

INTRODUCTION

Street Vending in the Neoliberal City

A Global Perspective on the Practices
and Policies of a Marginalized Economy

Kristina Graaff and Noa Ha

On 17 December 2010, the Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi burned himself to death in protest of the police's enduring, humiliating treatment of street vendors. He had been his family's main provider since he was ten years old. Selling fruits and vegetables on the streets of Sidi Bouzid, a rural town in central Tunisia, he was assaulted and harassed almost daily by local police officers who confiscated his goods and fined him for not possessing a permit (Ryan 2011). His self-immolation triggered the Tunisian Revolution, which not only led to the fall of then President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali after a rule of twenty-three years, but also caused further revolts in numerous other Arabic-speaking nations, including Egypt, Libya and Syria. Nonviolent protest movements centrally located in public space also took place in Spanish, Greek, and eventually North American cities.

This account visualizes several central aspects of this anthology. It highlights street vending as a precarized economy, reveals public space as

a contested territory, and points out local practices' inextricable ties to developments on a global scale. Aiming at an analysis of street vending from a multifaceted, global, transnational perspective, the volume comprises essays by international scholars from a variety of disciplines, including geography, history, cultural studies, and urban planning. Their contributions examine street vending activities and urban policies in cities as diverse as Berlin, Dhaka, New York City, Los Angeles, Calcutta, Rio de Janeiro, and Mexico City. With this selection of cities, we frame street vending as a global urban practice found in both the northern and the southern hemispheres. This approach attempts to repudiate the assumption that street vending is usually found in the Global South, especially in its so-called "megacities," and to reveal how street vending also represents an essential, constantly growing economic practice in urban centers of the Global North (Roy 2003). Focusing on vendors' positionalities, the contributions investigate their daily experiences as expert knowledge that has the potential to inform us about developments in our respective other hemispheres.

Defining Street Vending

In everyday language, the practice of street vending goes by many different local names. Depending on the respective region, anglophone countries use terms like street peddlers, street hawkers, informal traders, or street vendors, whereas Latin American countries deploy notions like *Ambulantes* and *Comerciantes*. In the academic context, street vending is the most commonly used term. Also serving as a basis for this book is a definition from India's *National Policy For Urban Street Vendors* of 2009, which frames street vending as a mobile, space-bound, predominantly urban practice:

A street vendor is broadly defined as a person who offers goods for sale to the public without having a permanent built up structure but with a temporary static structure or mobile stall (or headload). Street vendors may be stationary by occupying space on the pavements or other public/private areas, or may be mobile in the sense that they move from place to place carrying their wares on push carts or in cycles or baskets on their heads, or may sell their wares in moving trains, bus, etc. [T]he term urban vendor is inclusive for both traders and service providers, stationary as well as mobile vendors, and incorporates all other local/region specific terms used to describe them, such as hawker, pheriwalla, rehriatri walla, footpath dukandars, sidewalk traders, etc. (Bhowmik 2010: xv).

Though an accumulation of numerous street vendors can lead to a market-like situation, it should not be confounded with formalized mar-

kets organized by a market operator and held on a regular basis at fixed times and locations, such as farmers' markets, Christmas, or flea markets. In this anthology, "street vending" thus refers to the selling of products by individuals or by groups of vendors, sometimes in a market-like situation.¹

Street Vending as an Informalized Economy

The chapters in this anthology examine street vending as not only a global and urban phenomenon, but also a type of informalized labor. Much research has been conducted on the informal economy (De Soto 1989; Portes, Castells, and Benton 1989; Guha-Khasnobis 2006), a terminology first coined in the 1970s (Hart 1970, 1973; ILO 1972). Understandings of the term, however, vary widely depending on which activities are counted as "informal." Often, informality is simply equated with illegal practices, but this equivalence is inapplicable to the street vending of legal goods examined in this book. It is equally difficult to fit street vending into the common definition of informality as "a process of income-generation ... [that] is unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated" (Portes et al. 1989: 12). Indeed, street vendors are not subjected to the same regulations as vendors of indoor businesses, but local municipalities in many nation-states nevertheless seek to gain control over their practices by either limiting outdoor vending or banning it outright. Since these state regulations minimize the vendors' income, daily vending practices commonly revolve around the circumvention or bending of formal laws. As it must negotiate an informal work setting with governmental attempts at formalization, street vending can be best described as an *informalized* practice, not just an informal one. This emphasizes the processual nature of street vending as a practice situated between avoiding and complying with governmental interference.

As the above definition of informality illustrated, studies on informality are often based on a rigid divide between formal and informal, regulated and unregulated labor. This is problematic not only because it neglects the state's involvement in the informal sectors, but also because often the divide also suggests a hierarchical view of the informal as an outcome of "faulty" developments in the regular labor market or as an indicator of a "backward" economy that will eventually become obsolete once "underdeveloped" nations adapt to the economic standards of "more developed" ones. This volume opposes such modernist and Eurocentric viewpoints by conceptualizing formal and informal(ized) labor as

mutually related. As the case studies show, many street vendors participate in both the formal and the informal economy. The extent to which street vending itself is perceived as an income-generating practice is also closely tied to developments in the formal economy. Informal(ized) forms of labor can thus become more attractive with the increasing precarization of the formal employment sector, a common development in neoliberal economic regimes such as that in the United States.² The formal and informal sectors therefore have to be considered interdependent forms of production, whereas their interplay has to be acknowledged as inherent to (neoliberal) capitalism.

Street Vending and the Neoliberal Urban Economy

Street vendors are found in rural environments, but they are concentrated in urban areas (Bromley 2000). It is crucial to examine informal(ized) practices in urban settings not just because street vending is most common in cities, but because these settings best demonstrate how global economic developments play out on a local level. This connection is particularly visible in what Saskia Sassen (1991) refers to as “global cities.” Among them are New York, Los Angeles, Berlin, and Mexico City, which are discussed in this volume. From these strategic spaces in regimes of advanced capitalism, the trading of goods is managed, the transnational flow of capital is organized, and international economic relationships beyond national borders are sustained (Sassen 1991). The growth of these new urban economies went hand in hand with an increase in service-oriented jobs and the decline of the blue-collar economy, resulting in a “spatio-economic polarization that goes well beyond the older forms of inequality that have always marked cities” (Sassen 2006b: 43). In a climate of growing income inequality, where low-income populations and their (indoor) businesses are displaced from neighborhoods that now cater to the needs of “new high-income urban elites” (44), informal(ized) practices like street vending gain new importance. They allow income generation under precarized conditions and simultaneously provide goods that meet the needs of low-income populations.

While street vending in global cities encapsulates the intertwining of formal and informal economies, it also illustrates how global economic trends affect daily vending practices more specifically. As the case studies on Berlin, Los Angeles, and Mexico City in this book reveal, vendors are deeply affected by the growing commodification, touristification, and (semi-)privatization of urban space that result from global competition between different cities. By advertising their location-specific advantages,

cities compete for business investment in their particular regions. In the framework of international competition, public space turns into a commodity that cities use to promote themselves (Low and Smith 2005; Harvey 2006). Policy makers usually justify the overall refashioning of public space into a claimed location of leisure and shopping as a way of implementing “safety, order and security” (Smith 1996; Belina and Helms 2003). In order to realize and maintain this usage and appearance of public space, many local governments engage in public-private partnerships and extensively implement mechanisms of surveillance, policing, and control (Eick, Sambale, and Töpfer 2007; Graham 2011). These mechanisms of exclusion not only govern and push out local dwellers but also have tremendous impact on vendors for whom public space represents an indispensable resource of income.

Investigating the Positionalities of Street Vendors

Considering that street vendors all over the globe are exposed to governmental attempts to restrict or ban their business—including police raids, fines for vending violations, and confiscation of goods—it is important to ask *who* in particular is affected by these forms of enforcement. A central aim of the anthology is therefore to investigate the vendors’ positionalities and how the intersecting categories of ethnicity, gender, and class shape daily vending practices (Crenshaw 1991). Location-specific differences and the lack of comprehensive data tracing how the three categories structure the street vending business mean that the contributions in this volume can only offer indications of general tendencies in how street vending plays out in the Global North and South. However, the anthology hints at a feminization of informal(ized) labor in both hemispheres and illustrates how in most cities, street vending is a highly precarized practice carried out predominantly by disadvantaged minority populations.

Most of the volume’s case studies depict street vending as a precarious practice carried out by marginalized groups, including migrants and immigrants, people of color, and women—an observation confirmed by existing research (Spalter-Roth 1988; Austin 1994; Stroux 2006; Swanson 2007; Muñoz 2008; Estrada 2013). Some exceptions are found in the Global North, as in New York City, where increasing numbers of white middle-class vendors offer high-end fare from food trucks. The majority of vendors in the United States, however, are immigrants, on the West Coast predominantly from Latin America, and on the East Coast primarily from francophone West African countries, especially Senegal. By engaging in a practice governed by erratic state regulation, vendors are already in a vulnerable position. Taking

into account that law enforcement in the United States especially targets Blacks³ and people of color (Alexander 2010), for example by inundating them with stop-and-frisk practices at street level—the vendors’ income platform—vendors of color are subjected to multiple forms of marginalization. Especially for those who cannot provide proof of their legal status in the United States, having to sell in a space as “out in the open” as the streets entails constant fear of potential incarceration and deportation. In cities of the Global South, vendors are often also rural-urban migrants; however immigrants too engage in the informal(ized) income practice.

As research on street vending in the Global South confirms, women make up 30 to 90 percent of street vendors in this hemisphere (Tinker 1997; Brown 2006; Brown, Lyons, and Dankoco 2010). In countries where Islam is the predominant religion, such as Bangladesh, fewer women visibly participate in the street vending business. However, they often take an important role in the preparation of products, especially food. Women’s role in the domain of street vending is likewise significant in cities of the Global North. There, female migrants and women of color in particular contribute in versatile ways to family-run businesses. A closer look at their practices reveals that women often venture into street vending because it allows them to better reconcile reproductive and productive labor in their daily life—a fact that emphasizes how, regardless of such improvement, women continue to carry the double burden of family duties and income generation. As the volume’s contributions illustrate, the vendor’s gender is related to the type of product sold. Women engage more often in the vending of food in cities of both the South and the North. The profitability of vending spaces also affects the vendors’ gender distribution: women usually work in less profitable areas (Bhowmik 2010: 12ff.).

How Vendors Navigate Space: Street Vending as a Daily, Politicized Practice

Street vending is a marginalizing practice, but that does not mean vendors have no leeway in navigating the various challenges they face. As the focus on their daily practices reveals, they engage in a variety of activities to carve out space that allows them generate income despite the many state-initiated obstacles (Morales 2000; Kettles 2004; Ha 2009). How they create supportive networks, navigate restrictions and (re)configure urban space is thus a core interest of this anthology. With this emphasis on the vendors’ positionalities, street vending is examined not simply as a mechanism to cope with spatio-economic injustices but also as a space-producing activity. Although vendors are not usually equipped with conventional sources of power, they use location-specific tactics to circumvent restrictions and

maintain their businesses (Duneier 2000; Stoller 2002). Many conceptual frameworks can be used to highlight this actor-oriented perspective. Applying de Certeau's distinction between strategies and tactics to the practice of street vending, it is especially the vendors' mobility that combines spatial and temporal tactics to allow them to momentarily circumvent the state's restrictive strategies, such as those that limit their access to public space. Equally useful to exemplify the vendors' scope of action is Bayat's "quiet encroachment," which he defines as "the silent, protracted but pervasive advancement of the ordinary people on the propertied and powerful in order to survive and improve their lives" (Bayat 2004: 90). It implies transgression and expansion of spatial and legal limits through atomized action, both individual and collective, and is neither as comprehensive as a social movement nor as reductionist as a coping strategy often conducted at the expense of other marginalized populations (90–91). Selling without a permit, avoiding payment of a vending tax, or offering goods out of the trunk of a car in areas where vending is prohibited can be viewed as forms of such quiet encroachment.⁴ Though vendors more often engage in discreet noncompliance than in outspoken protest, their "seemingly mundane practices" (86) nevertheless represent political acts in that they claim access to opportunities and public space that state-sanctioned constraints would deny them. By using urban space to survive and better their living conditions, vendors demonstrate how the city, in particular the street, is a "concrete space for politics" where the "formation of new claims by informal political actors materializes and assumes concrete forms" (Sassen 2006b: 49).

Book Divisions and Essay Overview

Distinctly more research has been conducted on street vending in the Global South (Cross 1998; Bromley 2000; Donovan 2008; Bhowmik 2010), so this collection aims to stimulate questions about the applicability of concepts developed in a Southern framework to a Northern street vending context. While the essays investigate local vending specificities, such as how sellers navigate institutional control in different settings, they also reveal commonalities between the spatial practices in diverse cities around the world. Although street vending activities vary depending on site-specific regulations, the contributions illustrate how the urban practice can also reveal global ties and developments—in other words, the way "the global materializes by necessity in specific places" (Sassen 2006a: 84).

The division of the book into four parts reflects the specificities of street vending as a mobile urban practice affected by globalized neoliberal poli-

cies and processes of racialization, while also having deep historical roots. The first part, entitled “Responding to Urban and Global Neoliberal Policies,” consists of essays that examine street vending practices in New York City and Mexico City in relation to neoliberal policies at the global and local levels. The second part, “Street Vending and Ethnicity,” examines street vending as a racialized economy. It contains essays on Berlin, Los Angeles, and New York City that center on the positionalities of vendors of color, ethnic contestations over vending resources, and the use of common cultural experiences to market vending goods. The subsequent part, “The Spatial Mobility of Urban Street Vending,” which contains case studies on vendors in Los Angeles, Dhaka, and Calcutta, examines how they produce and transform space through their mobile vending practices and avoid harsh governmental regulations through their spatial flexibility and archival politics. The final part of this volume, “Historical Continuities of Street Vending,” illustrates the extensive past of outdoor selling with particular emphasis on the long-standing processes of racialization tied to this urban economy. Essays in this section discuss street vending in Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as the relationship between street activism and street vending in Harlem since the early 1900s.

The first essay, “Flexible Families: Latina/o Food Vending in Brooklyn, New York,” by sociologist Kathleen Dunn, examines the group vending practices of ten Latina families in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Red Hook. As she shows, the “flexible family” stands for a variety of practices and ideas. It describes female family members’ movement between formal and informalized labor as they also carry out the work of social reproduction; represents a material and discursive resource for responding to the state’s attempt to regulate their activities; and functions as a trope for solidarity among the entire group of vendors. Using the concept of the flexible family to describe a form of flexible, collective work organization, Dunn analyzes how families’ selling practices respond to neoliberal policies of economic deregulation and the ideology of economic individualism. Though they must necessarily adapt to flexible production regimes, the family vendors oppose vending as a solitary entrepreneurial practice and instead show how informality can give rise to collective action.

In “Street Vending and the Politics of Space in New York City,” regional planner Ryan Devlin scrutinizes the possibilities and limits of political engagement for noncitizen vendors in New York City. Focusing on the city’s largest advocacy group, the Street Vendor Project, his text depicts a variety of alternative practices beyond the ballot box that vendors use to counter the negative portrayals of street vending perpetuated within the neoliberal discourse spread by Business Improvement Districts and their

supporters within city government. As Devlin illustrates, street vendors take a conflicting position in claiming their right to public vending space: on one level, they seek to counter ideologies of New York as a tourist- and consumption-oriented city without street vending; but at the same time, they defend their access to public space by embracing free-market principles of individualism, entrepreneurialism, and self-reliance, whereby they reinforce the very hegemonies and inequalities they attempt to challenge.

The following essay by geographer Veronica Crossa also examines street vending in relation to neoliberal urban development policies. In "Creative Resistance: The Case of Mexico City's Street Artisans and Vendors," Crossa examines how, in Mexico City's tourist-oriented Coyoacán neighborhood, a "sense of place," that is, "personal connections to a particular location created through social practices," shaped the resistance strategies of vendors who were threatened with removal. Framed by a theoretical discussion on practices of resistance to urban neoliberalism in Latin America, Crossa exemplifies the particular responses of vendor groups at Plazas Limpias in Coyoacán by distinguishing between bounded resistance practices (using sit-ins and petitions based on local support from people who visited the plaza) and creative resistance practices (using paintings, music, and performance to draw on the symbolic characteristics of the place). As the text illustrates, these various resistance practices strive to fight the loss of not just an economic space but also a location inextricably linked to personal life and the vendors' cultural identities.

The anthology's second part, "Street Vending and Ethnicity," opens with an essay by urban studies scholar Noa Ha. In "Metropolitan Informality and Racialization: Street Vending in Berlin's Historical Center," she analyzes routines of racialization as they play out in the regulation of street vendors in the historical center of Germany's capital, a highly contested site of national representation in post-unified Germany. Conceptualizing street vending from a postcolonial perspective as a form of "metropolitan informality," her article aims to expose the mechanisms which lead to a racialized economy of street vending. By contrasting the working conditions of street vendors of color with those of white vendors, Ha's text reveals how both the racist dimensions of labor regulation and the racialization of labor itself fit into a hegemonic narrative of the European city, which is imaged as a primarily white, male, and bourgeois space.

Continuing with the perspective of Latina/o street vendors, cultural geographer Lorena Muñoz scrutinizes the daily practices of street vending in Los Angeles. Her essay "Selling Memory and Nostalgia in the Barrio: Mexican and Central American Women (Re)Create Street Vending Spaces in Los Angeles" explores how female immigrant food vendors (re)pro-

duce street vending landscapes from “back home” through specific selling practices, product ingredients, and a particular display and marketing of the food offered. Her text examines how both the vendors’ and consumers’ memories and nostalgic imaginations aid in the transformation of space, create a sense of place, and shape entrepreneurial vending practices. As Muñoz illustrates, street vending informed by memory and nostalgia is not only a conscious marketing mechanism; it is also a response to the host country’s denial of citizenship. Street vending landscapes thus have the potential to provide noncitizen vendors with an alternative form of citizenship, a “Latino cultural citizenship.”

The essay “Ethnic Contestations over African American Fiction: The Street Vending of Street Literature in New York City,” by American studies scholar Kristina Graaff, examines vending practices in contemporary Harlem. It scrutinizes the frictions between West African and African American vendors in the selling of a popular literary genre known as street literature or urban fiction. Written mainly by African American authors, the novels emerged in the late 1990s and established themselves as a genre by being sold in informal ways on the streets of Harlem, Brooklyn, and North Philadelphia. Choosing two street literature vendors as case studies—an immigrant from the Ivory Coast who is part of the group dominating the street sale of street literature, and an African American vendor from New York City—Graaff’s article works out the differing conditions of entrepreneurialism that the two groups have historically faced and draws upon economic, historical, and cultural explanations for the current mutual distrust between the two groups and their contestations over the street literature vending ground.

The following section of the volume “The Spatial Mobility of Urban Street Vending,” opens with an essay by urban historian Kenny Cupers that attends to the sprawling, suburbanized urban area of Los Angeles. Based on a combination of ethnographic fieldwork and historical analysis, “The Urbanism of Los Angeles Street Vending” examines the spatial strategies of street vendors in this West Coast, car-based city. Taking up approaches developed by Lefèbvre and de Certeau, the essay conceptualizes the mobile strategies of primarily immigrant vendors as a form of “everyday urbanism” that adapts and responds to the changing temporal rhythms of the city and, at the same time, actively shapes and transforms Los Angeles.

The next essay, by geographer Benjamin Etzold—“Selling in Insecurity, Living with Violence: Eviction Drives against Street Food Vendors in Dhaka, and the Informal Politics of Exploitation”—addresses (semi-) mobile vending practices in Bangladesh, where street vending is officially illegal. Drawing upon Johan Galtung’s conceptualizations of violence,

it explores three different types of violence—physical, structural, and cultural—that food vendors in Dhaka experience. Etzold illustrates the various tactics that vendors use to avoid these forms of violence, exemplifying in particular how vendors use their mobility to circumvent evictions and confiscation of their goods, either by moving back and forth between hotspots of governmental regulation and temporarily safer grounds, or by hiding their wares. The essay also elaborates on how the vendors' mobility intertwines with informal arrangements between street vendors and policemen, linesmen, and other local power brokers who have a share in the capital's expansive street vending business.

Ritajyoti Bandyopadhyay's essay "The Street Vendors Act and Pedestrianism: A Reading of the Archival Politics of the Calcutta Hawker Sangram Committee" addresses street vending in India since the practice was officially institutionalized by the Street Vendors Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending law. Focusing on the significance of the pedestrian, Bandyopadhyay, a historian, discusses different legal interpretations of the uses of public space. As he shows, street vendor organizations strategically deploy and archive these legal documents to claim their right to public space and thereby create new forms of formalization.

In the last section of this collection, "Historical Continuities of Street Vending," historian Mark Naison revisits the tradition of street speaking, street organizing, and street commerce in the New York City neighborhood of Harlem from World War I to today. In his essay "Street Vending, Political Activism, and Community Building in African American History: The Case of Harlem," Naison illustrates how street politics and street economies were inextricably intertwined until the 1970s. Speakers such as the socialist Hubert Harrison or Marcus Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, used Harlem's street corners not only to spread their political messages but also to benefit from public speaking as an income-producing activity. Promoting militant action by selling Communist Party or Nation of Islam movement papers outdoors was also an important street vending activity. Naison's article is a call for activists to reinvent and restore this tradition of street speaking and vending for political education in today's disadvantaged urban neighborhoods.

In the final essay of this anthology, historian Patricia Acerbi traces the historical origins of street vending regulation in Rio de Janeiro. In her essay "The Roots of Street Commerce Regulation in the Urban Slave Society of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil," Acerbi examines the historical conditions of street vending in Rio de Janeiro's urban slave society from 1808 until its abolition in 1888 and, subsequently, in its post-slave society. In particular, she focuses on the so-called urban *ganho* system (urban slave system), consisting of municipal and police administrations that put enslaved, freed,

and free street vendors under the same regulatory work regime. Analyzing street vending under the ganho system as a “liminal space between slavery and freedom,” Acerbi explores diasporic vending practices as well as the interactions between the three different vendor groups.

With *Urban Street Vending in the Neoliberal City: A Global Perspective on the Practices and Policies of a Marginalized Economy*, we aim to demonstrate the ongoing importance of the practice in the Southern hemisphere and the growing relevance of informalized labor in the North. The book seeks to bridge the gap between structural and actor-oriented approaches. By scrutinizing street vending as an informal(ized) practice from the daily perspectives of the vendors, structural limits imposed by state interventions intertwine with the vendors’ mobilizing abilities. Since street vending is a versatile practice that touches upon a great variety of issues ranging from sense of place and mobility to neoliberal precarization, racial discrimination, and nostalgia, a multi-disciplinary perspective is particularly well suited to approaching it, as this volume suggests.

Kristina Graaff received her PhD in American Studies from Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany, where she is currently an assistant professor of (African) American literature and culture. She has been a fellow at the Transatlantic Graduate Research Program Berlin-New York and a visiting scholar at Fordham University’s African American Studies Department, the Bronx African American History Project, and the University of Washington’s Honors Program. Her areas of research include Black popular culture and its relationship to the U.S. justice system, critical race theory, law in literature, and the interplay between literary and entrepreneurial practices.

Noa Ha holds a PhD in Architecture from Technical University Berlin and is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Metropolitan Studies, Technical University Berlin. Her research interrogates the production of space from a feminist, de-colonial, and, critical race theory perspective and was funded by the Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation and the Technical University Berlin. Currently she is conducting a study on the spatial production of Asian diasporas in European cities.

Notes

1. In fact, a wide range of intermediate forms of street vending practices take place between the two “poles” of vendors selling individually and groups of vendors selling in market-like situations.

2. There are no statistics that separately quantify the development of street vending in the United States. There are also no reliable data on the share of informal(ized) economies in the U.S. gross domestic product. Informal(ized) income activities are estimated to contribute from 6 to almost 42 percent of the nation's market value (Portes 1994). The breadth of this range is due to imprecise categorization of the informal sector as well as differences in quantitative measurements and evaluation of the data (Altvater and Mahnkopf 2002: 104).
3. Following Nana Adusei-Poku, the editors of this anthology decided to capitalize the word 'Black' because it "addresses first and foremost political and historical dimensions of the concept of Blackness, and relates only indirectly to skin complexion." We therefore do not capitalize the term 'white' because "this would obscure the use of the term 'Black' as an act of political empowerment and as a socio-political construct." (Adusei-Poku 2014, 7).
4. While conceptualized for cities of postcolonial societies, Bayat's quiet encroachment, applied to street vending, can put the analyses of informal practices in the Global North and South in dialogue.

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