



Billboard landscapes in Gurgaon,
2008. Photo by Rohan Kalyan.

Fragmentation by Design: Architecture, Finance, and Identity

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1. Introduction

In the fall of 2008, just as the global economy was beginning its hysterical descent into financial crisis, I traveled to New Delhi to conduct research on economic liberalization and urbanization in India. In particular, I was interested in a Delhi suburb called New Gurgaon in the state of Haryana, located just to the south of New Delhi and connected by a new elevated expressway to Indira Gandhi International Airport. New Gurgaon was of particular interest to me because of the rapid speed of its urban development in the post-liberalization era, which began roughly a quarter-century ago. At that time, Gurgaon comprised mainly agricultural land owned by small-to-medium-size farmers and villages. By 2008, it had mushroomed into a collection of speculative enclaves comprising commercial, industrial, and residential spaces that were geared toward attracting private investment. Gurgaon's rapid rural-to-urban transition was often portrayed in popular media as heralding India's larger national emergence from its postcolonial shell and its transformation into a confident, globalized economy.

In the history of Gurgaon's spatial transformation, the role of one real estate developer in particular quickly became apparent: DLF Limited (originally Delhi Land and Finance when it was founded in 1946). DLF initially played a big part in the southern expansion of postcolonial New Delhi in the 1950s, speculating on residential housing in anticipation of the influx of refugees coming into India from Pakistan in the aftermath of partition in 1947. But after the postcolonial government banned private builders from Delhi's construction industry from the early 1960s on, with the Delhi Development Authority taking monopoly control over all speculative development in the capital city, Delhi Land and Finance had to look elsewhere for business.¹ By the late 1970s it had ventured further to the south, crossing the border into Haryana and settling near the small rural town of Gurgaon, which at that time had some manufacturing industry and was surrounded by farm and village land. Throughout the 1980s, with the help of pro-business land policies on the part of the Haryana state government, DLF aggressively

acquired land from villagers and agriculturalists, steadily converting rural land into the five commercialized phases of what became DLF City, now proclaimed by its builder to be the largest privately developed township in Asia.²

One day, still early in my research stay, I was riding in a car with Krishan Kumar, my cousin's hired driver and a longtime resident of Old Gurgaon, the existing town that predates the recent hyperdevelopment of DLF City and the rest of New Gurgaon.³ While driving past DLF Cyber City, which houses high-tech firms such as Microsoft and Intel in sparkling mirror-glass towers, Krishan suddenly said in Hindi, "When I drive past these buildings, I feel that this is not India anymore!"

I had heard this kind of sentiment, regarding the state-of-the-art architecture and urban design in New Gurgaon, before. But this usually came from members of Gurgaon's elite classes. This feeling of escaping India while remaining close enough to family and business interests was what brought many wealthy ex-urbanites and mobile nonresident Indians (NRIs) to an elite suburb like New Gurgaon. But Krishan's reaction to the new buildings of DLF Cyber City was particularly interesting to me given that he was a hired driver; that is, he was a member of a vast servant underclass that was largely prohibited from accessing the interiors of new office buildings, as well as other newly created spaces such as shopping malls and gated residential communities that middle and elite classes effortlessly inhabited. Nonetheless, despite such outward exclusion, the visual encounter with the architecture itself seemed to produce a visceral feeling of belonging and attachment to something remarkably *new* and *different*, something decidedly "not-India." But if Gurgaon did not feel like India, what did it feel like?

When I asked Krishan this, he elaborated that buildings like the ones we had driven past in DLF Cyber City had simply never existed in India before and that he himself could remember a time when Gurgaon was but a collection of farms and small villages.

The amplified, resplendent designs and "global" aesthetics that characterize the built environment of New Gurgaon crystallize through a negation: they are decidedly *not-India*. Contrary to this common articulation, however, DLF's public corporate motto—"Building India"—signals something quite the opposite of a negation. The explicitly nationalistic tagline can be found anywhere DLF's ubiquitous logo appears in New Gurgaon. Taken in this context, the newly built glass towers in DLF Cyber City and elsewhere seem to suggest that the "India" DLF is actively trying to construct in new urban spaces like New Gurgaon is one that is *deterritorialized* in a fundamental way: a *new* India that is "not India anymore." In this article I link the production of new urban spaces to a deterritorialized temporal imagination of postcolonial India, made possible by liberalized and accelerated circuits

of finance and speculative investment in real estate. I also examine the spatialized discourse of postcolonial identity in India before and after economic liberalization, arguing that neoliberal architecture can be read as an expression and manifestation of an increasingly deterritorialized national imaginary. I conclude the article by returning to Krishan, my cousin's driver, and meditating on how his statement that day on the new architecture of Gurgaon effectively enacted the temporal imaginary of the new India, even when it claimed to not feel like India at all.

2. Time-Images of Urban Development

New Gurgaon is popularly called the Millennium City in English-language media. At a rhetorical level, this naming functions as an urban metonym for the “new” India, an India whose arrival is anticipated not only by a postcolonial middle class eager for global recognition but also by global investors eager to profit off newly “emerging markets” in the postcolonial world.⁴ Since neoliberal economic reform began in the 1980s and select parts of the Indian economy were progressively “liberalized” (i.e., deregulated and privatized), select parts of Gurgaon have mushroomed into private enclaves of rapid capital accumulation. Some urbanists have called such fragmented neoliberal development a “galactic metropolis” associated with postindustrial global capitalism. Such an association “describes a city which, rather than being a single coherent entity, consists of a number of large spectacular residential and commercial developments with large environmentally and economically degraded spaces between.”⁵ In Gurgaon, these developed parts do not form an urban whole but constitute a fragmented semiurbanized topography in which pockets of actualized urban space are surrounded by land banks of virtual, not-yet-developed spaces for future development.⁶ Within this actual/virtual circuit of spatial production, architecture and urbanism give expression to what the new India looks like.

New economic spaces in Gurgaon are primarily of four varieties: office space for tertiary-level economic activity, commercial retail space for shopping malls, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) for global production (often containing secondary-level activities such as manufacturing), and residential space for urban middle-class living. What is common among these spatial formations is the unique way in which they are each designed to provide holistic experiences for the user, experiences so total and complete that relations with the surrounding social environment become unnecessary, even redundant. As Sunil Khilnani notes, “private capital now chooses to build its own, self-generated and controlled habitats: their value lies precisely in the extent to which they are isolated from their surrounding environment.”⁷ Such spatial formations in new urban developments allow a

select and elite population (what Spivak has called the “secessionist culture” of electronic capitalism) to live among but never really *with* the diverse and largely impoverished others that surround it.⁸

In New Gurgaon, gated communities often have their own convenience stores, pharmacies, and schools within their grounds—not to mention parks and playgrounds, so children never leave the enclosed space unless they are with guardians.⁹ SEZs often contain dormitory housing for workers so that the surplus labor time for transport between work and home is kept to a minimum. Meanwhile, corporate office parks are increasingly equipped with in-house cafeterias and gymnasiums to keep workers fitter, happier, and more productive.¹⁰

But although enclosed private spaces boast of world-class amenities and first-world aesthetics, as soon as one exits these exceptional spaces one is “back in India,” as it were.¹¹ Even as it is celebrated for attracting global capital and multinational corporations, the Millennium City is just as frequently harangued in the media for its decrepit urban infrastructure; namely, its crumbling roads, regular power outages, lack of waste and sewage disposal, and high rates of crime.¹² An increasingly anxious projection of a new, privatized India, New Gurgaon is simultaneously haunted by the perceived public inefficiencies of the old India. Indeed, these twin aspects of New Gurgaon’s media-driven intelligibility—that is, its promise as a space of global recognition for the new India and the perpetual threat that it will fail to live up to this promise—are merely two sides of the same coin within the discursive economy of postcolonial capitalism.

One could assert that as a work in progress Gurgaon’s fragmented design is as yet incomplete. Surely the day will come when Gurgaon finally comes into its own as a “world class” city and its development reaches completion. This is precisely the promise of the Millennium City, a city of *future* arrival and recognition. And yet, note how this promise of future completion can only be infinitely deferred. The capitalist discourse of development, inaugurated in colonial times, entails the idea that “development” is a continually deferred process, always anticipated and desired, never quite reached.¹³ Moreover, this continuous temporal deferral filters out or represses aspects of the present that contradict or threaten the imagined or projected future. Architecture and urban design thus operate as a mediation of the present, in a fashion homologous to Lata Mani’s concept of “globality,” where, “Precisely because the economic and socio-cultural changes that [globalization] initiates are so disruptive, it requires an unanchored discourse of globality to mediate its effects.”¹⁴ The concept of globality is manifest in the dominant discourses of postcolonial capitalism, which constantly depict an India “on the move,” gaining the respect and recognition

of the world, projecting optimistic GDP growth rates and the nation's image on the "world stage," so as to further facilitate the attraction of global investment.¹⁵ Between the discourses of postcolonial capitalism that exuberantly project the image of a new, globalized India and the displacements, exclusions, and negations required in order for this projection to make sense in the present, architecture and urban design emerge as a mediation, a time-image in the fragmented urban landscape.

Lefebvre provides the conceptual frame for critically rendering such a time-image. In his *Urban Revolution*, he argues, "An *urban society* is a society that results from a process of complete urbanization. This urbanization is virtual today, but will become real in the future."¹⁶ But Lefebvre's work does not clarify if and when this future "real" will materialize, or whether "complete urbanization" is an endlessly deferred virtuality in the present, an impossible future ideal that nonetheless structures the experience of the present.¹⁷

This virtuality seems to be at work in the case of New Gurgaon, where before new urban spaces are even built the anticipation of their future arrival—their virtual presence that is actually an absence in the present—conjures forth a temporal imagination that redistributes the experience of the present so that the architecture is encountered as much in space as it is in *time*. What matters here is not so much the actuality of the built space but the anticipation of its future completion; that is, its virtuality.

This temporality of anticipation is most vividly expressed through the publicity hype of real estate advertisements, which project an enticing "elsewhere" and a "coming soon" over the here and now. For example, billboards for future corporate campuses depict lush green spaces with pristine glass structures punctuating a sanitized, utopic landscape. These images form a stark visual contrast to the barren, desert-like environs over which they get constructed in the dry soils of Gurgaon, as well as the undeveloped spaces and rubbish dumps that surround them. Around these dumps one often finds pigs, cows, and dogs rummaging for scraps. Not surprisingly, urban "wild life" is never featured in the virtual images of real estate advertising, nor are the ubiquitous construction workers who migrate from all over India and live in improvised shantytowns close to the construction sites in which they work. These workers and the uneven urban landscape define Gurgaon's present but are effectively rendered invisible in the future image of the city found in billboard advertisements, underlining the migrant workers' transience in the temporal imaginary of the new India. Similarly, advertisements for shopping malls in Gurgaon boast of "Experiential Architecture," while those for private gated communities urge potential investors to "Experience the Perfect Life" in their secured minic-

ities equipped with schools, markets, and work-out facilities. Such advertisements constitute “commodity images” in that “the advertisement itself is a very particular kind of commodity, a commodity built on images.”¹⁸ But when seen in the context of an unevenly urbanizing space like New Gurgaon—that is, when the advertisements are juxtaposed to the very spaces they seek to reimagine and commodify—they are also revealed as “time-images” in which the actual and the virtual work together to constitute a contingent articulation of the present.¹⁹

Thus, when one encounters the actual built environment of New Gurgaon, the encounter is not simply a visual encounter between a subject and a building or the movement of an individual in an inert space. The encounter itself occurs in the context of a temporality of anticipation and future arrival, a temporality invested with the promise of a seemingly totally privatized and enclosed socioeconomic life. In this way the temporal politics of New Gurgaon is fundamentally a politics of exclusion, as those who are not a part of the temporal experience of the new India are cast aside, rendered historically anachronistic and politically unintelligible or merely transient in the continually transforming time-image of urban development.

The temporality of anticipation is also figured in the circuits of finance capital that constitute the productive conditions for new urban space. The on-going construction of corporate, industrial, commercial, and residential spaces in New Gurgaon is made possible by prior investments of capital, ahead of actual production and accumulation within the *as-yet-virtual* spaces. Urban geographer David Harvey calls this a central component of the capitalist urbanization process. This process is driven by the credit system of finance capital, which “has emerged as the hegemonic force in advanced capitalist societies” and is the result of an overaccumulation in the economy that is redistributed as “fictitious capital.”²⁰ Finance, or fictitious capital, materializes as the new forms and practices of economic activity, including as a consumption fund to enable continuous and unfettered individual private consumption. Private creditors, state and private banks, and investment brokers all exist to distribute the consumption fund’s fictitious capital across the postindustrial mass consumerist society. But finance capital also materializes in the built forms of urbanization. Urban infrastructure and real estate development, two capital- and labor-intensive activities, require high levels of investment from both public and private sources, although with neoliberalization the emphasis increasingly shifts to the latter form of investment. Thus finance, in Harvey’s sense of the word, is fictitious not in the sense of being “make-believe” but in the sense of its temporal displacement of present capital accumulation: “Fictitious capital

amounts to a property right over some future revenue.”²¹ The neoliberal urban spaces that emerge through the speculative investment of fictitious capital are thus intertwined with the temporality of finance in India.

3. The Temporality of Neoliberal Finance

The government of India began liberalizing its financial sector after 1991, “in recognition of the important role of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the accelerated economic growth of the country.”²² Throughout the 1990s the central government eased licensing restrictions on investment and exposed previously protected or state-owned industries to global competition and the temporalities of capitalist accumulation.

The introduction of foreign competition and financial exchange marked a radical rupture in India’s postcolonial national economy. Built upon a historically produced anticolonial imaginary, the early national governments institutionalized economic policies of self-sufficiency and import substitution designed to limit the role of foreign and private capital within the domestic economy.²³ Notwithstanding the initial liberalization that began with India’s larger economic “structural adjustment” post-1991, not until 2005 did India begin to allow 100 percent FDI in key industries such as construction and real estate under the “automatic route”; that is, sans prior approval from the government. This step made it easier and faster for multinational companies and foreign investors to inject themselves into the Indian economy and had an immediate impact on the levels of FDI coming into India each year. From 2004 to 2007, total FDI rapidly rose from just \$2.7 billion to \$8 billion per year.²⁴ In addition, the inflow of global capital from foreign institutional investors in the form of hedge funds, mutual funds, and pension funds invested in Indian stock markets has also rapidly risen since the early 1990s, crossing \$3 billion in 2009. Today, large multinational banks such as HSBC Holdings, Citigroup, JP Morgan Chase, and Bank of America have become heavily involved in commercial lending and financial investment in India, along with the State Bank of India and many new domestic private banks.

This influx of finance capital into the Indian markets has resulted in the wide availability of fictitious capital in the form of credit. Over the last several years, “millions of upwardly mobile Indians [have] embraced debt-fueled consumerism.”²⁵ The use of credit cards is increasingly common: “the size of the Indian credit-card market is estimated to be about \$4 billion and growing at 35% yearly.”²⁶ Credit cards create new kinds of consumers who are subsequently incorporated into the temporality of global finance (a temporality driven not only by the anticipation of future repayment but by a continual deferral of the present in the form of interest). Indeed, the

growth of debt-fueled consumption through credit cards and private loans in India over just the past few years is staggering and coincides with the intensified liberalization of India's financial markets. Outstanding loans on credit cards reached \$6 billion at the end of 2008, up 85 percent from the previous year. India currently has "30 million credit card holders, triple the number half a decade ago."²⁷

The dramatic influx of finance capital has also cleared the way for intensified private urban development in New Gurgaon. Speculative real estate and urban infrastructure development require high levels of capital investment in building materials, tools for construction, and for labor. In 2003, only 4.5 percent of total FDI inflow was committed to the real estate and construction-related sectors. In 2004, the share of real estate investment increased to 10.6 percent. By 2007, when total FDI reached \$8 billion, the share invested in the real estate sector was 26.5 percent.²⁸ The Indian real estate sector, which now in many ways has become a key driver of financial markets and stock exchanges, is expected to receive \$25 billion in FDI in the next decade.²⁹

According to Harvey, finance acts as a metaphorical nerve center for capitalism's accumulation process, mediating and coordinating different circuits of economic production and channeling flows of capital from over-accumulated firms to investment in urban infrastructure and the built environment.³⁰ The built environment of finance capitalism embodies this mediating function, too, effecting not only the process of accumulation but the affective life of the city, the way in which urban space is perceived and experienced. In the urbanizing context of a neoliberal city like Gurgaon, which not only houses global capitalist firms and multinational corporations but metonymically represents "the new India" in its dynamic and transformational urban landscape, spectacular and highly visual architecture performs a symbolic and material function of imaging the exuberant confidence of the postcolonial capitalist era of neoliberal globalization.

4. Hafeez Contractor

There is always something of a gap between the unconveyed aspirations and desires of the client, the secret inspirations and fascinations of the architect, and the distracted yet judgmental perceptions of the users. As such, an architectural construction is a multinucleated field, a complex mesh of signs, a creative document that simultaneously has an internal logic of its own and is created by and understood in the context in which it is situated.

—Vikramaditya Prakash³¹

In the multinucleated field of contemporary Indian architecture, Hafeez Contractor “is arguably India’s most prolific—and most famous—practitioner.”³² Contractor is based out of Mumbai, where he began his practice in 1982 after studying architecture at Columbia University in New York City. Upon returning to India, Contractor made a name for himself in Mumbai (then Bombay) through his unconventional designs for residential high rises. According to his biographer, Prathima Manohar, Contractor stood apart from other designers.

Contractor created buildings that looked like spaceships, other buildings sported round windows and crescent balconies. His style had unorthodox qualities filled with domes, pitched roofs, arches, triangular canopies, sprites and gates that looked like entrances to fortresses. Sweeping shapes, whimsical forms and playful colours provided Mumbai with glimpses of a place and time outside its experience.³³

Contractor’s unapologetically “postmodern” style and penchant for creating buildings and using ornamentations and materials that were out of place with respect to local surroundings drew criticisms from many in the so-called architectural establishment of India, an establishment that Contractor has repeatedly and openly disavowed. “Even though most pundits might term my residential work gimmicky,” Contractor wryly notes in the forward to a recent book on his work, “it comes out of valid rationale. The numerous styles that seem to tick off many people are simply a response to the aspirations of the consumers and the market context.”³⁴

Architectural critic Kenneth Frampton has characterized a broad shift in the ethos and practice of architecture that Contractor exemplifies: “The globalization of the world is now such that the time-honoured differences between climates, landscapes, and subcultures are in the process of being flattened out by the ruthless application of universal technology, activated by the play of the market and by the escalated fluidity of transnational capitalism.”³⁵ Contractor’s ethos and practice are a vivid illustration of the embrace of market-based pragmatics in the profession, where architecture literally has to keep up with the speed of hyperdevelopment and the influx of global finance. Contractor’s commercial success is no doubt due to his ability to keep pace by internalizing the neoliberal business ethics of speed, efficiency, and discipline in his own firm, which has been described as a virtual factory for the production of designs as fetishized commodities.

Hundreds of architects and draftsmen sit elbow to elbow to churn out buildings. From morning to night, their sole purpose is to draft and design the innumerable sketches that originate from Hafeez, who has

a good view of the office exit. As a result, employees do not attempt to leave before dinner. When a project is over they immediately begin work on the next. There are no milestones, only more buildings to make. People here do not linger. They have been taught to respect time.³⁶

As Hafeez renders his architects into abstract laborers, their commodified designs themselves are actualized and constructed in neoliberal cities like New Gurgaon. Writing in 1998, Hall prefigures the emergence of a “superstar” architect in the fragmented and unevenly developed spaces of Gurgaon, contrasting such an emergence with the decline of modernist ethics in a previous era:

The loss of architecture’s social vision has coincided with its being co-opted by large institutional investors and speculative developers. This emphasis for the architectural profession has shifted to one of satisfying the demands of their clients, often engaged for a single project. This is typically achieved through decorative design and stylistic distinction, the massive scale of developments of the employment of a publicly known “superstar” architect whose presence on a project will attract a great deal of media attention. The consequence of this sea-change in the architectural profession has been that the urban landscape is designed in (artful) fragments and becomes littered with a number of “spectacular,” “imageable,” or “scenographic” enclaves which are largely divorced from their immediate urban or social contexts.³⁷

The resulting hyperdevelopment may have disastrous consequences for urban life and planning overall (and has given New Gurgaon a mixed reputation as a fast-growing but horribly disorganized and unevenly developed city), but it has given Contractor commercial success beyond that of any other Indian architect.³⁸ As Contractor’s biographer points out, “Architectural technology today has to deliver buildings at astonishing speeds; consequently old-fashioned technological ideas that can’t cope with these deadlines are bound to vanish.”³⁹

This is the accelerated, cut-throat, market-oriented environment in which Contractor’s practice has excelled. His is an architecture of speed. Working exclusively for DLF in New Gurgaon, Contractor has designed more than “four million square feet of residential space, 2.5 million square feet of commercial space, and half a million square feet of shopping for the DLF Group.”⁴⁰ Contractor’s residential, commercial, and corporate designs can be found all over New Gurgaon and bear such “cosmopolitan”-sounding names as DLF Beverly Park, DLF Ericsson House, DLF Plaza Tower, DLF Corporate Park, and DLF Square.

A. DLF Gateway Tower⁴¹

As its name suggests, DLF Gateway Tower marks an entryway into DLF City and New Gurgaon. As one exits Delhi from the south on the elevated Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway (DGE)—which acts as a virtual gallery for viewing the showcase architecture of DLF City—the dark, sleek, and imposing tower welcomes the mobile subject into the space-time imaginary of the Millennium City. The building was completed in 2000, symbolically inaugurating New Gurgaon as the Millennium City of India. DLF Gateway Tower hails the mobile subject with its granite and glass façade and its curvilinear shape, which culminates in a tall vertical spire announcing itself dramatically in front of the crystalline skyline of DLF Cyber City. According to Manohar, the tower embodies a design that “seeks to create an aesthetic based on tectonics,” juxtaposing and balancing granite and glass in a ziggurat pattern of emergence and exchange.⁴²

As with many of Contractor's buildings in New Gurgaon, glass is the dominant material used to create the façade of DLF Gateway Tower and gives the structure its glistening appearance from the DGE. In the post-liberalization period in India, glass has become a popular building material, both because of its relatively cheap price within India and (increasingly) from abroad and because of “global” aesthetics that are a part of the symbolic power of corporate architecture. As one critic notes, “We have been conditioned by the use of glass in American skyscrapers into believing that it best expresses corporate identity. Over the second half of the 20th century, private corporations rose in power, and glass became the architectural motif of power and prestige.”⁴³

As early as 1933, Walter Benjamin linked the proliferation of modern glass architecture with the impoverishment of everyday experience: “It is no coincidence that glass is such a hard, smooth material to which nothing can be fixed. . . . Objects made of glass have no ‘aura.’”⁴⁴ As in many of Benjamin's writings on modern art and aesthetics, however, the loss of aura and the new poverty of experience in modernism were not to be strictly bemoaned. These losses could also be productive of new possibilities in experience. Glass was first used along with concrete as “a wonder material for early 20th century modernist European architects. Design leaders such as Le Corbusier (who later designed Chandigarh in postcolonial India) and Mies van der Rohe were trying to create a new language for European architecture that expressed the high level of industrialization Western societies had achieved.”⁴⁵ But beyond this symbolic value of glass, the material was valued for its efficiency because it allowed natural light during the day, saving energy and money by reducing electricity consumption. Moreover, glass also let in heat along with light, “and it allows only light to reflect back,

trapping the heat inside.”⁴⁶ In the temperate climates of Western Europe and North America, this greenhouse effect resulted in lower heating costs, and by the middle of the twentieth century glass curtain walls began to appear on commercial skyscrapers all over the Western world.

In the contemporary Indian context, however, the greenhouse effect becomes an additional cost rather than a benefit of design:

the huge glass walls face any direction, including the west, from where the hottest low-angle sun streams in. Glass lets in light and traps heat. So these corporations must consume a lot of energy (and cash) to keep the interiors cool. All this because of the “progressive” look they desire.⁴⁷

Thus glass architecture, which is now an almost defining characteristic of new corporate towers in India and is featured on nearly all of Contractor’s office buildings in New Gurgaon, serves as a highly visual form of conspicuous consumption because “A glass tower broadcasts the ability of the owner-occupant to pay for all this.”⁴⁸

B. DLF Pinnacle Tower

As Martin and Baxi note, “DLF City/Gurgaon emerged from the latest phase of modernization serviced so adeptly by Hafeez Contractor . . . accommodating a middle-class flight from the city, and from the newly urbanized rural masses.”⁴⁹ This flight from the rural masses is ironic because New Gurgaon was built on former rural land acquired and converted into commercialized real estate. These ex-urban residents are haunted by the conditions of the Millennium City’s own possibility.

While DLF Gateway Tower was Contractor’s first office building in New Gurgaon, the bulk of his work has been in what he has called “real estate driven residential architecture,”⁵⁰ in which his designs are said to respond to the aspirations of mobilized classes that demand “global” lifestyles, aesthetics, and amenities in secure communities.⁵¹ DLF Pinnacle Tower is a 19-story residential complex that comprises two clusters of high-rise apartment blocks secured by guarded walls and a main gate. The imposing glass-and-concrete buildings are located within walking distance of offices, shopping malls, multiplexes, and the DLF Golf and Country Club. The proximity to these locales is part of the developer’s vision for DLF City to be a “walkable” city. This, too, is ironic, because the vast majority of New Gurgaon’s residents own private cars and use them even for intraurban and local transit. Most of DLF City is devoid of sidewalks, and New Gurgaon has almost no public transport. Thus, nonautomobile transport in this sprawling suburb is limited and hectic at best.

What defines the experiential space of residential communities like Pinnacle Tower is not their proximity to other developments but the ability to provide a totalizing experience that makes interaction with the surrounding environment redundant and unnecessary.

The 2 clusters of high rise apartment blocks are set within magnificently landscaped grounds. The water bodies, sculptural elements and broad walkways are just right for a stroll and wind their way through the peaceful gardens. In between the two apartment blocks is a clubhouse, which offers extensive views of the park. The recreational facilities in the club include a pool, a gym, and the tennis court. The complex is also set to include a party room. The apartments are spacious and airy, with a large balcony that adds a dash of brightness to the entire flat. Each apartment adds up to about 360 sq.m. The bedrooms come with elegant wooden laminate flooring, while the living and dining rooms have imported marble floors. The apartments conform to international standards and latest seismic stipulated codes.⁵²

The architectural experience of “elsewhere” comes complete with international standards and amenities. As Mani has argued, globality

is self-evidently about aspiring to live as though one were rich and lived in New York, London, Paris, Frankfurt, or Amsterdam and not as though one were poor or lower middle class in these cities. And since one is aspiring to live in one place a though it were an elsewhere, the virtual can attain the status of reality, thus generating and sustaining illusions about both locales.⁵³

Juxtaposing virtual and actual images of DLF Pinnacle Tower shows the limits to architectural simulation in DLF City: the actualization of the abstract design is nearly exact, but the finished product contains a noticeable dissemblance that is integral to the power of the simulacrum, which is always “built upon a disparity or upon a difference. It internalizes dissimilarity.”⁵⁴ The dissimilarity comes from the ground upon which the “shining, powering” towers rise.⁵⁵ The artists’ rendering of the finished space includes the “peaceful gardens” and interior park that Manohar advertises, and the image includes plenty of shade-giving trees. In reality, however, the finished grounds are devoid of any shade-giving vegetation, and instead of a lush green park and garden we see the more familiar dusty and dry terrain of Gurgaon. To keep such lawns green in an otherwise semi-arid and hot environment, copious amounts of water must be used, further adding to the environmental and economic costs of such developments. While the virtual image hides these costs within a more general rendering of an “elsewhere”

in which meticulously manicured lawns are a given, the actualized space struggles to meet the costs necessary to keep water running in sufficient amounts. This is all happening in a municipal context in which the water table of Gurgaon district is heavily depleted and private developers like DLF illegally dig their own wells in order to extract water, further decreasing the water supply.⁵⁶

C. DLF City Centre

In addition to being a Millennium City, Gurgaon is also popularly known as “the mall capital of India,” boasting numerous “state-of-the-art” shopping malls with “global” retail brands, food courts, and multiplexes. DLF envisions a future in which Gurgaon will “soon develop as a mega shopping district in the [National Capital Region].”⁵⁷ And this despite the fact that many stores in these malls do not make money or struggle to do so. According to one report, “many people come to the malls in New Gurgaon to look around and enjoy the air-conditioned and modern interiors, but very few actually buy anything.”⁵⁸

Private developers like DLF, responding to the irrational exuberance over rising property values throughout the Delhi conurbation, went on a mall building frenzy prior to the fall of 2008 and the dawning of the global financial crisis. Many of these malls have struggled in the aftermath of the crisis. Contractor’s DLF City Centre mall responds to a nearly continuous need to increase footfalls in New Gurgaon’s malls and, more generally, to image and advertise consumerism to members of the newly mobilized classes of neoliberal India, many of whom are unaccustomed to Western practices of conspicuous consumption and ostentatious displays of wealth. Thus, Contractor’s DLF City Centre “explores the realms of advertising visual imagery in building design.”⁵⁹ The building’s glass-and-aluminum façade incorporates billboard advertising into its structure, promoting “with forceful aplomb” the products and services it houses.⁶⁰

DLF City Centre features an eleven-story-high tower that “serves the significant role of communicating and attracting the outside spectator,” broadcasting “billboard jargon” with “flashy graphics.”⁶¹ The aesthetic expression of the building “is strongly anchored in the zany colors of the graphic illustrations.”⁶²

The visually loud exterior of Contractor’s DLF City Centre makes it just one of scores of “hermetically sealed interiorized enclaves” that are, for Ashraf,

in complete visual and attitudinal denial of their surroundings. The city is held at arms length through a series of barriers, by the virtually resplendent architecture, by the curtailing of interaction with the sur-

rounding city, by the inevitable motorized access, and by the spectacular security befitting a royal precinct—all of which work towards intimidating groups that are not participants of this new urban experience. The residential enclaves are also similarly policed and truncated off the continuum of the city. The metrosexual citizen can now travel from home to mall, bypassing the rest of India.⁶³

In DLF City Centre, as well as in the countless new shopping malls like it (though each one is unlike the others in its uniquely amplified, commodified design), architecture and economics work together to form a “continuous interior space” designed to exteriorize outside spaces and exclude groups that are not participants of this new urban experience.⁶⁴

DLF Gateway Tower, DLF Pinnacle Tower, and DLF City Centre are examples of neoliberal urbanism designed by the likes of Hafeez Contractor for private builders like DLF Limited. They are “neoliberal” in the sense that Aihwa Ong characterizes new economic spaces that result from *exceptional* governmental policies and practices in Asia as *exceptions* to national economic policies. Neoliberal policies enact, among other things, what Ong has called “technologies of subjection,” where “sovereign rule invokes the exception to create new economic possibilities, spaces, and techniques for governing the population.”⁶⁵ This seems to be the case in spaces like New Gurgaon, where the elevated Delhi-Gurgaon Expressway, already both a high-speed connection to Indira Gandhi International Airport and a virtual gallery for visually encountering new architecture and urban design, is also the border that now divides New Gurgaon from the existing town, Old Gurgaon, creating markedly different economic and spatial realities on different sides of the expressway. Neoliberal technologies of governance work to “fragment and extend the space of the nation-state,” and they are exceptional in this two-pronged sense.⁶⁶

On the one hand, neoliberal urbanism fragments cities internally, excluding participants who are not part of this new economic experience through the securitization and social policing of new economic spaces that are a veritable escape from the immediate social environment. Neoliberal urbanism is founded on

the rise of “paranoid” or carceral architecture based on protection, surveillance and exclusion and finally the increasing presence of simulation within urban landscapes, imaginations of alternative cities to the “dreadful reality” of actual cities, for example theme parks, themed, policed shopping malls, and more subtle forms of simulation that invade everyday life.⁶⁷

In this way neoliberal urbanism serves as an existential escape from the perceived chaos and clamor, squalor and underdevelopment of postcolonial India.⁶⁸

On the other hand, yet simultaneously, architectural designs recode these spatial experiences within a *detrterritorialized* national imaginary of extension, growth, and development, if not global interconnection. Thus Ong's argument is apt to explain the way neoliberal exceptions *detrterritorialize* domestic economic space in order to project a "new India" in places like New Gurgaon. But one thing Ong fails to mention is that exception works not only spatially but also temporally, as a discursive narration of the postcolonial nation and its neoliberal urban present. In India, hyperdevelopment in the aftermath of economic liberalization came as a temporal exception that changed the rule of the "Hindu rate of growth," at least within the dominant narrative of postcolonial capitalism, transforming the historically produced meanings of the postcolonial nation through the creation of urban metonyms for the *new* India.⁶⁹ New Gurgaon is precisely such a metonym, a spatial manifestation of a detrterritorialized and accelerated national imaginary, a part (the urban) that stands in for the whole (the nation).

5. Postcolonial Modernism

You cannot isolate architecture from the age, from the social conditions, from the thinking, from the objectives and ideals of that particular age. . . . The past was good when it was the present, but you cannot bring it forward when the world has changed into a technological period.

—Jawaharlal Nehru⁷⁰

India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, gave modern architecture official sanctioning "as the approved national style and symbol of a fresh start after Independence."⁷¹ Modern architecture, according to Nehru, "offered India a vision of the future based on a functionalist language that was free of colonial associations and of reference to specific religious or ethnic traditions."⁷² Yet, from its inception, postcolonial architecture in India has entailed a negotiated synthesis of what was perceived as the modern and the traditional. The adaptation of modernist architecture to climatic, cultural, and historical considerations points to a hybrid modernism, one that was less about simulating Western modernity and more about reconciling the modern with local conditions that "offered resistance to a homogeneous adaptation of modern principles, and could actually inflect them toward a more critical production of architecture."⁷³

An early form of this hybrid modernism in architecture predates India's

independence from colonial rule. For the British in India, colonial architecture—namely that which coded British symbolic power in an indigenous architectural language—in the new capital city of Delhi was a way of making themselves intelligible to their native subjects. In 1912, when the British raj decided to relocate the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, architect and planner Edwin Lutyens made a conscious effort to produce designs that could bring the colonizers “closer to the hearts and minds of their colonial subjects” while also unequivocally stating their political dominance over the same.⁷⁴ In the New Delhi Imperial Complex, “the British had typically appropriated compositional devices from India’s past for use on buildings that were designed according to Western spatial concepts.”⁷⁵ The case in point was the Viceroy’s Palace, which was constructed with indigenous materials and stylized with Indo-Saracenic ornamentations including *chattris* (pavilions) and *jhallis* (carved stone screens) but otherwise structured spatially according to the precepts of Western neoclassicism. By the time New Delhi was completed in 1931, the anticolonial nationalist movement was already in full swing, however, and the first post-independence government would inhabit these very buildings just sixteen years later, sitting (too) comfortably, perhaps, in the hybrid architecture the British left behind.

In the immediate period after independence, almost as if to demonstrate a firm confidence in the modernist course, the so-called father of European modernism, Le Corbusier, was commissioned by Nehru to design the city of Chandigarh in Punjab. But far from simply implanting an abstract “Western” design, Le Corbusier incorporated his “enchantment with India’s humane and profound civilization” into his designs through symbolisms and formal adjustments that were not merely ornamental but structural.⁷⁶ This kind of hybridity in design is most visible in the Palace of the Assembly building in Chandigarh (1963). Le Corbusier’s designs here also attended seriously to the specific climate of northern India, attempting to use the buildings’ physical and material properties to negotiate rather than negate the natural environment. These were not simply gestural citations of the local but structural considerations that implied a contingent yet specific negotiation of form, site, climate, and, for Le Corbusier, a quasi-mystical (if somewhat Orientalist) symbology.

Following the likes of Lutyens, Herbert Baker, Le Corbusier, and Louis Kahn, notable postcolonial architects in India such as Achyut Kanvinde, Balkrishna Doshi, and Charles Correa each pursued a hybrid modern style, though they balanced what was perceived to be the modern and the traditional in distinct ways.⁷⁷ For instance, Kanvinde furthered Nehru’s project of modernizing India in order to break away from the regressions of the past and “played a crucial role in the transformation of building from a manual

trade to an organized industry based upon a new division of labor.”⁷⁸ Doshi, on the other hand, more readily embraced India’s history and looked to the past as a way of negotiating the modern context. Doshi’s architecture represents the refinement and perpetuation of “the central principles of modern architecture as they relate to the history, climate and diverse cultural mixture of India.”⁷⁹

Correa, too, has used the past as well as particular elements of Indian aesthetic traditions to cultivate a postcolonial, hybridized modern style. In his various works, Correa has “evolved an approach to design that draws upon traditional Indian forms and ordering devices, which he uses to create buildings that are nonetheless unmistakably modern.”⁸⁰ All three postcolonial architects have used a style that attempts to go “beyond the formal boundaries of the Modernist Movement to evolve a personal approach that acknowledges Indian traditions” and also establishes an ethical “relationship to the country’s poor, especially in urban areas.”⁸¹ Thus, in addition to working actively to build housing for the urban poor, the likes of Correa also wrote extensively on the problems of urban inequality in India.⁸² In this way, these architects took on a “democratic approach” when conceiving their modern designs in the context of an impoverished, post-colonial country.⁸³

All three architects, too, have worked extensively in New Delhi, which after independence quickly became a major center of architectural activity because the state was the predominant client of architecture until the neoliberal period. In these and other works in Delhi, climate, culture, and financial constraints led Kanvinde, Doshi, Correa, and others to use particular materials—namely, concrete and red sandstone—as the predominant materials for building. Martin and Baxi argue that these materials helped define a specifically hybrid postcolonial aesthetics based on functionality, pragmatics, and site. The use of concrete corresponded with the perceived economic efficiency of modernization, while the red sandstone registered with indigenous traditions of building: “one offered the presumably solid footing of techno-scientific calculation, while the other offered the more ephemeral but no less real footing of imagined cultural identity, more often than not rendered in dusky reds, trimmed with beige.”⁸⁴ Red sandstone, quarried in the Delhi region or in neighboring Rajasthan, conjured the “specter of Indianness” in Correa’s Delhi designs, including his Hindustan Lever Pavilion (1961), the Life Insurance Corporation of India (1986), and the British Council (1992).⁸⁵ Red sandstone was even prominently featured in Correa’s only building in New York City, the India Permanent Mission to the United States (1992). In addition, Raj Rewal, who Martin and Baxi call “the doyen” of the contemporary Delhi design scene, uses red sandstone “as

a blunt instrument for smashing concrete modernism.”⁸⁶ The standout examples of Rewal’s work in red sandstone in New Delhi are the State Trading Corporation Headquarters (1976) and the Standing Conference of Public Enterprise (1989). As one might glean from the names of these buildings, both were government-commissioned projects.

6. The Spatial Discourse of Postcolonial Identity in Neoliberal India

Vernacular architecture which uses local materials is dead. Using local materials has become more expensive. There are materials coming in from China which works out cheaper than the local materials. The most honest way of construction at any point in history has been the cheapest, fastest, and the most superior. Today if the global options provide those qualities then I will obviously opt for them.

—Hafeez Contractor⁸⁷

The postcolonial thinker Himadeep Muppidi has critically analyzed discourses of national identity in India before and after economic liberalization in 1991.⁸⁸ He finds that anticolonial and postcolonial national identities in India were historically constructed through a careful balancing of what was perceived as the modern and the traditional, under the respective signs of the foreign other and the domestic self. In the aftermath of two hundred years of foreign colonial domination, nationalists sought to limit the amount of foreign capital permitted within the postcolonial domestic space. Though the foreign was perceived as necessary because it brought with it technologies of modernization and progress, too much of a reliance on and mimicry of the foreign was considered a threat to national identity. The architecture of postcolonial modernism, embodied in the works of Kanvinde, Doshi, and Correa, fits this selective and hybrid negotiation of the modern and the traditional, what Muppidi calls the “ambivalent identity-logic” of postcolonial nationalism.

Within this postcolonial imaginary, economic self-reliance, through nationalization, modernization, and endogenization was the historical manifestation of this postcolonial identity logic.⁸⁹ India would modernize, the postcolonials seemed to be telling themselves, but would do so on its own terms, protecting the nation from the twin threats of recolonization and falling too far behind the West by not allowing the foreign in at all.

This negotiation of postcolonial national identity was fundamentally challenged after 1991, when a balance-of-payments crisis signaled that the domestic self was insufficiently providing for the nation’s economic development and that greater involvement of foreign capital would be needed in

order to augment economic growth. This is the context in which the Indian government “liberalized” the economy, loosening restrictions on foreign investment and trade and selectively privatizing industries and sectors of the economy that were deemed ready and competent to compete for global investment, production, and exchange.⁹⁰

But far from abandoning the postcolonial identity logic, Muppidi finds, those who have argued in favor of India’s continuing liberal reform have articulated their positions from within the discourse of India’s postcolonial identity. In particular, they have argued for changing the meaning of national economic self-reliance. Liberalization, they claim, far from leading to recolonization of the national self, constitutes a “manageable level of reliance on the outside world.”⁹¹ Moreover, if the outside world (the foreign/the other) posed a threat to the postcolonial self, then “the danger posed by the Other predominantly threatens a part that can be divorced from the Self—inefficient industry. Such a divorce, in fact, is seen as only strengthening the Self.”⁹²

This divorcing of inefficient, redundant, and increasingly anachronistic elements of the national self simultaneously allows the global to become intelligible as a new, deterritorialized extension of the nation. DLF’s corporate motto, “Building India,” is a precise expression of this new deterritorialized imaginary. And, perhaps not surprisingly, as part of “the deliberate rearticulation of Indianness from a predominantly territorial conception to an increasingly deterritorialized one,” the nonresident Indian (NRI) is increasingly invited, along with foreign investment, to serve as the virtual citizen-subject of this new India.⁹³ The aggressive and wide dispersion of images of NRIs, particularly in the West, seems to resolve the postcolonial problematic of balancing mimicry of the West with repudiation:

NRIs are coded as successfully reproducing Indianness in alien spaces and of forever desiring to return home. The difficult problem of getting the modern west in without losing premodern India has been partially resolved through the bodies of the NRIs. . . . The economic success and cultural obduracy of NRIs in the modern West is read as proof of India’s potential success in dealing with Western forces.⁹⁴

Since 2003, the government of India has explicitly sought to increase the exposure of NRIs in the national imagination. Each year, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs commences with the highly publicized annual awarding of the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*, an award that recognizes the achievements of the Indian diaspora in a variety of fields. Such explicit recognition is meant not only to strengthen ties with NRIs and increase their public visibility; it also draws on their considerable financial resources for

investment. Indeed, the liberalization of FDI inflow has long been linked to the “promotion and facilitation of investment by NRIs.”⁹⁵

That NRIs play a central role in the symbolic and material production of new architectural/economic spaces in New Gurgaon should, thus, come as no surprise. DLF City functions as an urban metonym for a new India whose deterritorialization can be indexed in the nomenclature of its various enclave spaces, such as Hamilton Court, Belvedere Place, or Ridgewood and Princeton Estates, among countless others.

[The] televisual names connect these objects to other objects in places like suburban New Jersey, where new condominium developments in the greater Princeton area [and the suburban town of Ridgewood] offer an independent, home-owning lifestyle to the expanding class of international, English-speaking technical workers trained in India. . . . [A]mong the main clientele of DLF City is the NRI, for whom apartment units in Princeton Estate may represent both a potential investment in a rising real estate market, and a kind of displaced homecoming—a base from which to visit the family while still maintaining a safe distance.⁹⁶

In the neoliberal era, postcolonial national identity has itself become deterritorialized and partitioned, whereby the efficient and competitive parts fit for global competition now seem effectively divorced from those parts that are deemed inefficient, uncompetitive, if not anachronistic and “dead.” In a homologous fashion, cities like Gurgaon are themselves partitioned between the competitive and “global” parts (New Gurgaon) and the anachronistic “local” parts (Old Gurgaon).⁹⁷ Such partitioning is corroborated in many studies that examine the partial and uneven implementation of economic reforms in India, where the strategy for implementing reforms has focused on targeting particular groups while leaving others ostensibly unaffected. Sachs, Varshney, and Bajpai, for instance, find that “Indian governments since 1991 have gone for the less risky and relatively safer reforms, reforms that primarily affect elite welfare, while leaving reforms more relevant to the masses relatively untouched.”⁹⁸ Economic reform, according to these economists, has primarily been an “elite affair” and has generally been left off party platforms during election times, demonstrating the lack of mass support for economic liberalization. This lack of support has meant that the state’s practices of selective and exceptional neoliberalism have had to be enacted behind the back of democratic politics.⁹⁹ The neoliberal state has implemented policies that “differently regulate populations for optimal productivity, increasingly through spatial practices that engage market forces.”¹⁰⁰ If the figure of the NRIs has given globalization qua

economic liberalization greater intelligibility for the postcolonial self, then this is an increasingly deterritorialized self divorced from those who are not seen as part of the new urban/economic/aesthetic experience of neoliberal globalization. Neoliberal urbanism is thus the spatial manifestation of a radically partitioned imagination of the postcolonial nation, temporally coded as the “new India.”

7. Conclusion

Neoliberal architecture and urban design in New Gurgaon, fueled by liberalized flows of global finance, gives intelligibility to a new India that is partitioned spatially and temporally from the “old India.” Urban space is where this new India both fragments and extends “national” space. The spaces of neoliberal architecture are fragmented by their very design, representing new economic enclaves of efficiency, optimization, competition, and hyperdevelopment that are effectively divorced from the rest of India through barriers, gates, expressways, and other modes of inhibition, exclusion, and policing. But these spaces simultaneously extend outward, connecting transnationally to other nodal points in the global network economy. Hafeez Contractor’s architectural work for DLF is best understood as a symbolic and material articulation of this new, deterritorialized India.

But this distancing cannot be understood in purely spatial terms. Encounters with architecture and urban design occur just as much in space as they do in *time*. Thus, one effect of the deterritorialization of urban space in the neoliberal era is that the vast majority excluded from this new urban experience comes to be seen as anachronistic, as no longer “pretending to be a part of the contemporary world and relevant to human futures.”¹⁰¹ This is perhaps the hidden irony in Krishan’s statement the day when we drove past the mirror-glass towers of DLF Cyber City. When he enthusiastically proclaimed a feeling of not being in India, perhaps what he was also articulating, unbeknownst to himself, was his own temporal exclusion from the postcolonial narrative of this “new” India.

Notes

1. Suneetha Dasappa Kacker, "The DDA and the Idea of Delhi," in *The Idea of Delhi*, ed. Romi Khosla (New Delhi: Marg, 2005).

2. "DLF Invests to the Tune of Rs 1000 Crores in Orissa" (press release), DLF Building India, website, 10 November 2006, http://www.dlf.in/dlf/wcm/connect/DLF_Common/dlf_site/home/top+link/media/press+releases/2006/co_nov_2006_dlf+invests+to+the+tune+of+rs+1000+crores+in+orissa.

3. Wealthy families in India commonly hire private drivers. My cousin, an Indian-born but Western-educated and newly returned business executive, belongs to that elite contingent of urban India that can afford not only private drivers but live-in cooks and daily maids. In this sense, my cousin was fairly typical of the residents of Park View City, the luxury gated community in New Gurgaon where he lives and played host to me. Much of my ethnographic research on everyday life in the gated residential spaces of New Gurgaon was conducted within Park View City.

4. See Rohan Kalyan, "Postcolonial Capitalism and the 'Middle' Class in Neoliberal India," forthcoming. Evidence of the desire for global recognition can be found in the discourse of postcolonial capitalists such as Gurcharan Das, "The Respect They Deserve," *Time*, 7 December 2004; and Nandan Nilekani, *Imagining India: The Idea of a Renewed Nation* (New York: Penguin, 2009).

5. Tim Hall, *Urban Geography* (London: Routledge, 1998), 80.

6. My use of *the virtual* and *the actual* comes from Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (1970; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

7. Sunil Khilnani, "The India Project," *Architectural Design* 77, no. 6 (2007): 15.

8. This formulation is adopted from Krishna's articulation of the postcolonial Indian middle class living among but not with its poorer fellow citizens. Sankaran Krishna, "The Bomb, Biography, and the Indian Middle Class," *Economic and Political Weekly* XLI, no. 23 (10 June 2006). See also, Gayatri Spivak, "Megacity," *Grey Room* 1 (Autumn 2000), 9.

9. Somini Sengupta, "Inside Gate, India's Good Life; Outside, the Servants' Slums," *New York Times*, 9 June 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/09/world/asia/09gated.html>.

10. Paran Balakrishnan, "An Office Space Odyssey," *Rediff.com*, 11 January 2003, <http://www.rediff.com/money/2003/jan/11spec.htm>.

11. The phrase "back in India" is taken from one of the subjects of Ashim Ahluwalia's documentary film *John and Jane* (2006), which is about call-center workers in Mumbai. "Once your shift [in the call center] is over," Sydney tells us early in the film, "you're back in India!" Ahluwalia's film is remarkable for, among other things, the way it is able to juxtapose the pristine "global" spaces of the call center, where all of the subjects of the film work, with the other spaces of their everyday lives. I examine this film elsewhere. See Rohan Kalyan, "Ghostly Images, Phantom Discourses, and the Virtuality of the Global," *Globalizations* 7 no. 4 (December 2010): 545–561.

12. "Gurgaon Collapsing," *Hindustani Times*, 23 September 2008, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/special-news-report/GurgaonCollapsing.aspx>.

13. Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Un-Making of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

14. Lata Mani, "The Phantom of Globality and the Delirium of Excess," *Economic and Political Weekly* 43, no. 49 (2008): 42.

15. This postcolonial capitalist literature is vast in the public sphere of India, where op-ed pieces in newspapers constantly debate India's status as an "emerging economy" to be taken seriously. Two books, among countless others, that express such concerns are Gurcharan Das, *India Unbound* (New Delhi: Penguin India, 2000); and Nilekani. Such discourses work tirelessly to secure the intelligibility of the new India in a "globalized" context.

16. Lefebvre, 1.

17. My conceptual usage of "experience" and "the present" draws heavily on the work of Michael J. Shapiro, *Cinematic Political Thought* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 10–38. Shapiro's critical exploration of the "politics of now-time," itself inflected through the work of Walter Benjamin, Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze, and Jacques Rancière, informs my idea that political experience can be analyzed as a spatial and temporal distribution of value and intelligibility in the present.

18. William Mazzarell, *Shoveling Smoke: Advertising and Globalization in Contemporary India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 20.

19. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

20. David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 88.

21. Harvey, 95.

22. Government of India, Secretariat for Industrial Assistance, *Manual on Foreign Direct Investment in India: Policy and Procedures* (New Delhi, 2003), 9.

23. The literature on India's economic reforms is vast, but from the perspective of the implicit transformation engendered in the postcolonial national imaginary of India through liberalization, see Himadeep Muppidi, *The Politics of the Global* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).

24. "Real Estate FDI," IndianGround.com (n.d.), http://www.indianground.com/real-estate_fdi.aspx.

25. Anuj Chopra, "Debt Weighs on Indian Middle Class," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 24 March 2009, <http://www.csmonitor.com/Business/2009/0324/indian-middle-class-stuck-in-credit-card-debt-trap>.

26. Isabelle Sender, "Cashing in on India's Banking Boom," *Business Week*, 23 February 2006.

27. Chopra.

28. Sender.

29. "Real Estate Gurgaon," *NRI Realty News* (n.d.), <http://www.nrirealtynews.com/gurgaon/real-estate-gurgaon.php>.

30. Harvey, 7.

31. Vikramaditya Prakash, *Chandigarh's Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in Postcolonial India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 26.

32. Reinhold Martin and Kadambari Baxi, *Multi-National City: Architectural Itineraries* (New York: Actar, 2007), 113.

33. Prathima Manohar, ed., *Architect Hafeez Contractor* (Mumbai: Spenta Multimedia, 2006), 35.

34. Manohar, 7.

35. Kenneth Frampton, "South Asian Architecture: In Search of a Future Origin," in *An*

Architecture of Independence: The Making of Modern South Asia: Charles Correa, Balkrishna Doshi, Muzharul Islam, Achyut Kanvinde, ed. Kazi Ashraf and James Belluardo (New York: The Architectural League of New York and Princeton, 1998), 10.

36. Rahul Bhatia, "Deconstructing Hafeez Contractor," *Open Magazine*, 7 November 2009, <http://www.openthemagazine.com/article/living/deconstructing-hafeez-contractor>.

37. Hall, 89.

38. I explore the dimensions of this disorganized and unevenly developed city in a forthcoming article that looks at land policies and urban planning strategies implemented in New Gurgaon. I argue that the private speed of development by the likes of DLF is out of joint with the ability of the state to provide an urban infrastructure adequate to the demands of global investors. This temporal disjuncture is the cause of much consternation and anxiety among postcolonial capitalists who desire to produce and inhabit "first-world" spaces in India.

39. Manohar, 23.

40. Martin and Baxi, 113.

41. The three examples I present are taken from Manohar's illustrated book on Contractor's work; however, the critical reflections on these works are mine.

42. Manohar, 225.

43. Himanshu Burte, "Seeing through Glass," *Live Mint*, 29 January 2008, <http://www.livemint.com/2009/01/28230631/Seeing-through-glass.html>.

44. Walter Benjamin, "Experience and Poverty," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2, 1927–1934, ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 735.

45. Himanshu Burte, "How Sustainable Is Your Style?" *Live Mint*, 14 October 2009, <http://www.livemint.com/2009/10/14214005/How-sustainable-is-your-style.html>.

46. Burte.

47. Burte.

48. Burte.

49. Martin and Baxi, 116.

50. Manohar, 7.

51. The film *I Am Gurgaon* (dir. Marije Meerman, VPRO, 2009) intimately and deftly documents everyday perceptions, desires, and imaginations among the "secessionist class" of New Gurgaon that resides in such gated communities.

52. Manohar, 125.

53. Mani, 42.

54. Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 258.

55. Manohar, 125.

56. Tanushree Roy Chowdhury, "Crisis in Sight: Water Table in Gurgaon Takes a Plunge," *Indian Express*, 5 January 2009, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/crisis-in-sight-water-table-in-gurgaon-takes.../406761/>.

57. Prabhakar Sinha, "World's Biggest Mall Planned in Gurgaon," *Times of India*, 22 June 2005, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2005-06-22/delhi/27843222_1_biggest-mall-gurgaon-malls-jerde-partnership.

58. Aravind Adiga, "India: A Mania for Shopping Malls," *Time*, 13 September 2004, <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,695915,00.html>.

59. Manohar, 231.
60. Manohar, 231.
61. Manohar, 231.
62. Manohar, 231.
63. Kazi Ashraf, "Masala City: Urban Stories from South Asia," *Architectural Design* 75, no. 5 (2005): 69.
64. Martin and Baxi, 68.
65. Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press 2006), 7.
66. Ong, 7.
67. Hall, 12.
68. No one critically deconstructs the psychological motivations for such existential escape on the part of the postcolonial middle class more acutely than the venerable Ashis Nandy. See, especially, his "The Beautiful, Expanding Future of Poverty," *International Studies Review* 4, no. 2. (Summer 2002): 107–121.
69. The phrase "Hindu rate of growth" characterizes India's relatively stagnant (when compared to other Asian economies to the east and southeast) 3.5 percent average growth over the first three decades after independence. According to Tharoor, "The combination of internal controls and international protectionism gave India a distorted economy, under-productive and grossly inefficient, making too few goods, of too low a quality, at too high a price." Shashi Tharoor, *India from Midnight to Millennium* (New York: Harper, 1997), 166.
70. Mushirul Hasan, *Nehru's India: Select Speeches* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 154.
71. Kazi Ashraf and James Belluardo, preface to *An Architecture of Independence*, ed. Ashraf and Belluardo, 7
72. Frampton, "South Asian Architecture," 13.
73. Kazi Ashraf, "Reincarnation and Independence: The Modern Architecture of South Asia," in *An Architecture of Independence*, ed. Ashraf and Belluardo, 27.
74. Martin and Baxi, 57.
75. Frampton, "South Asian Architecture," 13.
76. Vikramaditya Prakash, *Chandigarh's Le Corbusier: The Struggle for Modernity in India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 16.
77. *Modern* and *traditional* are not static terms. They are deployed by different architects in multiple and unique ways.
78. Frampton, "South Asian Architecture," 15.
79. Ashraf and Belluardo, preface, 8.
80. Frampton, "South Asian Architecture," 19.
81. Frampton, "South Asian Architecture," 19.
82. See, for instance, Charles Correa, *The New Landscape* (Oxford, UK: Butterworth Architecture, 1989).
83. A.G. Krishna Menon, "The Contemporary Architecture of Delhi: The Role of the State as Middleman," in *Delhi: Urban Space and Human Destinies*, ed. Veronique Dupont, Emma Tarlo, and Denis Vital (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2001).
84. Martin and Baxi, 113.
85. Martin and Baxi, 108.
86. Martin and Baxi, 108.

87. Manohar, 37.
88. Himadeep Muppidi, *The Politics of the Global* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).
89. Muppidi, 51.
90. A wealth of literature explores the impetus for India's economic reforms. For a clear explanation, see Jeffrey Sachs, Ashutosh Varshney, and Nirupam Bajpai, eds., *India in the Era of Economic Reforms* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999).
91. Muppidi, 49.
92. Muppidi, 53.
93. Muppidi, 56.
94. Muppidi, 56.
95. Government of India, 3.
96. Martin and Baxi, 116.
97. This finding is corroborated in the case of Bangalore, another Indian city known internationally as a center for high-tech and "global" industries. See Solomon Benjamin, "Governance, Economic Settings and Poverty in Bangalore," *Environment and Urbanization* 12, no. 1 (April 2000): 35–56. Benjamin finds two modes of governance at work for the "local" economy and the "corporate" or globally linked economy.
98. Sachs, Varshney, and Bajpai, 15.
99. For more on this "liberalization by stealth," see Atul Kohli, "Politics of Economic Growth in India, 1980–2005, Part I: The 1980s," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 1 April 2006, 1363.
100. Ong, 6.
101. Nandy, 117.