone regulations, so that it's all equal. And it works, obviously sometimes there are minor differences according to what people want, but it's something which is set and everyone just follows that. It's actually better like that. It makes it look nice as well, I think.

The Trust chose to establish itself as a charity, with charitable status, because central to their aim is to fund the burial costs for members of the community who cannot afford it or have no relatives. The Trust then pays the Council to maintain the cemetery through the perpetuities fees, which cover costs including grave digging, grass cutting, and other maintenance work. As Amir explains: "In Islamic religion it's the community's responsibility for the community's deaths." He continues:

> We were always thinking if we had someone here who came from abroad and didn't have any family here, lot of students nowadays, if anything happened and a burial was needed, we the Trust would fund it. Also the fact that the Trust would also fund, what we have in our constitution now is any children under 16, then we pay for the burial costs for that. And maybe sort of any NVF, non-viable foetus, deaths, or any baby deaths as well, and all that is basically covered. Because it's quite stressful for families. We also look at circumstances where the family is in a poor financial situation, and if they can't pay for the full cost of the burial, we'll certainly give the lairs, which is a big cost. (Amir, Scottish Bangladeshi man, 50s)

And imam Ibrahim described:

> There are some lairs which have been donated by the community for those who can't afford them, or those who are students, or visitor's who've just come here and then they need to be buried. So we don't have to worry about raising money, we can just bury them, and then look to see if they can afford it, fine if not, it goes through the donations that have come before.

Yet this current iteration of Muslim burial in Dundee in the private Muslim cemetery will not be the final version of burial here. Younger members of the community have expressed a desire to take other aspects of the burial service under community control, such as the management of the cemetery, and to run funerals without needing an external funeral director:

> We're now, the thirty and forty-year-old guys we're the next ones coming up right, so we're trying to make things better. Where, if there's not a grave dug up we don't need to go straight to the Council, the only thing we'll need from the Council is the death certificate. We don't need them to dig a grave. We want to train guys, well this is our view but the younger guys that I've spoken to, they want to train our own guys to be able to dig a grave, and to be able to handle a funeral start to finish. (Tariq, Scottish Pakistani male, 30s)

Robert, a funeral director we interviewed, has worked with the Muslim community for around 40 years. Whilst Muslim practices differ from the Christian majority, he talks about how they have worked together over the past decades: "And you know we're a family business, we're very flexible, and using one funeral director probably was easier for them because the practices are different, and if we know what's expected then it just makes things smoother." However, Robert then turns to the growing Muslim community and the need for changing death provision:

> I think there's about five Mosques in Dundee now, so you're looking at a growing community as well, and perhaps some Mosques might favour a different funeral director … So yeah they've got their own cemetery now, … it's not a cheaper option to use their own cemetery, but they just wanted somewhere, not necessarily that's owned, … it was just the right thing for them to do moving forward. So they've got that place now and we know they need things done quick.

Within the quote we see an acceptance of the idea that the needs of Muslim burial might require a different approach. One where burial can happen quickly, in line with Muslim needs.

The declining preference for the repatriation of bodies to ancestral homelands has resituated death within adopted homelands for migrants. In this and other work we find that people also decide they want to be buried in the UK so that they are near to their British children (see Hunter, 2016; Maddrell et al., 2021). As Labha, a Muslim Bangladeshi woman in her 60s, explained to us:

> It is good to be buried here in Dundee as the cemetery [Birkhill] is clean and tidy. I think the deceased feel good here as the place is taken care of and doesn't become abandoned or overgrown. I do not think the [Council] will destroy or relocate the graves because the graveyards which are full the Council blocked further burial, and so I am hopeful that my grave will remain in Dundee for thousand years, no one will destroy it, and I will find peace in the grave that I deserve […] I want to be buried wherever I die. If I die in the UK, I told my son to bury me in Dundee because my sons live in Dundee, my husband's grave is in Dundee ….If I die in Bangladesh, I want to be buried in our family graveyard. My father and other family members were buried in that family graveyard. It's a walled graveyard (not open), very peaceful to rest after death in Bangladesh.

Here Labha demonstrated her connections both to Dundee and the idea that she would want to be buried there if she died in Scotland to be near to her immediate family. However, in Bangladesh she would be near to her father and other family. Far Right politics has continued to question multiple place attachments and present them as a form of divided loyalty, undermining British minority identity. However, we are all connected to different places through our own and our family and friends

mobilities reflected in transnational and translocal identities (Conradson & Mckay, 2007). Participants in this study expressed ongoing ties to Bangladesh but also see themselves as Dundonians.

5.6 Conclusions

By situating Dundee as a city connected to the Bengal for over 170 years, more sophisticated understandings of postcolonial citizenship and belonging are revealed. Tracing the development of Muslim burial in the city we can see how citizenship rights, at the national and local level, are mediated through making space for death. Without the exercise of citizen rights in death, citizenship can only ever partially be achieved. The recently established Dundee Muslim Burial Trust connects their work to a longer trajectory of care and provision in the Muslim community through time to the current practices of Muslims coming together to bury community members, demonstrating how the colonial legacy from the jute trade frames the conditions for the Bangladeshi community, in death, to feel a sense of belonging and being 'at home' in Dundee.

The making of space for Muslim and other minority burial is uneven in the UK. British Muslims have grown as an established community and where cemetery provision is suitable to their requirements there is less need for bodily remains to be repatriated to another 'homeland.' Having Muslim burial provision in Dundee reflects the need for a multi-ethnic British society to have diverse death services. However, these limitations, in part, denote a wider lack of attention to provisions for death as part of state services in Britain. Thinking about Dundee as a postcolonial city, connected through the trade in and production of jute, is not only illuminating to its history and the silences of colonialism, but also opens up space to think about the city as connected to the Bengal. The mobilities of the individuals arriving and making a new life in Dundee creates an imaginative territory which brings together Scotland and the Bengal Delta in a longstanding connection that might see Dundee's Muslim community as more than simply migrants.

The efforts of the Muslim community and the desire of the city to work with them has, over the years, co-created several iterations of Muslim burial space, leading most recently to the creation of a private burial ground. These efforts demonstrate the positive dimensions of community organisation and citizenship. Tracing the developments of Muslim burial in Dundee also demonstrates the evolving sense of belonging and home as successive generations settle and/or are born in the city. The longstanding Muslim community has mobilised religious practices bringing together religious requirements within Dundee to shape the deathscapes of the city. We argue that through situating the death practices and decision-making of ethnic minority communities within a wider understanding of how mobilities impact upon their life experiences, and within a larger postcolonial context, we understand spaces of death as part of the making of minority identities in Scotland.

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