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Reduplication and Reciprocity in Imagining Community: The Play of Tropes in a Rural Bangladeshi Moot

The trope of the "body politic" is reproduced in a Bengali popular court, or moot, not only through explicit submetaphors of that master metaphor but through a grammatical example of what Peirce called diagrammatic iconism. The iconism of reduplicated verbs with reciprocal meaning became pivotal in the metacommunicative negotiation of the agenda of a rural Bangladeshi moot. Such forms of iconicity analyzed here play traceable roles in particular imaginations of community and give us an opportunity to explore the accessibility of those imaginations to discursive consciousness. The article concludes that the tropes most powerfully shaping the discourse of the moot are those least accessible to metapragmatic consciousness, those that rhetorically contribute to the veiling of their own rhetoricity.

All communities are largely "imagined communities" (Anderson 1991), and various semiotic processes make the imagining possible. Grammatical constructions and commonly used metaphors often convey a particular imagination of socially engaged bodies (Hanks 1996: ch. 8; Haviland 1996; MacLaury 1989). It is useful to follow C. S. Peirce in linking various signs (whose ground involves a local sense of directness, naturalness, or resemblance) as examples of iconism and to trace the particular power of iconic signs in the imagination of community. This

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article examines the potential, exemplified in a particular speech event in rural Bangladesh, for two kinds of linguistic iconism to contribute to the imagination of a rural polity.

The first is diagrammatic iconism, exemplified here in the speech event's use of a particular grammatical form. Situated within its speech event, this grammatical form—morphological reduplication—operates multifunctionally, as all tropes do, in the constitution of community. Through its iconicity, this grammatical form simultaneously contributes, I suggest, to community building and community factionalizing. The second kind of iconism that I consider is imagistic and involves semantic metaphors. Metaphors have an iconic dimension in that they highlight resemblance or similarity.[1] Thus, in a metaphor used in several forms throughout the event described herein, a particular rural Bangladeshi polity is made to resemble a sick person, as in the classic link between human body and "body politic." I will argue here that a locally perceived and discursively constituted "body hexis" (Bourdieu 1977's concept, developed in its discursive dimensions by Starrett)[2] underlies much of the discourse in the event and is projected, not only by metaphors of the "body politic," but also by reduplicated reciprocal verbs. These verbs, I suggest, bring both forms of linguistic iconism together. Richly endowed with a sense of bodies entangled in mutual action, their complex iconism is an isomorphism of (1) morphemes (tied with asymmetric suffixes) and (2) semantics (agents mutually engaged, if only in conflict).[3]

Iconicity is the "first" of Peirce's three relations between signs and their objects: the relation of resemblance. More precisely, "An *Icon* is a Representamen whose Representative Quality is a Firstness of it as a First. That is, a quality that it has *qua* thing renders it fit to be a representamen. [Thus, a] sign may be *iconic*, that is, may represent its object mainly by its similarity" (Peirce 1960, 2:157).[4] Iconic elements of language are the exception to the sometimes exaggerated claim that linguistic sign-meaning links are arbitrary. Classic examples include onomatopoeia and metaphors (although metaphors certainly tap into all three sign relations—iconic, indexical, and symbolic; see Haley 1988). Onomatopoeia is but one example of one type of iconism in language, namely, sound symbolism, which entails a denotational iconism wherein the very sounds of a lexeme are taken to denote an object (Silverstein 1994).[5]

Among his types, or subclasses, of iconic sign relations, Peirce distinguished *images* from *diagrams* (see discussion in Jakobson 1987a:418 f.). In Peircean *images*, the sign vehicle represents the "simple qualities" of the object; we would have to include both onomatopoeias and simple metaphors highlighting resemblance in a particular dimension, in the category of *image*. For Peircean *diagrams*, the likeness between sign vehicle and object exists "only in respect to the relations of their parts" (Jakobson 1987a:418, citing Peirce). Following Bybee (1985:40) and Haiman (1985b:77), we can see this diagrammatic sort of iconicity in Bengali reduplicated verbs, where relations among the expression units (the reduplications) diagram the relations among the object-units.[6] In Bengali reduplicated verbs, it is primarily the reduplication itself, not the particular sound features of the reduplicated root, that is (diagrammatically) iconic.

This article situates one use of iconicity in a form of social interaction fairly common, at least in Bangladesh: the *sālis*, or *darbār*, 'moot' (conflict-resolution meeting or popular court; a partial transcript of a particular moot appears in the appendix). I place the iconicity in its speech-event context, and I also show the performative dimension of iconicity; that is, its socially creative potential. To prefigure the argument: it is common in colloquial Bengali to express reciprocal action through the use of morphologically reduplicated verbs. So much is unremarkable, although some analyses of Indo-Aryan reduplication (including Bengali grammars used in Bangladeshi schools) fail to note this aspect of reduplicated verbs' semantics. What is more significant is how, at certain points in conflicts such as occur in moots, such verbs can function creatively. Since the conflict being discussed and played out in the moot may well include contested representations of events or relationships, these verbs contribute to representation by creating an image (or imagination in Benedict Anderson's sense) of reciprocity. Such a linking of grammar, imagination, and social worlds resonates with the sorts of Whorfian research experiencing a revival in linguistic anthropology (Hill and Mannheim 1992).

Reduplication in the Light of the Linguistic Literature

Much early work on iconism was of a philological nature, almost exclusively focused on sound symbolism; it happens to have been done in South Asia. In fact, onomatopoeia and other morphological processes recognized as iconic have been treated as diagnostic features of South Asia as a "linguistic area," and "echo formation" (partial reduplication) has figured prominently in these discussions (Apte 1968; Bhaskararao 1977; Emeneau 1969; Masica 1991). Various semantic functions are performed by reduplicated forms, not only in South Asia but across the spectrum of languages; these include the marking of plurality, aspect, and mood. Stephen Anderson (1985:170), discussing those functions of reduplicated forms, speculates about the possible denotative iconism underlying their semantics.[7]

Moreover, in Bengali, as in other South Asian languages, the reduplication can be iconic at more than one level. Not only is the reduplication itself an icon of some sort of intensification, but often the words that are reduplicated are themselves onomatopoeic. In the moot analyzed here, an example is *hāwdāw* (an onomatopoeic and reduplicated evocation of "roaring," line 252).[8]

In Bengali, reduplication is a productive grammatical process, as the examples in Table 1 illustrate. Reduplication of Bengali words adds some semantic feature to the root meaning and the narrowly constrained morphological-semantic links are readily explainable in terms of iconism. I focus here on reduplication of Bengali verb roots and on only one of the range of semantic effects produced thereby. In Table 1's examples—most of which are taken from the transcript in the appendix—although the reduplicated forms function as nouns, they all derive from verbs, except

Table 1
Reduplication in the grammar of violence. Numbers refer to lines in the transcript; see the appendix.

Base	Gloss	Reduplicated form	Gloss
mārā (210)	hit	mārāmāri (163, 171, etc.)	violence, fighting
reṣ/riṣ	malice	riṣāriṣi (138-9)	mutual spite or ill-feeling
kāṭā (221)	cut	kathār kāṭākāṭi	argument (cf. "crossing kathā [words]" 526)
ṭhelā	push	ṭhelāṭheli	shoving match, crowding
dharā	grasp	dharādhari	mutual holding or grasping (Dimock 1989:58)

riṣāriṣi, which derives from a simpler noun. Through the doubling of the root and the maintenance (via vowel endings) of a distinction between the doublets, Bengali reduplicated verbs become frozen metaphors of interaction, of embodied actors socially engaged. Their very form expresses the multiplicity and distinctness of agents (some marked /-ā/ and some /-i/) and the reciprocity and intensity of their activity.[9] It is important to note that these forms' doubling of agent markers, agents that are marked as distinct from one another, conveys the idea of interaction and reciprocity, since this dimension of reduplicative semantics has sometimes been overlooked in analyses of reduplication in South Asian languages.

While reduplication is common in these languages and ranges across word classes, its semantic effects are various. For Hindi, for example, Abbi (1980) cites commonly reduplicated forms among nouns, verbs, and adverbs. Offering a fairly full analysis of the semantics of reduplicated verbs, she mentions the following semantic effects that can be achieved through reduplication: iterative, inchoative, durative, continuative, distributive, and intensive meanings. Thus some commonly reduplicated Hindi verbs can result in such forms as *khaṭpaṭ* 'fight, sound made by turning wooden things over', *caiṇcaiṇ* 'crying with an argument', *jhāṇyjhāṇy* 'nagging', and *ṭāṇyṭāṇy* 'crying' (Abbi 1980:150 f.). Reduplicated verbs followed by the utility verb *kar* 'do' (Abbi 1980:55 f.) often have an iterative sense ("again and again") and, derivatively, an adverbial connotation of "excessiveness" (as in *piṭpiṭ kar* 'excessive beating'). The iconism in which a repeated stem represents an intensified meaning seems clear. Such meanings are, in fact, not confined to Indo-Aryan or even Indo-European languages.

Similarly, several examples of reduplicated forms in Fijian Hindi occur in a transcript presented by Brenneis (1984), taken from a gossip event whose content focuses on a conflict and thus has some affinities to the data I shall analyze here. Brenneis's examples include forms such as *garmi-garmi* 'hot-hot' (which metaphorizes the notion of heat),[10] *jaldi se jaldi* 'quick from quick' (intensifying the root meaning), *juṭe-phuṭe* 'lying', *ulṭa-phulṭa* 'upside-down' (lit. "reverse-[reverse?]," where the second member is a partial echo of the first but lacks independent semantic content; the common Bengali counterpart is *ulṭo-phālṭo*). One of his examples is especially close to that on which I focus in my own data: *chuṛi-urì mār di* 'knife-[echo] strike give' (where *uṛi* is an echo of *chuṛi* 'knife' but lacks independent semantic content).

Despite the link with the conflict semantics of my data, however, in neither this phrase nor in any of the others cited by Brenneis or Abbi is the iconism of quite the same nature as that upon which I focus; that is, it is not an iconic representation of reciprocal action. Abbi's more recent comparative study of reduplicated structures in South Asian languages (1992:109–116) comes closest to describing what I find in Bengali when she deals with non-Indo-Aryan languages spoken around the fringes of greater Bengal. Reciprocal syntactic functions are encoded by reduplicated elements including pronominals in Tibeto-Burman and main verbs in Austro-Asiatic. Evidently thinking only of the Bengali reciprocal pronominal *eke-aparke* 'each other', 'one another', Abbi mistakenly claims that "Oriya, Bengali and Assamese, in spite of being adjacent to languages that use reduplicated structures for reciprocals, do not have them" (1992:111). In Austro-Asiatic neighbors of Bengali, "for the RECIPROCAL base (formed by the infix -p-) discontinuous reduplication of the affix of the performative base is used; *dal* reciprocal *da-pa-l* (or *d-ap-al*), performative *d-pa-pal-l* (or *d-ap-ap-al*)" (1992:115). This reduplication of the main verb actually closely approximates the Bengali reduplicated reciprocal verbs, the difference being that the latter are fully and continuously reduplicated, with no intervening infix.

That Abbi failed to discover the reciprocal sense of some reduplicated Bengali verbs seems remarkable until we realize that it is also missing from such native-speaker accounts as Shaklayen's (1983), whose Bengali grammar is widely used by students in Bangladesh. (Cursory reading of other texts in a market in 1996 suggested that the topic of reduplication is dealt with in even less detail in other grammars used in schools.) Shaklayen does recognize reduplication; thus he writes that *dvirukto* 'doubly uttered' words may be adjectives, adverbs, nouns, or verbs. His interpretation of the doubled noun *fever* in the phrase "jvar jvar bodh" is insightful; rather than intensifying the meaning "I am feverish," the reduplication adds an element of doubt, subjectivity, or metaphorization. Likewise, *laṛāyi karā* means "to fight," but *laṛāyi-larāyi khelā karā* means "to engage in a mock fight" (Shaklayen 1983:83, my translation). This native-speaker account tells us, first, that reduplication per se is well within the awareness of at least Bengali *linguists*, although we must hesitate to generalize this to other speakers. Second, if we take the iconism of reduplication per se, heuristically at least, as a universal, the contrast between the Bengali sense attaching to *jvar jvar bodh*—something like deintensification—and the intensified sense attaching to many Hindi (and other Bengali) reduplicated forms reminds us that even the "iconic" is always culturally constituted. The "resemblance" of signs and their objects, even when it appears to be "natural" (as is the nature of iconism), is always in the eye of the culturally located beholder. But we should also note that Shaklayen's account omits what I find to be a pervasive semantic effect of reduplication in Bengali: the addition of the sense of reciprocity or mutuality through an iconism between partial reduplication (of the verb root, together with contrasting suffixation) and the semantic expansion of the number of agents in the action, along with a sense of their mutual and balanced engagement.

In contrast with these analyses of the semantics of Bengali reduplicated forms, Dimock's classic article "Symbolic Forms in Bengali" (1989) concurs with my own interpretation.[11] Dimock describes Bengali "echo" words (bipartite words, the second part partially or wholly reduplicating the first)[12] along with onomatopoeia and other sound symbolic forms. He points out that the first iteration of a Bengali compound echo verb ends in *-ā* and its reduplicated counterpart ends in *-i*. Whereas reduplication sometimes merely intensifies the root meaning (for example, *kaṛā* 'strict' becomes *kaṛākaṛi* 'extreme strictness'), it commonly adds the semantic feature of *reciprocity* or *mutuality*. As Dimock indicates, this transformation of a unilateral action concept into a *reciprocal* one is, along with intensification, the most common semantic effect of Bengali verb reduplication. In Dimock's words, "these forms always have the meaning 'mutual action' or 'extreme [degree of the] quality' " (Dimock 1989:58). Thus for one person to push something is *ṭhelā;* for persons to push each other is *ṭhelāṭheli*. The reduplication evokes a *bodily* sense of push-and-shove. Classical metaphors are not the only site at which language projects body hexis.

What is the significance of the way Bengali reduplicated verbs are formed by consecutively suffixing two different vowel endings *-ā* and *-i* to the two iterations of the verb root? The answer might provide a key to our interpretation of the particular rhetorical work to which this grammatical process was put in the Bangladeshi moot. Using *mārāmāri* as our example, let us consider one interpretation of the significance of the contrastive vowels in relation to the semantics of agency. In Comrie's (1985) analysis of reciprocal semantics and verb valency, forming a reciprocal verb reduces the valency encoded by its nonreciprocal counterpart, since "subject and direct object of the basic verb are combined into a single compound subject. . . . The valency of the verb is . . . reduced, from transitive to intransitive" (1985:326). It may seem paradoxical that the multiplication of agents seen in the transformation of simple verb roots (appropriate for encoding unilateral actions) to reduplicated verbs (appropriate for encoding mutual action) results in a reduction of valency. And in fact, according to Mansur Musa, director general of the Bangla Academy (personal communication, 1996), it is quite appropriate for such verbs in Bengali to take agent noun phrases as their subjects. On the other hand, says Musa, the sense of personal agency is obscured when speakers use this form. Consider the form *mārāmāri* 'mutual beating', which is in focus for much of the remainder of this article. Musa claims that one possible motivation for speakers to use the form is to obscure agency. The first iteration of the verb root, *mārā*, is gerundial and lends itself, as we can see from Musa's reflections, to a function quite like that of the English agentless passive. The second iteration, *māri*, is formally identical to the finite first-person present verb form *I beat*.

The above interpretation of the contrastive suffixation on the reduplicated iterations of Bengali verb roots is significant and highly plausible. Another interpretation, however, deserves notice and is not mutually exclusive with the first. This second interpretation links the contrasting root-final vowels more directly with the diagrammatic iconism entailed in the reiteration of the verb root as diagram of mutuality. While the sheer doubling of verb roots in reduplicated verbs could produce the diagram on its own, the contrastive root-final vowels help in the Bengali case. Their function must be linked with a pervasive Bengali pattern of sound symbolism in which /ā/ carries a feeling of heaviness/darkness and /i/ carries the sense of lightness. In reduplicated verbs, these vowels do not index speaker or hearer as do first- and second-person pronominal shifters. It is possible that, in the diagram constituted by reduplicated-reciprocal Bengali verbs (see Table 2), the relative placement of vowels stands iconically for the placement of a pair of objects, namely, two agents differing in moral-aesthetic quality. We should understand that awareness of this semiotic process is constrained, as Haiman reminds us: "A diagram is an icon of a complex [object]. . . . A convenient rule of thumb for distinguishing images from diagrams might be that anyone can recognize the first, while certain conventions have to be understood before we can recognize the second" (1985a:10).[13]

This reciprocal semantic force is associated with reduplicative morphology in other languages as well. For instance, examples of reduplication in Papuan languages have been analyzed (Haiman 1985a, 1985b) as a means of symmetrically representing agents. In the Papuan languages Kate and Kewa, "a small number of verbs form their reciprocal 'voice' by deriving a nominal from a reduplication of the first syllable of the verb stem in question. This nominalization is then treated as the object complement of a utility verb *e* 'do'. . . . For other verbs, reduplication is less stingy. The entire verb stem is repeated [with the same reciprocal force]" (Haiman 1985a:76 f.). Reduplication, thus, is one iconic means of representing reciprocal action.[14] Given the Bengali data and given how commonly the world's languages attach reciprocal semantics to reduplicated verbal morphology, the remarkable absence of the "reciprocal" meaning in some accounts of reduplication in South Asian languages, including Bangladeshi grammar textbooks, is a notable oversight. This issue will be taken up again at the end of the article.

Table 2
Bengali Deictics. Proximal deictics are marked by relatively high-front vowels; distal deictics, by relatively low-back vowels.

	Base	Demonstratives	Spatial deictics	"Agent" markers in reduplicated verbs
Proximal	e	e-ʈā 'this'	e-khāne 'here'	-i
Distal	o	o-ʈā 'that'	o-khāne 'there'	-ā

Metaphor, Syntactic Iconicity, and Body Hexis

Moving from linguistic structure to social structure invites attention to that productive metaphor for society, the body (Lock and Scheper-Hughes 1990). English speakers are not alone in metaphorically projecting a "body politic." In some Pacific societies, the metaphor of "disentangling" bodies in conflict—and social affairs—is used to describe meetings designed to resolve conflict (Watson-Gegeo and White 1992). It should not surprise us that bodies figure largely in even the figurative speech of conflict and resolution, particularly when bodily harm is at issue, as it was in the Bangladeshi conflict described here. Bodies were literally entangled. The moot was organized in order to disentangle the physical injuries occurring in the fighting from those economic "injuries" that led to it and to attempt to prevent further damage to the polity, described at times as a sick body (e.g., lines 440–443 of the transcript).[15]

Anthropologists have pointed out that the body is "good to think with," that it is not only an object but a vehicle of social thought. Poets do not need our instruction on this point, but neither do they have a monopoly on figurative speech, let alone oratory. Trope-laden speech is common in rural Bangladesh, even in dispute-resolution meetings ("moots," sālis, or darbār), raucous though these open-air speech events often are. In moots, metaphors of the personal and political body are among tropes bearing a lot of rhetorical weight. Several of these metaphors occur in the transcript; like all metaphors, they exemplify iconism as a semiotic relation based on similarity. But while the transcript includes some metaphors whose semiotic organization is relatively straightforward, we shall focus especially on two reduplicated verbs in which a body-politic metaphor is conveyed in a semiotically more complex way. These forms, *mārāmāri* and *reṣāreṣi*, project a sense of bodily engagement not only in their semantics of physical battle (their Peircean symbolic meaning) but also in an iconism, an isomorphism between their morphological and semantic structure. Thus at some level of consciousness—somewhere between what Giddens (1979) calls practical and discursive modes of consciousness—for these Bengali speakers, classical metaphors such as "the polity is a sick body" and verbs like *mārāmāri* exemplify two distinct forms of iconism, one (the metaphor) rather more explicit than the other.

Haiman's discussion of syntactic iconicity is worth mentioning here again: "a convenient rule of thumb for distinguishing images from diagrams might be that anyone can recognize the first, while certain conventions have to be understood before we can recognize the second" (Haiman 1985a:10). Simple metaphors, I argue, are images, while reduplicated-reciprocal verbs are diagrams. It is through such tropes that this *darbār* speech reflects upon and helps constitute the body politic. Only after some effort can we perceive some of the iconicities—particularly those whose construction is not strictly a sum of continuously segmentable morphemes (Silverstein 1981)—and their social-metaphoric and ritual-performative significance.

The Bangladeshi Moot and Its Background

The *samāj* 'Bangladeshi society', here in its local-community sense, is a group of households with mutual obligations, disputes amongst whom are handled at a conflict-resolution meeting known as a sālis (sometimes pronounced, via metathesis, as "sāilāsi" and sometimes realized in my transcript as "sālisā") or darbār. Residents of Sonargaon, the locale in which the particular moot described here occurred, sometimes describe these moots themselves as the samāj (see line 508). To do so, however—that is, to imply that this gathering represents the whole society in action—is to use a dangerous synecdoche. It masks how such meetings exclude the poor from speaking and women from even attending. These meetings tend to become platforms for rich peasants to launch or sustain lucrative political careers (Adnan 1990:169). Moots legitimate existing powers and keep a lid on the tendency of factions to divide the polity. In that sense the whole speech event is a creative indexical icon of a polity, a part (society in microcosm) that naturally resembles the whole that it also indexes. The indexical iconicity here is more entailing/performative than presupposing (Silverstein 1976, 1981); it moves the imagination from microlevel (interaction) to the macro ("society"). More than a mere aid to imagining community, it constitutes, performs, and enacts in itself a form of community. Yet as I shall suggest, that form of community contains its opposite.

The event I describe took place in Sonargaon Union,[16] about a four-hour ferry ride from Dhaka in the rural Chandpur subdistrict of Matlab (described in Fauveau 1994). The meeting was held in a public schoolyard, several hundred yards from my field home, which was with the family of Habibur Rahman in the northern end of Sonargaon Union (see Figure 1).[17] Matlab grows a lot of potatoes as a cash crop, as well as rice. Habibur Rahman ("HR" in Figure 2) and his kin, who own a surplus of land, support their fellow pious Muslims for union office. Politically, their stance is moderately Islamist, in the sense that it appeals to Islamic morality as the best basis for electoral choice. Musadeq is Habib's own son-in-law and a member of the Islamist faction. The other principal disputant, Guna, was at one time Musadeq's closest friend; but when they tried to start a business together, the capital "disappeared" and they had a bitter falling out. Guna now accuses Musadeq of squatting on one of his agricultural lands near a pond, and Musadeq has made formal accusations—accusations proceeding, that is, through official courts rather than open-air meetings—that Guna leads a gang of robbers *(ḍākāt)*. Around the time of the event under analysis, the gang allegedly plundered television sets and other expensive status symbols in a neighboring union across the canal.

Just after Bangladesh held nationwide local elections for the members and Chairmen of unions such as Sonargaon, the factional dispute in Sonargaon—between Musadeq and Guna, perhaps between "Islamists" and "secularists"—turned violent. According to Musadeq's side, Guna became a sort of hit man for the victorious union chairman, whom my host family called "Bottle," accusing him of drinking and sexual promiscuity. Musadeq was threatening to take evidence of Guna's involvement in the criminal

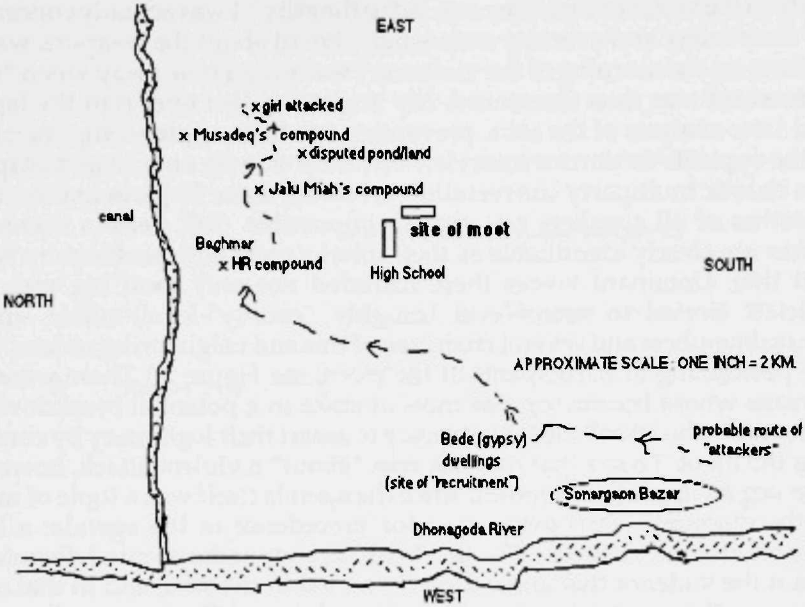
EAST
x girl attacked
x Musadeq's compound
x disputed pond/land
x Jalu Miah's compound
canal
site of moot
Beghmar
x HR compound
High School
SOUTH
NORTH
APPROXIMATE SCALE: ONE INCH = 2 KM.
Bede (gypsy) dwellings (site of "recruitment")
probable route of "attackers"
Sonargaon Bazar
Dhonagoda River
WEST

Figure 1
Map of Sonargaon area, showing scenes of fight and moot

gang to the courts; Guna, for his part, was probably emboldened by his boss's victory. So Guna organized a preemptive strike, a series of violent attacks against Musadeq and his supporters.

Because I received the account of the violence through members of Habibur Rahman's family, my view of the attacks begins there, at Habib's compound. Going on from Habib's, Guna's men came to another "enemy" compound. In the ensuing fight, several members of that compound were injured, including one adolescent girl. That scandalized many of those who later spoke at the moot.

Although I have summarized my host family's version of the events leading up to the violence because it is the one that was told me, it is presumably not the only version that exists. For the most part, therefore, when discussing the moot, I confine my historiography of the events outside of the moot to their invocation in the dialogue of the moot itself, the transcript of the sālis. I could justify restricting myself to the transcript on ethnomethodological grounds, arguing that we should count as relevant issues in the "disentangling" event only what is actually invoked in the talk of that event. To do so in this case would be somewhat disingenuous, however. The fact is that the event was surrounded by such controversy that I hesitated to do extensive interviews to elicit post facto versions of the story. Also, I heard one side—the perspective of the party with whom I lived—much better than the other. They, the residents of Habibur Rahman's compound, who are Islamists, saw themselves as the aggrieved party in the violence that, they say, led to the sālis.[18] I was actually concerned for their safety and even my own when I heard about the weapons waved at them on the morning of the violence; I was only a mile away when "my" homestead was thus threatened. My anxiety spilled over into the taping and later analysis of the sālis, preventing me from approaching members of the opposite faction for interviews. Moreover, with only an audiotape of this chaotic multiparty conversation involving some 50 participants, identification of all speakers has proven impossible. Still, certain dominant voices are clearly identifiable as their interlocutors address them by name and title. Dominant voices there included not only local big men but officials elected to union-level (roughly "county"-level) office—union councilmembers and several chairmen of this and neighboring unions. (For the positioning of participants at the moot, see Figure 2.) These were the persons whose legitimacy was most at stake in a potential breakdown of order and who strove most vigorously to assert their legitimacy by controlling the moot. To say that the sālis was "about" a violent attack, however, is to beg an important question since the agenda itself was a topic of much of the discourse. Two items vied for precedence in the agenda: a land dispute and the violence. Was the "real" agenda some original dispute, or was it the violence that arose from it and led to the sālis, and in that case, what was the conflict that precipitated the violence? (For transcript conventions, see the appendix.)

130	āpnāgo jāgā(r?) saŋkrānto byāpār,	You have the affair concerning the place,[19]
131	jami jamār byāpār, puskunir byāpār,	the affair of the land, the affair of the pond.
132	egulā to pare-o karte pārben.	These you could even handle later.

The lines above provide only some of the many examples in the transcript where the agenda was (re-)negotiated.

Also under negotiation was the representation of what happened to the injured adolescent girl. Stories conflicted as to whether she was passive or active in the fight. Some said she was a victim (*mār khāi[ye]che* 'she ate blows'), while others described the scene as *mārāmāri* 'mutual fighting'. That issue came to dominate the moot. In fact, it seems that this debate entailed a resolution of the metaconflict and foreshadowed a "successful" resolution of the underlying moral-economic conflict. Once the actionable offense was agreed upon, the participants in the moot could go on to agree to hold one of the parties accountable. That party was eventually fined, the details being worked out in the last minutes of the multihour moot, although some backpedaling followed by reinforcement of the agreement did occur over the next few days.

The meeting did not completely resolve the underlying factional conflict between "Islamists" and "secularists," but it did dash some of the secularists' hopes that had risen after their election victory one short month earlier. In this political history the moot played a role—riveting attention on fissure in the community, primarily by metaphorically projecting "the polity as

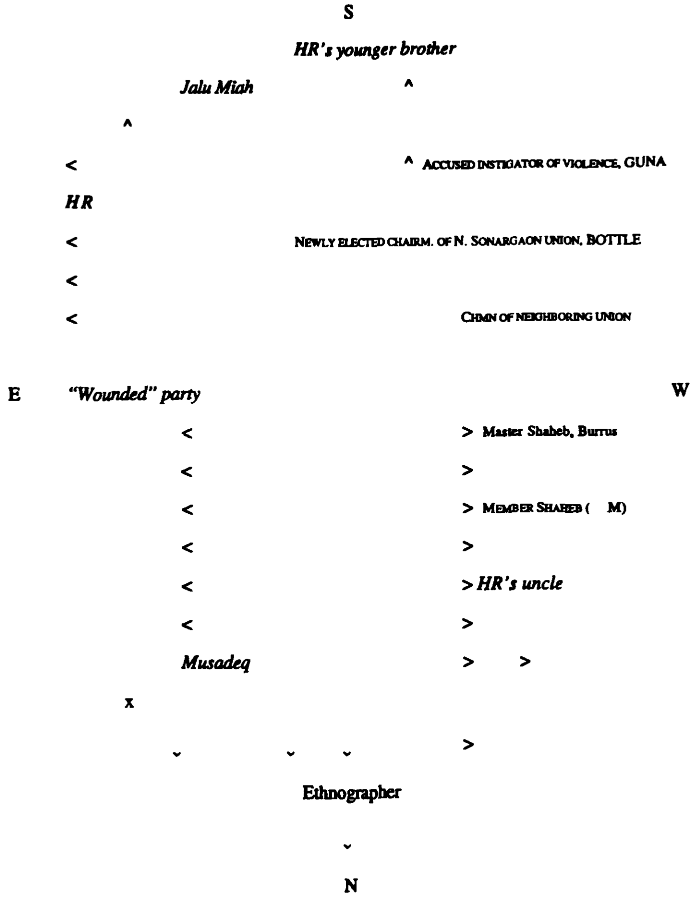
S
HR's younger brother
Jalu Miah
ACCUSED INSTIGATOR OF VIOLENCE, GUNA
HR
NEWLY ELECTED CHAIRM. OF N. SONARGAON UNION, BOTTLE
CHMN OF NEIGHBORING UNION
E
"Wounded" party
W
Master Shaheb, Burrus
MEMBER SHAHEB (M)
HR's uncle
Musadeq
x
Ethnographer
N

Figure 2
Participants seated and standing at moot, Baghmar High School yard, February 1992. Following Duranti 1992, the carets roughly represent the orientation of the pelvises of the men participating in the moot, such that the direction in which they open out indicates the direction in which their eyes might have been gazing. Names and phrases label active speaker/participants. Less active participants are marked with an "x." The number of persons thus labeled is an approximation of the number present, which was at any rate not stable during the course of the meeting. Italics represent members of the "Islamist" faction recently ousted in election, accused in land dispute, accusers in dispute over violence. Small caps represent members of the "secularist" faction, accusers in land dispute, newly elected to union office, and accused of instigating violence.

sick body" and, ironically, through discourse that framed the fight as mārāmāri ('reciprocal fighting'). This crucial framing was also echoed in other reduplicated verbs that evoke a sense of reciprocity, but reciprocity of blows in a fight. (The irony is heightened when we consider that the particular "Member Shaheb" [union council member] who was arguing for this "reciprocal" view of the violence—and against a unilateral view involving some innocent victims—was trying to win community unanimity around that vision of "a fight.")

In addition, "successful" legal actions (by an official court, not a moot) were taken against the "secularists" for their alleged involvement in the burglary ring, or so my fictive mother reported to me over the next month. Taking the court actions and the moot together, it seems possible that the burglary convictions (imposed by the court) and the fine (imposed by the moot) might not have *caused* the secularists' setback so much as they *reflected* it. The strength of those local elements who were scandalized by the secularists' behavior (especially their rumored use of alcohol) may have been only temporarily hidden in the election results, reasserting itself shortly afterward in the separate legal actions of official court and village moot.

As for the "victims," the moot did little for them, other than fixing "sentence" on the "perpetrators." One of those affected by the violence was Jalu Miah's four-year-old son, who had seen his father threatened with a pistol; the boy's condition was considered to be *dar* 'deep fear' (parallel to "magical fright" in the anthropological literature). The boy was given magicoreligious herbal treatment by a neighbor woman, not as part of the moot's adjudication but on the initiative of Jalu Miah. The treatment cost next to nothing.

Before considering portions of the talk that occurred at the moot more closely, I must point out that my transcript is by no means a complete record of the long moot. I arrived after learning that the meeting was in progress, and I left at a point when the meeting appeared to break down, although it had seemed tantalizingly close to resolution at several points while I was there. What I recorded amounts to two hours out of a total meeting time exceeding five hours. (The transcript cited in this discussion and presented in the appendix represents extended excerpts from the two hours I recorded.) After I left, my fictive kin continued to trickle out of the meeting and give me reports, and over the next days I also asked Jalu Miah, my neighbor and one with divided loyalties in the conflict, for continuing updates on its resolution and on his son's progress in coping with dar.

The early portions of the transcript concern the negotiation of agenda, as mentioned above. In doing so the transcript includes allusions to preceding events, since part of the "issue" is when the conflict should be said to have "begun." One such event to which I was not privy had occurred between the fight itself and the moot—the negotiation of a "truce."

195E	(ka) mārāmārir agey? mārāmāri jāte nā hae	Before the mārāmāri, to prevent mārāmāri
196	ubhay pakhyo sālisāke mān(e)che.	both sides agreed to arbitration.
197	KE amāṇya kairā mārāmāri karlo	NOW THEN, who broke [that "truce" /agreement]? Who did mārāmāri?
198	seṭā niyā habe bicār	THAT'S what the arbitration will be about.

Line 195 indicates that, before the fighting broke out, the prior dispute had been arbitrated to the point of a truce agreement. The moot talk indicates that the truce had been violated, and one understanding of the moot's task is to establish which party violated it and punish them.

The agenda dispute had moved along in fairly chaotic fashion when one of the leading men began first to propose that an elite subgroup handle the whole process (143–150) and then (after line 162) to declare the agenda issue settled and to *control the terms of the debate.* The one repeatedly addressed simply as "[union council] Member Shaheb" himself would define the agenda (163 ff.). But not everyone submitted passively to his rhetorical construction of events. The metaconflict took on sharper tones following Member Shaheb's shifting of the metadebate from the question of agenda-priorities to the *definition of events.*

In this part of the Bangladeshi sālis, the rhetorical struggle hinges on the construction of agency or responsibility in the narration of events. Duranti (1990, 1994; Duranti and Ochs 1990) has uncovered the grammatical means by which agency and responsibility are assigned in politically sensitive talk in Samoa. In many if not all languages, the semantics of agency may be manipulated through verb valency (changing verb *voice* in the grammatical sense) and through case marking. The transformation of transitive verbs like the Bengali *mārā* into intransitive verbs like *mārāmāri*—a shift in valency, as Comrie (1985) rightly argues (see my discussion above)—parallels the Samoan discursive play between ergative and absolutive. That is, the Samoan choice of the grammatical case with which to mark a party in a disputed event parallels the choice Member Shaheb made in encoding actors not as attackers and victims but as coparticipants in violence. In line 163, Member Shaheb draws attention to the action noun (a reduplicated *verb* but for the omission of the auxiliary *kar*) that has been used to describe the violence: *mārāmāri.*

163	ā(p)n(ā)rā bisārtāchen mārāmāri. to mārā-mārir . . .	you are looking into mārāmāri. About mārāmāri . . .

Reṣāreṣi (lines 138–139), too, is a reduplicated form that alters the valency of an action expression:

139M	ganḍagal reṣāreṣi āṛo bārbo = kambo na.[20]	The indiscipline and mutual spite would grow, not shrink.

The morphological process of reduplication is put to the semiotic purpose of metasemantic discourse, drawing explicit attention to the deverbal noun in 163 and its meaning in 171:

171	Mārāmāri balte ubhay pakhye	To say "mārāmāri" [means] both sides.

Member Shaheb's utterance in 171 is a metasemantic act; it comments explicitly on the meaning of a word that in fact he himself had introduced into the discourse in line 163 (see above).[21]

By construing the event as an example of a *reciprocal* action (mārāmāri), Member Shaheb adroitly robs one side of the rhetorical power it might have gained had all participants unconsciously accepted the fight as a one-sided affair. His portrayal does not go uncontested, as lines 190–191 illustrate.

190c	[*very emotional*] ekṭā marman hayechi?[22]	One ([of us] was beaten)?
191	ekṭā hay(e)che MĀR.[23] ekṭā ôāpā hai(ye)che amner.	[And] one [was subjected to] (mār). [That] one [thing] was suppressed [in] your [account]!

One *pāblik* expressed outrage at Member Shaheb's attempt to impose such a neutral definition of the event on the meeting when, in his view, the party supported by Member Shaheb had unilaterally perpetrated a grave and violent injustice on his party (see Lindstrom 1992).[24] The aggrieved party would countenance no such mutual distribution of agency and blame! By using the finite first-person verb *haiyechi* 'was/became', the speaker in line 190 indicates his own party was injured.[25] He presents his "collective self" as victim rather than participant in a reciprocal mārāmāri. His initial complaint is followed by an accusation that the powerful discussion leaders are suppressing the important facts of the case: the injuries sustained by the innocent.[26]

The Body Politic in a Troubled Polity

The sālis did not go smoothly. Outside analysts—and perhaps those at the margins of power whose shouting was "disrupting" the meeting—might claim that there is something egalitarian about a polity that "allows" such shouting. A positive view of long meetings and elaborate oratory was presented by Michelle Rosaldo (1973). She argued that polities that give ample opportunity for various parties to engage in baroque rhetoric are more egalitarian than those whose rules of rhetorical order stifle debate. This verges on a one-to-one mapping of social-structural function onto discourse-level form paralleling that of Bloch (1975);[27] I hesitate to follow Rosaldo's generalization. Still, the new relative disunity of landed Muslim leaders in Bangladesh has presented others with opportunities that are evident in the "chaos" lamented by those trying to control the moot. The inability of the leaders of the sālis to "maintain order" might reflect at least a partial deference to a Bangladeshi version of individualism which gives no automatic submission to authority. This is reminiscent of Bloch's (1975) argument that oratorical formality itself exercises a coercive effect on listeners, so identifying speech with a tradition as to place it beyond challenge. We can appreciate Bloch's affirmation that the form of ritual speech exercises some influence on its flow and content (1975:5) and that rhetorical form exercises a unique degree power when it is hidden (1975:6). Still, his one-to-one mapping of function onto (an essentialized notion of) formality is untenable, as is demonstrated in Seidel's essay (1975) in the volume Bloch himself edited and in more recent work (Bauman and Briggs 1990:62–63; Irvine 1979; Myers and Brenneis 1984; Parmentier 1993).

At any rate, the four elected chairmen of four unions who were trying to run the meeting did not react to the shouting by the pāblik as a positive manifestation of egalitarianism in the polity. In fact, they threatened to leave if people did not stop *krasiŋ kathā* 'crossing words' (i.e., mutual interrupting; line 535).[28] The threat should be seen as a form of coercion since any withdrawal of the legitimating presence of the officials would have contributed to the disarray and disrepute of the local polity. Significantly, the chairmen turned to a medical metaphor in line 439 in the context of describing the measures needed to bring order back into the social order. (The "canvasser" is a hawker of medicines, a common figure in Bangladesh's outdoor markets.)

439	udār sālin guli owṣud bānāyā	You are making fine "saline" preparations
440	dāter owṣud bicchen.	but you're trying to sell toothache medicine.
441	eṭā to asubidha haito nā.	[If you want to engage in verbal gymnastics (line 434),] that's no problem.
442	kintu (xx) *canvasser* haiyā buddhi (to) dān	But a canvasser's teaching
443	darkār nāi?[29]	we don't need.

The speaker of line 439, taking a presiding role, aims to reimpose order, lest the meeting mire in chaos. He uses two strategies to chide previous speakers, speaking first in relatively "direct" metarhetoric and then in a metaphor. What they have been doing is bogging down in *kathār bāhāduri* 'skilled words, oratory' (the local equivalent, perhaps, of "legalese," another pejorative example of what I am calling metarhetoric), demonstrating their oratorical skills but circling around what he calls the *meyn jinis* 'main thing' (line 444). This he likens to a canvasser, a hawker of medicine in the bazaar. The canvasser would like to sell one remedy that works for all problems; thus he waxes eloquent about its virtues. Saline—oral or injectable—is widely viewed as such a cure-all.[30] But neither eloquence nor such a generic fix is called for when one has a toothache. Not that the toothache is regarded lightly; it is just very specific and falls outside the purview of saline's efficacy. The samāj (the society, the body politic) has a toothache, and now the sālis must engage in specific, targeted, direct, bold action to cure it. The toothache, I think, refers both to the February fight and to the breakdown of order in the meeting at hand.

The speaker in lines 470–476—perhaps the same man—changes the trope:

470	māmā bānāiyechilām sabhāpati?	We made Mother's-Brother the chair of the meeting?
471	uni ey elākār *chairman?*	He is the chairman of this union?

472	āmi bhābchilām je onār se ḍābṭā phāṭā	I was thinking that he would be able to crack this green coconut
473	baṣṭi sa(he)ber jetā āmrā (xxx) garāddo	(Mister X and we,)
474	āmrā ey bhābe cali?	[I hoped] we could proceed this way.
475	kintu ājke dekhlām je	But today we've seen
476	onār durbalatā anekta haiyā geche?	that he has a lot of weakness.

Indeed, "weakness" (Wilce, in press[a]) functions here as another iconic trope; it is a metaphor with one foot in the phenomenology of experience and the other in social reality. The speaker says that he had hoped the particular elder who is his "Mother's Brother" could lead this meeting to a solution, but he has proven too weak. The weakness of the local *polity*, I assume, is the real problem; to admit that, however, would contribute to the problem. Better to personify it, to resort to synecdoche, pars pro toto, one leading member standing for a whole. At any rate, this trope is one more brick in the construction of the case that the honor of the local polity is at stake in the way the moot proceeds:

497G	se hisābe, e elākar jāte (durnām) nā hay,	In light of that, lest people speak ill of this area,
498G	se marjādā (āmnārā) kairen.	[let us act in such a way as to] uphold its dignity.

Discussion

What enabled the image and the diagram, the denotational-structural iconism to be used so effectively in the moot, that is, to become a micro-macro performative iconism? I do not argue that the denotative meaning of the reduplicated verb phrase used by Member Shaheb was lost on the crowd; quite the contrary. One man who heard Member Shaheb's reciprocal construction (mārāmāri) of the violence did protest. His protest was a counterconstruction of the event as one-sided, a construction using the nonreduplicated (and passivized) form *mārā haiyeche* 'was beaten' (lines 190 f.). The debate thus centered on referential (meta)semantics as Member Shaheb and others struggled over "truth" or "truths," "trying to reconstruct in aggregate memory the way particular phrasings fit 'real world' events" (Silverstein, personal communication, 1995). But no one called explicit attention to the rhetorical tool or to the "rhetoricity" itself (Herzfeld 1988). The lack of a readily available metapragmatic discourse in which hearers might describe the member's verbal strategy contributed to the power of his words to reconstruct the event without serious challenge.[31]

Does the explanation lie in the relative opacity of diagrammatic iconism in particular? The opacity of this moot's rhetoricity might arise in part from the particular mode of semiosis entailed by the structural-semantic iconism of these specific Bengali reduplicated verbs. Diagrammatic iconism, to paraphrase Haiman (1985a:10), is less accessible to discursive consciousness than is image iconism. I do not claim that the reduplication process is opaque to native speakers. Speakers of Bengali, or at least linguists, do, in fact, have metalinguistic tools to refer to reduplication as process; see Shaklayen's (1983) description of *dvirukto* 'doubly-uttered' words. Yet Shaklayen's account is also a manifestation of linguistic ideology. Given the attitudes accompanying the particular diglossia pervasive in the Bengal region (Wilce 1996), his linking of "doubled *verbs*" with the *colloquial* form of the language seems pejorative and urban-classist (Shaklayen 1983:86). While admittedly speculative, my hypothesis is that the metapragmatic association of reduplicated verbs with rural speakers contributes to making the reduplicative-reciprocal semantic iconism relatively less accessible to discursive consciousness than either the morphology of reduplication itself or other semantic effects it produces. Thus in addition to intrinsically semiotic factors, linguistic ideologies almost certainly shape the form and degree of native speakers' consciousness of these tropes of grammar.

Yet another explanation for the fact that no one drew attention to the use of reduplicated forms as *rhetorical* or *performative device* is the capacity of rhetoric per se to hide itself.[32] I would propose that the effectiveness of at least some of the tropes in play owes to the fact that their *rhetoricity* (Herzfeld 1988) lies outside of the metadiscursive consciousness of the moot participants. Again, it is not that the moot lacked metarhetoric; there were in fact "accusations" that some party was resorting to "mere" rhetoric (lines 434, 514). In fact those very accusations—coupled with a lack of attention to *how* devices like reduplicated-reciprocal verbs *function* rhetorically—do "precisely what rhetoric does best: it backgrounds its own rhetoricity" (Herzfeld 1988:1). By backgrounding its own rhetoricity, the rhetoric of this moot can be seen as more-or-less successfully achieving performativity. That performativity is a particular exploitation of iconicity in the service of social ideology (Herzfeld 1986).[33]

Most members of stratified speech communities (including the United States [Hill 1995] and rural Bangladesh) are not considered rhetorically competent; competence is regarded as an achievement (Briggs 1988). Thus the "expert" use of certain rhetorical tools by a few helps keep their intricacies (and the contingencies of their performance) from the awareness of most speaker/hearers. To the extent that using the reduplicated-reciprocal verb *rhetorically* manages to hide its own rhetoricity, it falls in the realm of those aspects of speech which effectively naturalize the somewhat arbitrary construction of reality it calls forth.

Conclusion

Space does not allow us to investigate the indexical (and probably also iconic) dimensions of vocal timbre and volume in the moot; this article must content itself with description of the iconism of metaphor and morphological-semantic isomorphism in the moot. A skeptic—more likely one without, rather than with, linguistic training—might dismiss the transcribed exchange over *mārāmāri* versus *mār* as "*mere* semantics." Semantics, yes. But to be able to define the terms of debate is to exercise power. Thus to control what is the focus of the words in the debate is to render the interlocutor either a complainer (a "whiner," injured in "his own" brawl) or a legitimate plaintiff. In other words, from vocal timbre and intensity to morphology and explicit tropes like "the body politic," the management of linguistic resources constitutes variously imagined communities. As contemporary crosscurrents in Bangladeshi public rhetoric sometimes escalate into violence, it remains to be seen what forms of community can survive and what newer forms will arise.

It is not surprising, given the multifunctionality of linguistic signs (Irvine 1989:248–252), that a monolexemic sign like *mārāmāri* might simultaneously accomplish the imagination of a polity (united at some level, or at least mutually engaged in the same activity, albeit a fight!) and also factionalize that community. Member Shaheb's diagrammatic-iconic invocation of reciprocity via the reduplicated verb alienates one party even while the reduplication achieves a performative level of iconicity by linking persons in an imagined polity. In the very act of implicating "all" in mārāmāri, Member Shaheb suppresses the claims of those who consider themselves uniquely victimized, alienating at least one speaker (lines 190 f.). It seems that, for at least some time during the moot, owing to the semiotics and rhetorical production of (un)consciousness as well as to the coercive force more or less implicit in threats (threats not unlike those that the moot was called ostensibly to resolve and in its very process to transcend), even that alienation was subsumed under the hegemonic imagination. Yet in the end, again because of and in other ways despite the public discourse,[34] a somewhat different community emerged from this speech event, one in which the faction supported by Member Shaheb was marginalized. This event, then, represents the potential of all sorts of Peircean tropes to play a formative role in the creation of political moments (Friedrich 1989). The life of political institutions subsists in such moments, linked intertextually.[35]

Notes

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1. As Haley points out in his "microscopic" Peircean analysis of metaphor, iconicity in poetic metaphor must actually be viewed as encompassing not only the imaginal and diagrammatic but also a third subcategory of iconism Haley calls the *metaiconic*. A mature metaphor needs "the rigor of the Peircean diagram to give it structure (to our minds), the quality of the Peircean image to give it color (to our

senses)" as well as the "reciprocal" depth of the metaicon, the "typological" or "archetypal" form of iconism (Haley 1988:34, 46).

2. "Any practice theory (Ortner 1984) that is to grant a space to agency and allow for the strategic use of cultural resources that Bourdieu himself stresses must move beyond a vague discourse of mute embodiment and toward one in which we can perceive in detail the ways in which the body is *made* symbolic, interpreted, and experienced as ideologically significant. It is in this direction—exploring the ways that the body is made an object of cultural and political contention—that we can most fruitfully extend the notion of body hexis in Islamic ritual" (Starrett 1995:965).

3. The iconism of such juxtaposition is explicated quite differently by Herzfeld and Bybee. Bybee (1985) makes the case that not only the order of words in sentences but also the distance of morphemes from the heads they modify (e.g., aspect markers from verb stems) is iconic, leading speaker/hearers to make sensible inferences about what modifies what. Herzfeld, exemplifying the semiotic or language-derived (and thus less language-based [Herzfeld 1988:2]) form of anthropological reasoning he himself advocates, argues that "[b]oth allusion and direct juxtaposition illustrate the paradox which makes iconicity so useful a tool for ideologies. . . . The paradox is that juxtaposition, by positing at least two terms to be compared, denies identity [yet, for ideological purposes, projects it nonetheless]" (Herzfeld 1986:409).

4. This is not the occasion for discourse about Peirce's idea of firstness, but the following citation from Peirce makes clear that no icon, least of all the denotational iconic legisigns (Daniel 1984:30; Parmentier 1994:8 ff.) discussed in this article, is a pure first: "The First is that whose being is simply in itself, not referring to anything nor lying behind anything. . . . The idea of the absolutely First must be entirely separated from all conception of or reference to anything else. . . . It cannot be articulately thought: assert it, and it has already lost its characteristic innocence. . . . Stop to think of it, and it has flown" (Peirce 1991:188–189).

5. Sound symbolism may entail single sounds, while onomatopoeia entails an iconism of the form of a whole word with its object.

6. "Ideally an iconic diagram is *homologous* with what it represents: not only will every point in the diagram correspond to some point in the reality depicted, but the relationships among these points will correspond to the relationships among the points in reality" (Haiman 1985a:11). In her article "Diagrammatic Iconicity in Stem-Inflection Relations," Bybee argues, "When the relations among the expression units of various categories are considered, it is found that these relations are diagrammatic for the relations among the units of content" (Bybee 1985:40).

7. Counterevidence to Stephen Anderson's claim that verb reduplication does not affect "person, voice or the like" (1985:170) is provided by Bengali and its Austro-Asiatic neighbors (Abbi 1992:115) if we interpret reciprocal verbs as modified in voice or valency (Comrie 1985).

8. Standard Bengali *hãwmãw*, which corresponds to Matlab *hãwdãw*, denotes an animal's growling or roaring.

9. Haiman argues that verb-stem reduplication, when used to achieve reciprocal meaning, manifests this diagrammatic sort of Peircean iconism: "The reduplication may itself be seen as an iconically motivated index of the multi-clausal origin of the reciprocal sentence [i.e., a sentence like 'A hit B and B hit A', reduced to a single lexeme meaning 'A-B-hit-each-other']" (Haiman 1985b:77).

10. The semantic extension of the notion of "heat" to food, passion, intensity of mana-like spiritual power and so forth is common in South Asia.

11. Bangladeshi sociolinguist Humayun (1985:97) also recognizes, in passing, the reciprocal force of some reduplicated verbs in a particular dialect. Humayun also

credits Bengali Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore with having written about the reciprocal force of reduplication (Rajib Humayun, personal communication, 1996).

12. These parts are not (meaning-bearing) morphemes in the strict sense, since the second is often unglossable, a "mere echo" of the first.

13. Although the sound-symbolic pattern itself is fairly well established (see below), it is the sort of pattern that remains unconscious until someone like myself comes around asking questions about it. (Pinker [1994:167] speculates that high front vowels are quite common signs of proximity while low back or central vowels often index distance throughout the world's languages.) My hypothesis that the vowel contrast *in reduplicated verbs* conveys a diagrammatic contrast in "moral-aesthetic quality" is admittedly speculative, partly due to the "limits of awareness" (Silverstein 1981).

The "lightness" of the /i/ vowel is mentioned by Dimock (1989:60 f.). This and the contrasting value of the /ā/ vowel were confirmed in linguistic interviews that I conducted in Bangladesh in 1996. My earlier hypothesis that the contrast was linked with the proximal-distal values conveyed indexically by the /e/ versus /o/ deictics in Bengali was not directly confirmed. That is, interviewees consistently identified the indexical values of /e/ and /o/ as proximal and distal but did not consistently identify the same values for /i/ and /ā/.

14. The Papuan examples of reciprocal-reduplication in verbs described by Haiman approach the "problem" differently from Bengali. The problem, according to Haiman (1985a), is how to manage the concatenated clausal elements compressed in reciprocal verbs. "[T]he asymmetry of any concatenated elements *AB* may be either reinforced or overridden by morphological or prosodic diacritics of two distinct types . . . [either] *subordination* [or another type of solution, unnamed by Haiman] which . . . allows us to distinguish between symmetrical and asymmetrical coordination" (1985a:73). Haiman, citing Pilhofer's Kate language data, shows a preference for a "symmetrical" means of overriding the semantic asymmetry inherent in reciprocal verbs. In at least some reciprocal-reduplicated verbs, "the entire stem . . . is repeated. The first token is prefixed with the first person singular object pronoun prefix *na-*, the second, with the second person pronoun prefix *ga-*. Each token is followed by the same suffix *-ng*; the entire complex is treated as the object complement of the utility verb *e-*" (Haiman 1985b:77).

For example:

na-le-ng ga- le-ng- e-
1st sing. obj-give- nominalizer? 2nd (subj.?)-give- nominalizer? do/say-
"give each other"

In Bengali, the entire complex is treated as the object complement of the utility verb *karā* 'do', but the semantic asymmetry inherent in the reciprocal meaning is reinforced through the asymmetrical marking of the two agents, A and B:

mār-ā mār-i karā-
hit-(distal?) hit-(proximal?) do-
"engage in mutual beating"

15. In lines 417–431 those who address the moot dispense with metaphor and make a more directly and patently ideological appeal to the audience to cooperate. They make an implicit threat to impose order upon the unruly bodies of the pāblik ("unauthorized," or "lay," speakers), those claiming injury, and/or those whose violence might have embarrassed their patrons. The ideological appeal is not only in highly valorized moral terms like *peace* but in terms of the relative status or reputation of this fractured polity—as if reputation could earn a community a

special standing in a grand sort of competition between neighborhoods. Here the imagined "community" approaches the level of "district" or nation.

16. Administrative units in Bangladesh are, in ascending order of inclusivity, the village *(grām)*, union, subdistrict *(upazilā)*, district *(zilā)*, and division.

17. All names of persons and places (with the exception of Dhaka, Matlab, and Chandpur) are pseudonyms.

18. All are Islamists, that is, but one household in the six-household compound. I asked one young man about the idea of the residents of his household voting according to individual preference; he laughed and told me that was unthinkable. Yet to the consternation of the other elders, one household head supported the "un-Islamic" candidate, as befitted his own lifestyle.

19. Note that Bengali has a three-term system of respect/intimacy in second-person pronouns and suffixation on verbs. The form of the second-person pronoun used throughout the meeting is, in accord with its formal character, the highest *(āpni)*, rather than *tumi* or (extremely intimate/disrespectful) *tui*.

20. *Ganḍā-gol* bears some resemblance to reduplicated forms derived by what is known among South Asianists as "echo formation"; in this case, however, each segment—*ganḍā* and *gol*—bears some semantic weight and contributes something to the compound's sense: "disturbance."

21. Parmentier's semiotic analysis of Belauan oratory defines "metasemantics" (following Silverstein) as "language about the relatively decontextualized meaning of forms." This realm of sign making is encompassed by metapragmatics, "language about the indexical or pragmatic relationship between linguistic signals and their contexts of use" (Parmentier 1993:261). Among the many examples of metalanguage in the transcript of the Belauan oratory that he analyzes are many references to the ongoing speech event (analogous to what I treat as metadebate over agenda) and "metapragmatic glosses" of a metasemantic sort: explicit discussions of the meaning of recent speech segments.

22. Although what I hear is *mārman*, which seems idiosyncratic, what was said could also have been either *māraṇ* 'slaughter, destruction' (Ali et al. 1994:663) or *mārāṇ* 'injustice' (Shahidullah 1993:853).

23. [māyr], the phonetic shape produced by the speaker, is somewhat idiosyncratic.

24. The singular English form is used by Bangladeshis to designate a member of a crowd (cf. the Greek masculine plural *'oi poloi*.) A pāblik (citizen) contrasts with a *byaktityo* (personality), or a person who has a title owing to political office. There are, at times, some parallels to be drawn between discourse in Matlab and in Samoa, two hierarchical societies (Myers and Brenneis 1984).

25. Note that Bengali verbs are unmarked for number, hence the subject of this verb may be "we" or "I."

26. Space does not permit a digression from my focus on iconism to an examination of the fascinating role played by indexicals in this moot; suffice it to say that first-person plural pronouns functioning either exclusively or inclusively constitute what Silverstein (in his Whorfian reflection on Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*) calls "the trope of 'we'-ness" (Silverstein, in press). Such pronouns also help the polity to imagine itself as such.

27. For this insightful critique I am indebted to Michael Silverstein (personal communication, 1995).

28. It is possible that "crossing words" here is a calque on the Bengali reduplicated verb phrase *kathār kāṭākāṭi* 'mutual cross-cutting' (overlapping, argumentative exchanging) of words. Whereas the latter refers to argument in general, a context-

sensitive interpretation of "crossing words" in this moot supports the more specific meaning of "interruption."

29. Regarding the question mark here and in line 476, cited below, see the transcription conventions in the appendix.

30. This faith is based on the successful use of saline in rehydrating victims of cholera and other severe diarrheal disorders.

31. Such metapragmatic discourses *can* be generated, as evidenced by my discussions with Mansur Musa (alluded to above).

Jane Hill (1995) has recently described how "mock Spanish" *indirectly* indexes racist images of Spanish-speaking people. She traces her theoretical framework through the writings of Ochs (1990) on indirect indexicality to Silverstein (1979) and Whorf on covert semiosis. "Innocence," unconsciousness, and power are linked in Hill's striking portrayal of the range of forms used in mock Spanish.

32. "At the level of rhetoric itself, imputations of rhetoric [imputations that the present author labels *metarhetoric*] are a mark of social unpleasantness. In ordinary usage, the term implies pretension, bombast, even deliberate dishonesty. As a result, the social sciences have generally treated rhetoric as an epiphenomenon of a real world to which it blocks access. Yet the consequent refusal to take rhetoric seriously is symptomatic of precisely what rhetoric does best: it backgrounds its own rhetoricity" (Herzfeld 1988:1; see also Jakobson 1987b).

33. "Both allusion and direct juxtaposition illustrate the paradox which makes iconicity so useful a tool for ideologies.... The paradox is that juxtaposition, by positing at least two terms to be compared, denies identity.... All these devices are performatives, directed to the reconstitution of what may be an impossible condition in one sense as fundamental truth in another. They belong to the larger class of devices which background the tropic character of an attribution ('Z is a *real* shark'). Just as it would be merely silly to object to the reality of the shark, so, too, we stand to gain nothing from simply dismissing the claims of cultural ideologies as 'untrue'. Their validity is subject to what Hanson (1979) has called a 'double contingency,' one side of which lies in the evidential rules within which the ideology itself is formulated. Like all performatives, such devices are successful in varying degrees" (Herzfeld 1986:409).

34. What role behind-the-scenes negotiations played in the fining of the relatively-more-violent parties I know only in a general sense.

35. This statement invokes a vision of social institutions being produced and reproduced in and across moments of interaction, a vision conveyed by Bourdieu (1977), Giddens (1984), and practice theory in general. The intertextuality on which the social structures of power rest is described by Bauman and Briggs (1990).

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Appendix: Transcript of the February 1992 Moot

Transcription Conventions

- Punctuation of the Bengali discourse follows intonation, not grammar. Thus a final question mark indicates rising intonation, even if the preceding sentence is a statement.
- Overlapping speech segments are shown between slashes on both of the lines that overlap.
- Capitalization indicates segments stressed by speakers.
- Italicization marks English words used in the Bengali discourse.

- Words within parentheses are problematic or uncertain hearings of the taped words. Individual letters within parentheses in the middle of Bengali words are phonemes unrealized in the rapid pronunciation but included to facilitate Indologists' recognition. (xx) signifies inaudible words.
- Comments about participant structure and paralinguistic features are contained in double parentheses.
- Words not spoken but implied in the original are contained within brackets.
- Length of pauses is shown in seconds, by numbers in parentheses.
- Latching of utterances, the near overlap of two utterances by the same or different speakers, is indicated by =.

Given the difficulty of identifying all 50 potential speakers from an audio recording of the moot, I have arbitrarily assigned a new lowercase or capital letter of the alphabet whenever a new unidentified speaker begins. Some speakers are identified explicitly in the course of the interaction, and I assign them special letters. For example, "M" designates the particular union councilmember dominating most of the sālis, "Mt" designates Burrus, the schoolmaster ("Master Shaheb"), and "Bt" designates "Bottle," the new chairman of Sonargaon Union. "N" designates "Bottle's" nephew.

130	āpnāgo jāgā(r) saŋkrānto byāpār	You have the affair concerning the place,
131	jami jamār byāpār puskunir byāpār	the affair of the land, the affair of the pond
132	egulā to pare-o karte pārben.	these you could even handle later.
133	jeṭa āpnārā udyag niyā dujan *chairmen*	The thing about which you took the initiative and invited two [union council] chairmen:
134	māmlā karte den nāy,	you did not allow [the parties] to go to court.
135	eṭāke ekṭā mahāt kāj karechen?	In that you have done a great thing.
136	māmlā haile elākār ksmati,	In a court case, the area is hurt,
137	elākār ṭākā paysā apacan haibo,	the area's money would be wasted,
138y	reṣāreṣi	conflict . . .
139M	ganḍagal reṣāreṣi āro bārbo kambo nā.	The indiscipline and mutual spite would grow, not shrink.
140y	Hm.	Mhm. ((*Agreement.*))
141M	eṭār āge samādhān karār ceṣṭā karen.	Before it comes to that, try to solve it!
142	eṭār to *time* āche=pare pārben.	There's time for this matter=later you can do it.
143	ār ey matlab kar(e)che	And this [person] thought
144	je jāgā(r) saŋkrānto jinis dekhte hale,	that if you must hear land-related disputes
145	eto lok lāgbe nā.	You don't need so many people.
146y	nā ṭhik	No, [you're] right.
147M	āmi lāgbo?	I'm needed.

148	(e) elākār (mai murabbi dasṭā) lāgbo.	The area's leaders—ten [or so]—are needed.
149y	ekjan lāgbo jārā nā ki jinisṭā JĀne.	One are [*sic*] needed who KNOW the matter.
150z	hā jāne. thik.	Yeah.
151M	āge to jeṭā nā ki niyā ghaṭanā,	First, whatever is the real event,
152	jeṭā niyā kendro. eṭā to āge śeṣ karben.	whatever this centers on—you should finish it first.
153x	*Member* Shaheb, kendro ki liyā.	Member Shaheb, what is the center?
154y	ayṭā to ekṭā bād diyechilo	(That, something got neglected??)
155x	ke- kendro ki liyā, *Member sā*(he)b?	What is the center, Member Shaheb?
156M	ār aiṭā to ekṭā BHĀR niyechilo.	And they [who took this initiative] took a burden [of responsibility].
157a	eto kathā śunechen (ki niyā) kendro?	You've heard all this talk; what is the center?
158x	ji śunechi ek miniṭ. ācchā?	Yes, I've heard—[wait] a minute. Huh?
159M	je janyo baktabyo rāikā geche nā?	That for which all those presentations went by, you know?
160	bāge bibhāge (LAIYĀI) bal(e)che.	Bit by bit they addressed it.
161	to ekhan to	Now
162	āmnerā ay kendro to ār (bisārtāchen nā.)	you are no longer looking for the source of the fight.
163	a(p)n(ā)rā bisārtāchen mārāmāri. to mārā-mārir-	You are looking into mārāmāri. About mārāmāri—
164	eṭā to mār nā. e to mārāmāri. (1.0)	This is not mār. It's mārāmāri. (1.0)
165	nā eṭā mār.	Or is it mār?
166x	mārāmāri to (h)ai(ye)che.	Mārāmāri is what happened.
167M	nā āmār kathā hai(ye)che /jadi mārāmāri/	No, I'm saying, /if it's mārāmāri/
168z	/(jehetu duy pakhyo)	/(Since it's two sides)
169M	/mārāmāri bā/	—mārāmāri or/
170z	/jadi/	/If/
171M	mārāmāri balte ubhay paksme	To say "mārām 6ri" [means] both sides.
172A	HA!	YEAH!
173M	to mārāmāri kar(e)che ubhay paksme. (1.5)	Both sides just did mārāmāri. (1.5)
174	MĀR NĀ TO! (1) SE TO MĀR NĀ.	NOT "MĀR" AT ALL! (1) THAT WASNT MĀR AT ALL!
175b	āmi to mārāmārIY bal/chi. /	I SAID /mārāmāri. /
176M	/ay to/	/That's it—/
177	mārāmāri kar(e)che (.5) ubhay paksme.	both sides did mārāmāri.
178c	ji.	[Yes,] sir.
179M	mār hale, eṭār praśno thākto.	If it were mār, that question would remain.

180	ekhan āpni dekhen,	Now you look
181	je āsaLEY ki niyā lāglo ke karlo.	at actually who did what for what reasons.
182x	Hm.	Mhm.
183M	tā (mā ŋ) mārāmāri hai(ye)che?	That's (?) mārāmāri happened [right]?
184	ubhay paksme mārāmāri kar(e)che,	Both sides did mārāmāri.
185	ār jadi (.5) ki liyā karlo	And if (.5)—who did what,
186	ke se mālik nā mālik nā	who is the owner [of the land] and who is not. . .
187	seṭā nā āmrār dharte habe.	That's what we have to grasp.
188c	ekṭā kathā cāpā raiyā geche gā.	One subject has been suppressed.
189		((several people speaking at once))
190c	(very emotional) ekṭā (mārman [māran, mārān]) hayechi?	One ([of us] was beaten [slaughtered, robbed of justice]),
191	ekṭā hai(ye)che MĀR. ekṭā cāpā hai(ye)che āmner.	[and] one [did the] beating. Something was suppressed [in] your [account]!
192d	kathā (aksmar) (rākho)	(Hold your words)
193		((several people speaking at once))
194e	mārāmāri ubhay pakhyo hai(ye)che.	mārāmāri [between] two sides occurred!
195	(ka) mārāmārir āgey? mār āmāri jāte nā hay	Before the mārāmāri, in order that mārāmāri not occur
196	ubhay paksmo sālisāke man(e)che.	both sides agreed to arbitration.
197	KE amānya kairā mārāmāri karlo	Now then who broke [that], who did mārāmāri,
198	seṭā niyā habe bicār	that's what the arbitration will be about.
199x	hā, seṭā tulte pāren.	Yeah, you can raise that issue.
200c?	(mār ni(ye)chi) pare!	(We've taken the mār) later!
201	ār ekhāne (āste kathā balben).	And here [you should] speak softly [or, "slowly"].
202N	mārāmāri habe je (kichu ekṭā)	(There will inevitably be a little) mārāmāri.
203	sālisā kar(e)che kar(e)che tinjan lokke	The case was initiated [against?] three people.
204	āyjkā sandhyā-eyi basbo. (0.5)	[They had said] we would sit this evening. (0.5)
205x	kintu seṭā (ābār na-dasṭā karlo)	But that (was set for 9 or 10 [p.m.]).
206	tyāg karā ey mārāmāri ke kare śriṣṭi karlo,	[Should we] give that up [x] and decide who started the mārāmāri
207N	seṭā (nā āger *or* ālādā) kathā.	—that ("is another," *or* "or the previous") discussion?
208		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
209O	tārpare, tārpare to ballo	Then, then they said—
210x	(tārpare) mār hai(ye)che, mārāmār(i) nā.	then mār occurred, not mārāmāri.

211P	tārpare to āslo je thākbār cintā karā	Then came thoughts about staying [overnight]
212M	ey je āpnāder (xxxx) chilen nā āpnārā	Here you had no (xx), you
213		((uproar))
214M	jato kathā kambo nā.	This discussion will not settle down!
215Q	kamto.	It will settle down.
216Y	ey jāk āwwā emje kathā kaiyechen.	Whatever. (xx) As you said
217	āge to āmrā to *statement* /niyechi/	We've taken a *statement* [from the accused?]
. . .		
219	e kathā āmāre ekhan ṭān diyechen	This discussion you are now dragging out:
220	tat niyā ābār e ghorā dāri	The horse when roped,
221	ghoṛā ṭānto ghoṛā kāṭto ghoṛā kāṭṭe	wounds [the one who goes near].
222	herpare mājhe jāite	So, to go in the middle . . . [those who intervene also bear some responsibility]
223		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
224Bt	onāre āmi kichu balār janno balechi? ebaṇ sabā-e jāne (eji karechen)	I told them to say something, and all know.
225M	nā (sam xx jāni nā)	No [not all know about it]
226B	jehetu xxx Burruser murabbi āchen. Burrus cale geche.	Since Burrus is an elder-leader, Burrus went [to speak in an official capacity].
227x	sabā-e jan\e.	Everyone knows [that].
228B	erpareo paricay karen.	Nevertheless, introduce [Burrus?].
229x	(thāk cese ha)	(Never mind)
230B	e rakam *internation* darbār	In this sort of *"international"* moot.
231	*interdistrict*-er darbār (du ekṭā) KAREo	Convening an *interdistrict* moot.
232x	=kare.	(They convene it)
233B	se hisābe onār ki *point* -e jāite cāe (cān)?	In that light, what *point* does he want to move to?
234	eṭā āpnāder byāpār.	That is your decision.
235M	xxx jā balechen eṭa (bhumikā diyā) baltāche,	What you speak of [someone] addressed (already, by way of background)
236	jā āge iyāṭā dekhen (KĀN DIYĀ) dekhen.	Look (with your ears) at what [took place] before.
237	(āchen nimno oderike jadi) alpo	(xx) a little bit
238	jadi eṭār saṇge (āge lupto)	If, along with that (before)
239	kono biṣay bastu esā jāe, tā(ha)le fazdāri *stop*.	some other matter or thing comes in, then this court is stopped.
240x	(xx) rāy haiyā jāe	Yes, a decision occurs [then].
241M	fazdāni sthagito thākeyi	This "court" would be suspended.
242x	*stop* haiyā ā ā ā—/ad/	It comes to a *stop*.
243M	/(xxx)/	(xxx)

244		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
245a	a ekhāne āmrā e (xxx) kathā balben nā (xx) eṭā	Here we (. . .) Don't [honorific form] talk!
246		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
247ch	x nā, sunen!	No, listen!
248R	āmi kichu kathā baltām (1.8), eman kichuṭā baltām.	I would speak a word (1.8), I want to say a little.
249S	EKHĀNE JE JINISTĀ NIYE ĀMRĀ EKHĀNE ((speaking over the roar))	THE THING WITH WHICH WE ARE HERE CONCERNED
250		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
251M?	ekhāne (sabhāpati sāheb ekṭā kaTHĀY (ney nā keo).	[The thing] here—Chairman Shaheb, I want to take [the floor] to speak a word!
252	sabāy to kathā hāwdāw kartāche.	Everyone is roaring.
253		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
254S?	nā!	No!
255		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
256S?	sunen, sunen!	Listen, listen!
257	ekhāne darbāre basle jadi sāilāsi kan,	If [what's going on] here is that a moot is convened, if you call it a moot,
258	ekhāne *corresponding* karen.	[then you must] correspond here.
259	ekhāne darbār kono din?	There can never be a moot—
260	siddhānto āmrā pawcte pārbo nā.	we won't be able to reach a decision.
261	ekhan āsal biṣay-bastuṭā puskuni.	The actual subject matter is a pond.
262x	dar (xxx)	(?)
263S	sekhāne jamin kono	[Whatever] parcels of land [might be] there
264	ekhāne kono *subject* -i nā.	are no subject here at all!
. . .		
291	(1.0) o tin jan amānya karlo.	(1.0) Those three transgressed.
292T	((high nasal voice)) E RĀ(K)HEN! ĀMNE hunen,	Quiet! You [honorific form] listen!
. . .		
417A	niyam srinkhalā buddhi āyechi,	We have come [under] rule, discipline, wisdom
418	je āmār (deser janno) chārāite pāri.	which (we can dispense with for our nation)
419B		((Someone makes a joke.))
420C		((Several laugh.))
421D	āsale darbār karte (x) hale	If you have to hold a moot—
422E	(nā āpni reden bhāy)	No, you ((xxx)), brother—
423D	he darbār ekṭā (he jeman maito)	this moot must . . .
424	thākte habe	you must have . . .
425	ekṭā ātma-niyaton thākte habe,	there must be a self-command.

426	sabār (madhye) sabār ekṭā	Everyone must have an attitude of respect.
427	sraddhā-bodh thākte habe	There must be this attitude of respect among all
428	Hm	Hm.
429	ekṭā bhālabāsā thākte habe	There must be love,
430	ebaṇ sab ceye baṛo jiniś thākte (xx)	and the greatest of all things, there must be (xx)
431	ekṭā udāratā thākte (pārben ni).	a nobility [*or* magnanimity/loftiness].
432	āmrā e[kh]āne basechi, ekṭāi	We have sat down here
433	(śuneś eṭā cāite) mimaṇsā.	(to work out) a compromise.
434	āmrā (jadi) kathār bāhāduri de(k)hāi	If we display verbal skill
435	kathā balte thāki, ta (hai)le	and keep on talking, then
436	(bājār kemne śārā satya)	(how can the whole truth come out in the bazaar?)
437	(bā jadi dārāgbār du ṣāt das hājār balte dārā	(Or by speaking 2, 7, 10 thousand [x's]?)
438	bujhāite (xxx) lāgbe nā.	(xx) No need to explain.
439	udār sālin guli owṣud bānāyā	You are making fine "saline" preparations,
440	dāter owṣud bicchen.	but you're trying to sell toothache medicine.
441	eṭā to asubidhā haito nā.	[If you want to engage in verbal gymnastics,] that's no problem.
442	kintu (xx) *canvasser* haiyā buddhi (to) dān	But a canvasser's teaching
443	darkār nāi?	we don't need.
444	āmgo *main* jiniś jeḍā	That which is our main thing
445F	śunechi	we have heard.
446D	(krimi) owṣud (*or* asubidhā) dar	(Parasite) medicine (*or* problem?)
447G	(bhālo)	is fine.
448D	kāje kār (atatan) haiye (xx) lābh nāi	So [to do x with the question of] whose [x is x-ing] won't help.
449	kār āpatti kār jālā sini iyā iyā karā darkār nāi.	We don't need "whose objection, whose pain."
. . .		
460	sabār ekṭu śānti	[There is] a common peace [to be concerned with].
. . .		
470N	māmā bānāiyechilām sabhāpati?	We made Mother's Brother [Bottle?] the chair of the meeting.
471	uni ey elākār *chairman*?	He is the chairman of this union.
472	āmi bhābchilām je onār se ḍābṭā phaṭā	I was thinking that he would be able to crack this green coconut.
473	basṭi sā(he)ber jeṭā āmrā (xxx) garāḍdo	(Mister x and we,)
474	āmrā ey bhābe cali?	(I hoped we could) proceed this way.

475	kintu ājke dek(h)lām je	But today we've seen
476	onār durbalatā anekṭā haiyā geche?	that he has a lot of weakness.
477	uni durbali āche? ki khāidām (wābe)?	He is weak, and (???)
478	nā mānuṣ (kartan wābe)?	(humans xxx)—
479	eṭā bujhte pārlām nā.	I can't understand whether he is [x or y].
480	onār darbār ājke (xx) haitāche.	He is hosting this moot.
481	(xxx) āmi onār bhagine (xxx)	(xxx) As his nephew (xxx),
482	āmār khārāp lāgtāche.	I feel badly.
483	keno eṭā habe?	Why should this happen?
484	ājke āmrā enā cār cārṭā *chairman* upasthit.	Today we are four chairmen present.
485	(xxx) śudhu ekhāne nāi.	(xxx) Not only here.
486	jadi ey bhābṭā nā thāke,	If this attitude does not abide,
487	sraddāpar nā thāke,	if respect does not abide,
488	bhālabāsā nā thāke, sraddhā nā thāke	love does not abide, respect does not abide,
489	(xx) nā thāke tārpare	(xx) does not abide, then
490	āpnār darbār bandho kare den?	shut down your moot?
491	āmrā cale jāi. ār jadi seṭā	and let's go. And if that
492	(bandho karen) tāhale karen.	(is what you want), then do it.
493	āmār kathāke rāg karen nā	Don't be angry with my words.
494	byādabi(ḍā) māph karen.	Forgive the offense.
495		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
496Bt?	(xxx) je *interdistricter* (lokoi) hay nāi? darbār āi(ye)che.	(xxx) People have come from other "districts."
497H	se hisābe, e elākār jāte [durnām] nā hay,	In light of that, lest people speak ill of this area,
498H	se marjādā (āmnārā) kairen.	uphold its dignity.
. . .		
500I	āmrā ek mat (āmrār kathā)	We are of one mind (regarding [your?] words).
501J	āmrā sabāy ek mat	We are all of one mind.
502I	ekhan	Now
503I	(bāhāduri) mem[bār] sā(h)eb	(xx) Member Shaheb
504G	ji	Yes
505	(1.5)	(1.5)
506I	e (0.8) er āgar [standard form = āger] jakhan āmrā sabāy	The (0.8) previous [time] when we all
507	isṭeṭmente halo *council* (.3) kathā halo	[When] statements happened, a council [convened], discussion went on
508M	samāj (dite je halo)	[That is,] a "society" (was convened).
509Mt?	takhan āmrā ballām je	We said then that
510	jārā bāhirer (0.8) lokjan āi(e)che (0.3)	those outsiders (0.8) who have come (0.3),
511	TĀRĀ JE LĀINE (JĀITE CĀY)	the line they (want to go in)
512	he lāine erā (geche nichin [std. Bengali nicchidra]) hok (1.3)	even if that line be pure (1.3)

513	e lāine (je nijer dārā) āmrā (to eman)	we are not willing (on our own)
514	(nijeder) bāhāduri ār karte rāji nāi .	to go on in (our) verbal skill [rhetoric]
515	(0.6)	(0.6)
516K	ekṭu kathā bal(e)chi (āmi cu) āpnāre	I'm (?) speaking a word to you.
517J	nā!	No!
518?	dārāo	Wait.
519		((Three people speak at once; unintelligible))
520K	hay nāi!	(x) hasn't happened
521	(tārā *or* dārāo halen)	(Wait? They became x?)
522Mt?	ekhaṇ āro	/Now/
523		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
524Mt	(x) āche	there is more (?).
525	āpnār muchā minachā karben	Do your (insulting)
526	eṭā ki bhābe pracār karben seṭā karben	Proclaim it in whatever way you will.
527N		((Unintelligible loud interruption))
528	kathā balte pārbe nā	[third person] will not be able to speak
529		((Member and Master Shaheb speaking simultaneously?))
530M		?
531Mt	darkār ney.	No need!
532M	je ājgā	that today—
533M/Mt		((Unintelligible multiparty talk))
534Mt	keu keu balte habe nā	It won't do for just anyone to speak.
535M	krasiṇ -kathā	crossing-words
536Mt	(ek mātro balbe x)	Only (x) shall speak
537	krasiṇ-kathā (neme xxxx)	[If we] (descend into) crossing-words
538Mt	ekhan (sāmthiṇ tumulā) ji	Now something (?)
539O	*hello*	Hello
540M	jinisṭā *treatment* ki hai(ye)che nā hai(ye)che ?	What [sort of] treatment happened and did not happen?
541	(0.4) e ghaṭanāṭā sabāi (jāne je) haiye geche gā / (0.3) /	(0.4) Everyone knows that the incident occurred . . . /(.3)/.
542P	/sabāi jāne/	/Everyone knows./
543M	tā(ha)le āmāder ey je (restā e janner)	Then our (??)
544SA	bakkār (janno nāpad) bāhire te[he]	(speakers) from outside (??)
545	jārā nicu karā (0.8)	those who are being humiliated (0.8)
546	/ ate-/	/?/
547Q	/ alo/	(became?)
548	āmāder ceye (nihokkadā) tārā beśi (2.0)	They are being (humiliated) more than us. (2.0)
549R	Mhm. Mhm	Uhuh [agreeing].
550	āmāder ceye beśi	More than us.