**Introduction: Revisiting Urban Property in India**

**The Politics of Urban Property Regimes**

Over the last three decades, processes of economic transformation and market liberalisation have had far-reaching consequences for property regimes across the world.[[1]](#footnote-1) These transformations are felt particularly strongly in urban areas, where land and housing have been turned into real estate. Discourses on private property are also part of emerging subjectivities and urban policies,[[2]](#footnote-2) which are redefining citizenship in terms of property ownership. In many contexts, including urban India, property has enhanced both monetary gains *and* social status for those individuals and communities benefiting from post-liberalisation ownership regimes. Thus, what Shatkin argued for Southeast Asia in the late 1980s holds true in India today, namely that ‘real estate development and speculation in real estate products have become a major means for wealth accumulation by propertied people in many cities’ (2010, p. 272). While wealth accumulation per se is nothing new nor necessarily problematic, novel the accumulation of capital through real estate enabled by liberalisation policies has certainly not benefitted all social groups in equal measure. Even though marginalised groups are equally exposed to glowing media representations of urban renewal and homeownership, many continue to be subjected to evictions and exclusions, struggle to claim basic rights as citizens, and can only dream of participating in the emerging consumer culture (Baviskar, 2010; Dey, Samaddar & Sen, 2013; Rao, 2010).

Transformations of urban areas under regimes of millennial capitalism have renewed scholarly interest in questions of urban politics, urbane cultures and urban power dynamics in the post-liberalisation era (Shatkin, 2010; 2014). Many transformations affect the appropriation of land beyond the city, as the burgeoning literature on land grabbing and the commodification of agricultural land across and beyond the subcontinent shows (Adnan, 2013; Feldman & Geisler, 2012; Levien, 2011). However, a key question about urban property markets concerns the role that urban elites and growing middle classes play in shaping cityscapes to their own interests and needs. It has already been acknowledged that much state policy has been geared towards supporting middle-class housing and leisure development projects as well as urban developers’ interest (Bose, 2015; Fernandes, 2006; Sabet & Tazreen, 2015). Shatkin, amongst others, comments on governments’ explicit bias towards elite interests, by ‘incentivizing property development, and creating opportunities for investment in real estate as an effort to create a “new ideology of inclusion” by giving the middle class (of both the old and new variety) a stake in the prosperity created by the new economic order’ (2010, p. 270).

This creates an ideology of cultural citizenship, based on promised and imagined possibilities of inclusion into the hegemonic practices of the middle classes. Yet, the spatial dimension of this ideology also produces sharply defined boundaries between those who belong to the new city and those who remain both symbolically and materially ‘in the margins’ (Baviskar, 2010; Donner, 2012). Middle-class lifestyles are not accidental or mere outcomes of shifts in financial markets and neoliberal economic policies. They are, as Fernandes points out, a site of ideological, legal, political and economic reform, which involves a variety of practices and actors. Importantly, a whole new role is given to aesthetics too, as the ‘invention of the new middle-class lifestyle has been increasingly interwoven into the creation of an urban aesthetics based on the middle-class desire for the management of urban space based on strict class-based segregation’ (Fernandes, 2004, p. 2420). This involves a focus on the aesthetic quality of new cityscapes that allows for urban restructuring to promote middle-class values, as new urban property regimes reflect ideas about idealised urban spaces - to be attained through beautification drives, environmental campaigns and the design of desirable suburban housing, which in turn produce an ‘aesthetic governmentality’ (Ghertner 2011; Bose, 2015; Brosius, 2013; Searle, 2014; Srivastava, 2012; Varrel, 2012).

Moreover, emerging urban landscapes depend on new state policies and planning instruments that may well have poverty alleviation and social inclusion as their stated aims, but often lack the actual mechanisms needed to protect the rights of urban poor. Planning, zoning and building regulations have become a mode of dispossession as the urban poor are evicted and displaced from property-driven global cities (Bhattacharya and Sanyal, 2011; Raman, this issue). Pressing questions are being asked about the dynamics and politics of these exclusions as well as about the possibilities for contestation and resistance (Appadurai, 2000; Baviskar, 2010; Fernandes, 2004; Rao, 2010). Many individuals, families and communities alike see their rights of access and customary usages contested and undermined as cities and booming small towns become the ‘loci of the practices of predatory global capital’ (Appadurai, 2000, p. 627). This is particularly the case in the absence of strong regulatory and protective institutions, but exclusion, dispossession and marginalisation are also produced by the way state institutions are restructured – and indeed fragmented - along neoliberal lines (Ong, 2006). An emergent politics of contestation over urban space is closely related to a new politics of urban class formation, in which disputes over what constitutes property and property rights lie at the heart of contemporary urban class relations (De Neve, this issue). Far from being superfluous, Fernandes shows that ‘state practices are centrally implied in the politics of spatial restructuring, as the state oscillates between an active ally of new middle class aspirations on the one hand and manager of spatialized political conflicts between the middle class and subaltern groups on the other’ (2006, p. 140). Indeed, ongoing transformations of the urban landscape are altering politics and the relationship between the state and its citizens. Whereas the urban poor were earlier often empowered in the course of electoral politics and could gain – temporary – victories by mobilising discourses on rights in land and state resources, they are today increasingly barred from the political and legal processes that affect them. Or, as Chatterjee observed, as Indian cities are becoming ‘bourgeois,’ the poor are not so much losing claims to citizenship as being reduced to ‘populations’ to be managed (Chatterjee, 2004). Yet, these ‘populations’ have not remain completely devoid of voice or input.

Even though the hegemony of elite interests cannot be denied, contestations do arise over resources and dissent contributes to the shaping of contemporary cityscapes in India. But voices of dissent are not always easily expressed or heard. In the absence of protective legislation, the urban poor are increasingly left to rely on local politics and patronage relations to access basic resources and claim rights (Harriss, 2007). Discussing the transformation of working class neighbourhoods in Mumbai, Fernandes - like Chatterjee before her - points to the limits of resistance in the face of the overwhelming intersection of interests between state, private sector and emerging middle classes in the city (2006, p. 156). Even so, the persistent force of particularistic claims, identity-based mobilisations and political bartering that residents mobilise to access housing, land, water, electricity and other basic necessities demands attention as well (Harriss, 2007; Shatkin, 2014). As Shatkin points out, ‘particularistic claims, often rooted in identity politics, present a formidable force that has held its own in urban politics and in efforts to shape the city in the face of developmental state planning and middle-class civil society’ (2014, p. 4). Unfortunately, dissent is often only heard if it is articulated within hegemonic discourses on ‘consumer citizenship’ and ‘propertied citizenship,’ and it is only likely to be successful if it manages to mobilise dominant legal tools and instruments of governance. Clearly, the study of urban property and its role in wider social transformations invites reflection on a wide array of themes, including class, resistance, consumerism, governmentality, citizenship and politics.

**The Social Life of Urban Property**

Against the backdrop of these broader processes, which reveal multiple similarities across regions, the articles in this volume draw attention to the way real estate markets in India are organised, understood and appropriated in different contexts and by different actors. While urban real estate and property redevelopment are key parameters shaping the restructuring of inter- and intra-class relations, an aspect of property that has remained much less explored is its place in contemporary economies of desire and its role in the fashioning of emerging middle-class subjectivities through a complex cultural politics. In India’s cities, as elsewhere, the commodification of land and the redevelopment of urban sites of work, leisure, religion, politics and associational life have created enormous opportunities for the middle classes ‘*both* to enjoy a new style of living *and* to tap into an investment opportunity in the city’s expanding economy’ (Shatkin, 2010, p. 274). Property regimes and urban space lie at the heart of how various social groups construct new identities for themselves, while simultaneously creating and accumulating capital. In this lies the dual role of urban property: as an engine of capital accumulation *and* as a site of housing, place-making and identity formation. Indeed, property regimes that promote private homeownership are today crucial to the development of group-based identities, a multiplicity of urban ways of living, and notions of what makes kin, neighbourhood and gender relations. The dual meanings and roles of urban property (and particularly houses and apartments) are often in conflict with each other, creating tensions and contestations, and producing new processes of negotiation and claim making. The articles contained in this issue explore how localised spheres of value and different kinds of capital are being transformed, connected, disconnected and re-imagined through new property regimes within radically changing urban landscapes.

In this special issue, we also build on anthropological writing on property, which reminds us that - contrary to economistic views - the construction of property is always embedded in the reproduction of social relations and in ongoing contestations over gender, class and other forms of difference. All contributions to this volume address one or more aspects of the social and relational aspects of urban property, in which property is conceptualised as a relationship between people and ‘things’ (Busse, 2012; Hann, 1998; 2007; Strang and Busse, 2011). We start from the recognition that the constitution of property is inherently negotiable and its appropriation always flexible and multi-faceted, with social relations being established in the course of contestations over access, rights and resources. With reference to urban India, such processes engage a huge number of ‘traditional’ or ‘older’ constellations being re-invented and re-orientated alongside the introduction of new players, values and linkages. Thus, middle-class families, squatters, tenants, real estate developers, planners, brokers and politicians take centre stage, while the ‘things’ featuring prominently include houses, apartments, shopping malls, industrial sites, slums, streets, infrastructure, master plans, surveys and finance. We thus adhere to the view that property ‘is not an activity or a thing at all, but the rights that people hold over things which guarantee them a future “income stream” (Hann, 1998, p. 4). Hence, property comprises the relations between different actors and the sorts of claims these actors can make over each other and over particular resources. Put differently, ‘property is not the thing itself, it is rights with respect to that thing’ (Busse, 2012, p. 111), and such rights are always mediated by, and mediate, social relations. As a result, property in general and real estate in particular are never a static or fixed ‘possession’. In as much as people craft rights and ideas about ownership, ‘ideas about property [in turn] create particular kinds of social persons, relationships and organisation’ (ibid., p. 113). Taking property as a process of negotiated and contested social relations (Strang and Busse, 2011) also directs attention to its material, symbolic and communicative qualities that engage gender relations, the institution and values of the family, and group boundaries based on communal and religious identities.

The questions we need to ask therefore include: what particular social relations are affected and created by emerging real estate markets in Indian cities? How are material realities and ideas related to urban property reshaping caste, class and neighbourhood relations, state-citizen interactions, kin and gendered practices, and the very nature of the public sphere? First, renewed academic interest in urban property emerged from the new ideas and practices of property that began to spread as neoliberal ideologies and policies took root in India. One point of scholarly focus is the increased centrality of private investment, private ownership of public space and urban segregation in contemporary India. With the collapse of socialist regimes and their collectivist ideologies, which in India largely failed to reduce urban poverty and deliver even the most basic public services (Hann, 1998; Humphrey & Verdery, 2004), ‘private ownership’ has now come to take a central place in how both individual and collective relationships with assets, resources and rights are conceived. As Harvey put it, ‘we live, after all, in a world in which the rights of private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights’ (2008, p. 23). Recent public debates across South Asia have centred on privatisation, including new patterns of exclusion and dispossession, state-enabled appropriation of land and resources, and India’s much disputed Land Acquisition Amendment Bill (2015) (Baviskar, 2010; Levien, 2011, 2013; Sabet & Tazreen, 2015). Such debates highlight some of the contestations and conflicts of interest that the emerging property regimes based on ‘private’ property entail. Yet they also reveal crucial shifts brought about by the nature of global financial capital, the redefined role of the state as arbitrator of investment, and the multiple transnational flows involved in real estate markets (Sud, 2014; Searle, 2014; Varrel, 2012). Conflicts over urban property, land and resources reveal the state’s support not only for national and global financial capital – making land and other resources available for industrialisation and infrastructural development - but also for the propertied classes who enjoy the privatised form of ownership typical for such urban assets, and housing in particular (Sabet & Tazreen, 2015; Searle, 2013). India’s post-independence developmentalist state, with its rhetoric of redistribution and government protection of the poor, has in the process changed track by introducing policies that encourage private ownership, investment in real estate and dispossession. Such policies produce other shifts as well, such as the creation of new forms of material and immaterial labour (Bhattacharya & Sanyal, 2011), the rise in public private partnerships, and a host of urban redevelopment projects glossed over as urban restructuring.

However, those who see ‘propertied citizenship’ and ‘propertization’ - the process by which ‘notions of property are penetrating more and more spheres of human social existence’ (Hann, 2007, p. 288) - as the only game in town, have so far been proven wrong. This issue presents detailed ethnography of how private ownership continues to intersect with customary rights and kin-based entitlements and obligations, many of which are explicitly gendered and community-based. Ethnographic explorations reveal, for example, that new regimes of property and new ideologies of choice, freedom and individualism are always negotiated within localised contexts that comprise communal ties, kin obligations and gender ideologies, which shape conflicts as well as new understandings of ‘private’ property. Moreover, new property regimes can also revive ideas about collective ownership, challenge existing gender ideologies and produce novel collectivities and alliances. Thus, property remains deeply embedded in status and identity projects, and acts a powerful symbol of success, achievement and mobility. It is thus imperative not to reduce our analysis of the building boom in Indian cities to a mere question of real estate values and economic gains, but to analyse the novel cityscapes that emerge in all their different facets (see Susewind, this issue). In doing so, the articles discuss the forces that continually mitigate processes of commodification and propertization, and illustrate what Hann refers to as ‘depropertization’ (ibid., p. 289) or the constant infusion of property with complex social meanings and values. This issue therefore seeks to broaden the analysis of property beyond the dominant focus on privatization, capitalist accumulation, and ideologies of ‘possessive individualism’. Instead, it explores how property always co-exists and interacts with other meanings, ideologies and moralities, while simultaneously reshaping them in the course of everyday negotiations and claim making processes.

Similarly, the contributions critique naturalised ideas of ‘possessive individualism’ and the primacy of economic rationality by looking at the many ways in which houses, apartments and land are used and understood by different actors and within particular social processes. It is at this juncture that the hegemony of globalised formations like ‘private property’ is revealed as class-specific, rather than self-evident and universal. While there can be no doubt that neoliberal ideas about property have produced novel ways of seeing the self, defining community, and understanding rights and entitlements, an ethnographic perspective reveals the complex ways in which such ideological formations travel, are appropriated and become fractured. Ethnographic insights also offer a stark reminder that actual processes of claiming rights and enforcing obligations with regards to property remain deeply rooted in broader understandings of social relations that extend well beyond those of real estate markets.

Finally, exploring the social life of urban property regimes in contemporary India, we draw attention to property as process and as a set of negotiations which produce specific kinds of knowledge and require perpetual work. The kinds of knowledge and labour that go into the making of property can be extremely diverse: from everyday practices of making a home and kin relations, and mobilising social capital to (in)formal brokerage and political mediation to legal pursuits and collective mobilisation. All these require not only various degrees of time, effort, skill and capital, but such labour inputs are themselves the outcome of specific and often extremely localised social fields. As such, the making of property, property markets and property exchanges involve extensive amounts of work, including ‘paperwork’ (Tarlo, 2000), ‘class and kin work’ (Donner, this issue), and ‘link work’ (Cook, this issue) or the bringing together of relevant actors, types of knowledge and connections. Unpacking such everyday ‘work,’ we believe, is key to an understanding of how particular property regimes are made and re-made in contemporary urban India. The crucial point we seek to emphasise is that the spread of market values and the influence of neoliberal ethics do not lessen the role of the social in the making of property regimes; they only engender transformations in the way property surfaces as a key factor of contemporary social life.

**Contributions to the issue**

One of the ways in which property in the form of real estate transforms social relations comes out clearly in Henrike Donner’s contribution, entitled *‘Daughters are just like sons now’: Negotiating kin-work and property regimes in Kolkata middle-class families*. Donner links an analysis of middle-class domesticity, evident in the layout and equipment of homes, to gendered inheritance patterns, and she documents changing property regimes as they affect middle-class families in Kolkata. Hailed as the driving force behind and the main beneficiaries of the real estate boom in Indian cities, middle-class residents live with the promise of homeownership, even where this remains an ambivalent aspiration rather than a material reality. Nevertheless, even the promise of ‘a home of one’s own’ remains highly gendered, as women remain excluded from ownership in their own right. Focusing particularly on the changing role of daughters, Donner shows how for middle-class women rights in housing continue to be mediated through their dependency on male kin - typically fathers, brothers and husbands - and through ‘kin work’ that produces middle-class domesticity. Moreover, the salience of the joint family ideology continues to prevent most women from exercising agency through individual ownership.

Yet, the article suggests that significant changes are taking place with the availability of new and modern housing, financial instruments, and middle-class desires for consumer goods. Novel demographics – particularly shaped by the shift towards one-child families and parents’ need for care in old age – give daughters a new vantage point from which to re-negotiate rights in real estate. The outcome of such renegotiations, however, tend to be conditional on the delivery of ‘kin work’, in which daughters are now expected to take on the care for their own parents often in addition to that for in-laws. Donner shows that ownership, residential rights and future investments are all infused with the values of kin morality, arranged marriage, patrilocality and filial duty. New kinds of ownership - for example property owned by a couple - and new forms of household formation compete with actual access to property, which is mostly negotiated through earlier legal and customary idioms. The burden of re-negotiating ownership and residential arrangements falls disproportionally on women too. These include the challenge of mediating ideals of autonomy and individualism – often expressed in a desire for post-marital neo-local living arrangements – and the values of joint living and filial duty. Donner argues that while younger women may be empowered by a changing demography, higher education levels and families’ increased affluence, their agency remains determined by the fulfilment of expected ‘kin work’. Donner’s contribution reveals not only how novel economic and political ideologies impact on earlier property regimes, but also how emerging property regimes remain highly gendered, and may actually produce new vulnerabilities and inequalities even amongst relatively privileged sections of society.

In his contribution *‘Predatory Property: Reflections on Urban Land Acquisition, Housing and Class Formation in Tiruppur, South India’*, De Neve documents how processes of land acquisition and the politics of housing in the industrial city of Tiruppur, Tamil Nadu, link urban restructuring directly to class formation based on caste-based capital in a provincial city. De Neve describes how Gounders - a powerful caste of erstwhile cultivators and rural landlords -not only profited from industrialisation by becoming entrepreneurs, but today monopolise the region’s real estate market. The processes through which urban land and houses are appropriated by this community present a ‘predatory mode of property accumulation,’ which here, as elsewhere, leads to the displacement and permanent exclusion of the working class from the city and its booming property market. While large-scale land grabs have been discussed in the context of metropolitan areas, De Neve exposes some of the less visible, more gradual and more piece-meal modes of accumulation and illustrates how urban property plays a key role in the transformation of urban class relations and the production of a property-less urban labouring class.

Crucially, however, in Tiruppur urban property is about more than just market speculation and capitalist accumulation. Urban property, and the construction of elaborate residences in particular, is also deeply embedded in the politics of status reproduction through which Gounders seek to construct a new urban middle-class identity for themselves. Continual investments in urban properties, and in extensions and renovations of houses in the run up to marriages in particular, are a key preoccupation of any upwardly mobile Gounder family keen to enhance their status and improve their children’s marital prospects within the community. Being central to marriage considerations, property is invested in and displayed in a competitive pursuit of status and distinction. As with Donner’s article, De Neve’s contribution shows how urban property markets play a key role in the production of middle-classness, as a material, symbolic and relational position. As much as thriving real estate markets turn houses and urban land into commodities, social forces continually re-infuse them with social meaning and symbolic values, implicating them within society’s most intimate economies of kinship, marriage and status.

In a contribution entitled *‘Link Work: Land and Housing Brokers in Mangaluru, India’*, Ian Cook hones in on another dimension of how property and sociality are interconnected by focusing on the figure of brokers and middlemen. Analysing the work undertaken by two property brokers in Mangaluru, a smaller but rapidly urbanising coastal city in Karnataka, Cook shows how ‘linking’ brokers engage in complex social networks. Their ‘link work’ not only consists of making connections between interested parties in Mangaluru’s land and housing market, but also of assessing crucial class, caste, religion and gender characteristics that make or break access to markets. With the city's fortunes changing following a recent real estate 'boom' and the expansion of the educational sector, the number of players and connections has increased and diversified, and brokers have become more than ever key players who help clients ‘interpret’ and access the market.

Cook argues that in the process their work becomes a part of the making of property itself: the knowledge, skills and experience that go into the making of deals have a value, can be ‘owned’ and can be transferred, as when brokers collaborate on deals. Cook’s ethnography thus points to the vital role of ‘link work’ in the very making of property markets and in driving the commodification of land and housing in the city. Property is only a commodity if there is a market, and brokers are key to the making and functioning of such markets in the city. Indeed, brokers with their multiple links are not merely mediating markets but are at the very heart of how urban property markets are constituted, structured and acted upon. Despite a growing body of literature on real estate developers in India’s metropolises, we still know relatively little about the many ‘men in the middle’ or small-scale brokers, whose lives and everyday activities Cook documents in fine detail in this issue. Such lives and activities throw significant light on the day-to-day processes through which land and housing are commodified in fast expanding cities, or as Cook puts it, the wider dis-embedding of property relations under capitalism remains ‘a peopled, laboured process’ in which brokers play a vital, if often unnoticed, role.

With a different take on the social life of real estate markets, Raphael Susewind turns to Lucknow’s urban housing market to examine questions of discrimination. His paper ‘*Spatial segregation, real estate markets and the political economy of corruption in Lucknow*’ questions established narratives that assert that segregation along ethnic/religious lines in Indian cities is based on discriminatory practices and ‘communal’ violence that lead to ‘ghettoisation’. Drawing on official property registration data and ethnographic fieldwork in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Susewind seeks to complicate this narrative by focusing on how networking and collusion result in higher profit margins and lower expenses, leading Muslim buyers and developers to further invest in ‘traditional’ Muslim areas.

Susewind’s article clearly shows that irrespective of broader discriminatory practices, segregation is as much the outcome of how ‘markets’ are locally constructed and embedded within a localised political economy of collusion and corruption. The article documents, for example, how communal identities provide access to networks and relationships to be exploited, which leads Muslims to invest and rent in particular areas of the city rather than others. While not denying that explicitly discriminatory dynamics influence residential (and especially rental) arrangements too, Susewind draws attention to how social connections, rooted in group-based identities and trust, shape coalitions between bureaucrats, politicians, brokers and developers, and produce communally segregated real estate markets. As such, particular communities and their middlemen gain from operating in those parts of the city where they are already well connected and able to access malleable community networks. Using both unique property registration data as well as first-hand ethnography of development brokers’ activities in the city’s Muslim neighbourhoods, Susewind presents an evocative picture of how property markets – shaped along communal lines - are produced through carefully managed collusions and coalitions. Rather than merely being excluded, Susewind concludes, Muslims are differentially incorporated in the political economy of Lucknow’s urban development and in the city’s social life of corruption.

A different way in which ‘property’ is constituted within the parameters of emerging real estate markets is presented by Bhuvaneswari Raman’s contribution, ‘*The Politics of Property in Land: New Planning Instruments, Law and Popular Groups*’, which discusses ongoing contestations around rights to land and housing in a Delhi squatter colony. Raman discusses how property rights, and ordinary people’s understanding of them, have come to be re-defined in neoliberal terms with the introduction of new legislation, urban development plans and private-public partnerships under the government’s Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) urban housing and poverty reduction programme. Presenting a detailed discussion of the history of squatters’ struggles over access to housing and land in Delhi’s Katputli colony, Raman describes how under RAY squatters’ ‘rights’ became transformed, diffused and commodified. Whereas land titles had earlier been granted as part of legitimisation moves supported by local politicians, drawn-out struggles to prevent eviction and relocation have now turned into negotiations over rights in housing. Framed by extensive efforts of the government to make prime urban land available to private developers, urban renewal projects take the form of private-public partnerships, which result in different rights to former squatters and middle-class buyers of luxury residences on the same housing site.

Raman’s detailed analysis of the ongoing struggles over land and housing in Katputli demonstrates the continuing power of a state apparatus that diffuses responsibility, allocates tasks of surveying, mapping and planning to ‘private’ agents, and gradually shifts the definition of rights and entitlements in the favour of the urban elites. Importantly, Raman’s long-term perspective on the struggle between government officials, private developers, residents and civil society actors reveals how rhetorical, legal and cognitive shifts are introduced by NGOs, government planners and developers alike. The new instruments of planning (including surveys, maps and legal cases) not only reconfigure the definition of ‘property’ and property rights, but begin to prioritise upmarket residential and commercial real estate developments over the interests of squatters. However, Raman also charts the multi-faceted resistance to urban redevelopment and relocation, and the ways in which the language, instruments and activities of the state are appropriated and mobilised by those affected. Caught between electoral politics and the violence of every day administrative acts, squatter residents themselves take on the language of property right and contest the practices of institutions (such as public-private partnerships, land rights legislation and participatory planning) in their long-term and ongoing struggle over land rights in the city.

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1. We thank Vegard Iversen for constructive comments on an earlier draft of this introduction. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Banerjee-Guha uses the term ‘neoliberal urbanism’ to refer to the infiltration of neoliberal ideology in urban policy making in India. She writes that the ‘material manifestation of neoliberal urbanism in contemporary Indian urban policy is resting on an aggressive strategy of politico-economic restructuring of space and regulation of basic services through upscale governance that itself has become an essential component of capitalist expansion’ (2009, p. 96). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)