

**MANUFACTURED MAGNIFICENCE IN THE ‘MILLENNIAL CITY’: THE
(POST)COLONIAL POLITICS OF A SPORT-FOCUSED GATED COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT IN GURGAON, INDIA**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the (dis)connections between urban development, colonial legacies and postcolonial expressions of space, and ideas associated with sport/leisure. These (dis)connections are specifically explored through the emergence of a sport-focused gated community in Gurgaon, India. This research looks to better understand how this community is produced by public/private actors, the role of sport in urban development, how land is made available for such uses, how experiences of dispossession reflect broader state/citizen relationships, and how this development is connected to financial capital and legacies of colonialism. I conducted a global ethnography (Burawoy, 2000) of this community, employing a range of methods including observations, interviews, and qualitative document analysis.

I begin by investigating how the community was imagined by executives, architects, and consultants, and how the community is promoted to potential buyers. Findings reveal that conceptualizations of this community are reflective of broader neoliberal policy changes in the region, and also that promotional materials reference colonial and postcolonial notions of sport and space. Additionally, I highlight the ways sport/leisure is utilized in creating spaces outside temporary moments of mega events.

Following, I explore strategies used to acquire land, experiences of dispossession, and resistance to (il)legal land acquisition. I demonstrate how (in)formal modes of governance differentially discipline people through uneven applications of law. This reveals the unstable boundaries between what is considered legitimate and illegitimate in land acquisition and development.

Next, I examine the design decisions made by architects and development executives. I highlight how architecture, in this case, (re)produces aesthetic sensibilities predicated on

exclusionary practices. I also critically interrogate the uses of golf to produce a sanitized environment – and connect this analysis to colonial imaginations of civilized landscapes and contemporary politics of urban beautification.

Overall, this dissertation contributes to literatures on sport and urban (re)development, economic liberalization and urban politics in India, and gated communities. Taken together, drawing theoretically from Ong's (2006) notions of neoliberalism, and Chakrabarty's call to provincialize Europe, this study illustrates how this space is connected to colonial practices of domination and shifts towards the facilitation of global capital, but cannot be reduced to this narrative exclusively.

Lay Summary

This dissertation explores connections between urban development, colonial and postcolonial politics of space, and the place of sport/leisure in community development through the emergence of a sport-focused gated community in Gurgaon, India. Study One reveals how the community was conceptualized, and how promotional materials reference colonial and postcolonial notions of sport and space. Study Two sheds light on strategies used to make land available for development, responses to (il)legal land acquisition, and how flexible interpretations of law privilege some individuals and land uses over others. Examining the architectural and design decisions reveals how ideas associated with the aesthetics of sport help produce a sanitized and exclusive environment – and how this is linked to colonial practices of ‘taming’ nature and contemporary politics of spatial purification. Together, the findings illustrate that gated communities cannot solely be understood as localized examples of neoliberalization or new forms of colonialism unfolding in cities.

Preface

This dissertation is the original, unpublished, independent work by the author, Devra Waldman.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Lay Summary	v
Preface	vi
List of Abbreviations	xi
List of Figures	xii
Acknowledgements	xiii
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Context: The City of Gurgaon	5
1.1.1 <i>Gurgaon and the colonial imaginary of city improvement</i>	5
1.1.2 <i>Post independence, Gurgaon as exception, and competing ideas of modernity</i>	7
1.1.3 <i>Economic liberalization, exceptional development, and the fragmented gated city of Gurgaon</i>	10
1.2 Theoretical Framing and Approach	12
1.2.1 <i>Political economy and spatial implications</i>	13
1.2.2 <i>Postcolonial urbanism</i>	15
1.3 Navigating This Document	19
2. Methodology	24
2.1 Global Ethnography	24
2.2 Research Context	28
2.3 Multiple Methods	30
2.3.1.1 <i>Observations and fieldwork</i>	31
2.3.2 <i>Semi structured interviews</i>	34
2.3.3 <i>Qualitative document analysis</i>	35
2.4 Ethical Considerations, Reflexivity, Research Reflections, and Access	38
2.4.1 <i>Ethical approval</i>	38
2.4.2 <i>Ethical commitments, research access, reflexivity, and reflections</i>	39
2.4.3 <i>Reflexivity, access, and the politics (and realities) of research</i>	42
2.4.4 <i>Unthreatening and innocent</i>	44
2.4.5 <i>Object of desire</i>	46
2.4.6 <i>Used to portray status</i>	49
2.4.7 <i>Other issues of (perceived) safety</i>	50
2.4.8 <i>A focus on elites and the embodied costs of (ethnographic) research</i>	52
2.4.9 <i>Language, translation, and the stories of the dispossessed</i>	56

3. Selling spectacular spaces: hyperbuilding and hybridity in the creation of the Golf Gardens	60
3.1 Introduction	60
3.2 Theoretical Perspective	63
3.3 Literature	68
3.3.1 <i>Gated community developments</i>	68
3.3.2 <i>Economic liberalization, new Indian middle class, and gated community living</i> ...	72
3.3.3 <i>Sport and (urban) space</i>	76
3.4 Methodology	80
3.4.1 <i>Methods and analysis</i>	81
3.5 Findings	82
3.5.1 <i>Centrality of sport in promoting exclusivity and hierarchical differentiation</i>	83
3.5.2 <i>Nostalgic and colonial references of sport</i>	89
3.5.3 <i>Exclusive, all-encompassing space</i>	92
3.6 Discussion	94
3.6.1 <i>Spectacular developments geared towards the new Indian middle class</i>	95
3.6.2 <i>Centrality of (hybridized) sport in the making of space</i>	98
3.7 Conclusion	105
4. Exploring strategies for land acquisition: intersections of informality as governance and graduated citizenship in competing claims to space	107
4.1 Introduction	107
4.2 Theoretical Perspective	109
4.2.1 <i>Neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship</i>	109
4.2.2 <i>Provincializing Europe and urban informality</i>	112
4.3 Literature	115
4.3.1 <i>Economic liberalization and urban spatial shifts in India</i>	115
4.3.2 <i>Land transformation into the 'Millennial City' of Gurgaon</i>	119
4.3.3 <i>Avenues for (legal) land acquisition in Gurgaon</i>	124
4.3.4 <i>Gaps and next steps</i>	128
4.4 Methods and Analysis	129
4.5 Findings	130
4.5.1 <i>High level strategies to facilitate land acquisition</i>	131
4.5.2 <i>Strategies on the ground to facilitate land transfer/purchase: deception, manipulation, gaining trust, and bribes</i>	133
4.5.3 <i>(Il)legal acquisition: resistance and taking land by force</i>	136

4.6	Discussion	144
4.6.1	<i>Coercion and resistance in land acquisition</i>	144
4.6.2	<i>Graduated citizenship and informality: the blurry boundaries between bending and breaking laws</i>	148
4.7	Conclusion	155
5.	Aiming for the ‘green’: (post)colonial and aesthetic politics in the design of a purified, gated environment	157
5.1	Introduction	157
5.2	Theoretical Approach	160
5.3	Literature	165
5.3.1	<i>(Post)colonial productions of nature</i>	165
5.3.2	<i>The new Indian middle class, aesthetics, and approaches to (urban) nature</i>	169
5.3.3	<i>Sport, colonialism, modernity, and the production of pristine natures</i>	173
5.3.4	<i>Gaps and next steps</i>	177
5.4	Methodology	178
5.4.1	<i>Methods and analysis</i>	179
5.5	Findings	181
5.5.1	<i>Visibility from the inside out: an (aesthetic representation) of golf on view from all angles</i>	181
5.5.2	<i>Invisibilities from the inside out: anything and anyone ‘other’ to golf hidden from view</i>	192
5.5.3	<i>(In)visibilities from the outside in: the occlusion of dirt, disorder, and labour</i>	198
5.5.4	<i>(In)visibilities from the ground up: a hierarchy of views</i>	202
5.6	Discussion	205
5.6.1	<i>The (aesthetic) politics of the architecture</i>	205
5.6.2	<i>Politics of golf: aesthetics, purified nature, and disciplined space</i>	211
5.6	Conclusion	216
6.	Conclusion	218
6.1	Contributions and Significance	219
6.1.1	<i>Sport and urban (re)development</i>	219
6.1.2	<i>Economic liberalization, urban politics, and shifting relations between the state and its populations</i>	221
6.1.3	<i>Gated community developments in India</i>	223
6.2	Limitations and Future Directions	224
6.3	Final Thoughts	228
	References	231

Appendix A: Contact Letter	247
Appendix B: Information and Consent Form for Interviews	248
Appendix C: Oral Consent Script	250
Appendix D: Oral Consent Handout.....	251
Appendix E: Information and Consent Form for Observations	252
Appendix F: Oral Consent for Observations	254

List of Abbreviations

GLD	Gurgaon Lifestyle Developers
DIT	Delhi Improvement Trust
DLF	Delhi Land and Finance Corporation
DDA	Delhi Development Authority
QDA	Qualitative Document Analysis
NAREDCO	National Real Estate Development Council
UREM	Urban Real Estate Megaprojects
HUDA	Haryana Urban Development Authority
DTP	Department of Town and Country Planning
CBI	Central Bureau of Investigation
MCG	Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Distance Between New Delhi and Gurgaon	29
Figure 2: Map of Location of GLD Golf Gardens	30
Figure 3: Rendered Image of St. Andrews Tower	91
Figure 4: Aks-Shajra Highlighting Legal Division of Land	137
Figure 5: Map Submitted by Gurgaon Builders to Acquire License	139
Figure 6: Architect Image of Golf Gardens	182
Figure 7: Floor Plan Sample 1	184
Figure 8: Floor Plan Sample 2	185
Figure 9: Floor Plan Sample 3	186
Figure 10: Photograph of Proximity of Greenery to Building	188
Figure 11: Photograph of Proximity of Greenery to Building from Grass Level	189
Figure 12: Masterplan of West Development	195
Figure 13: Masterplan of Golf Gardens	195
Figure 14 :Masterplan of Golf Gardens	196
Figure 15: Photograph of Use of Golf Architecture to Hide Other Spaces	196
Figure 16: Photograph of Use of Golf Architecture to Hide Other Spaces	197
Figure 17: Photograph of Golf Garden Gates	199
Figure 18: Photograph of Golf Gardens Entrance from Above	200
Figure 19: Photograph of Concrete Paneling Hiding Service Balconies	201
Figure 20: Photograph Illustrating View from Lower Units	202
Figure 21: Photograph Illustrating View from Upper Units	203
Figure 22: Photograph Illustrating View from Upper Units	203

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1. Introduction

This dissertation explores the (dis)connections between urban development, colonial legacies and postcolonial expressions of space (and related politics of inclusion/exclusion), and ideas associated with sport/leisure, through the emergence of a sport-focused gated community in Gurgaon, India. Particularly, my research centres on one specific case – the building of a gated residential development around golf and polo identities/brands by a real estate company named Gurgaon Lifestyle Developers (GLD)¹. Established in 1985, GLD is an India-based property developer that has 17 projects under development that include residential, commercial, hospitality, and retail developments. Of interest here is their development of the Golf Gardens – a luxury residential development that will house at least 4000 people (excluding families' service staff) – built around a 9-hole 'executive'² golf course.

This development is in Gurgaon, a satellite city roughly 30 kilometers south west of Delhi and part of the National Capital Region (with a population of over 46 million people as of 2011). Gurgaon, in particular, has seen recent rapid urbanization and growth, with the population rising from roughly 600,000 in 1991 to 1.5 million in 2011 (Census of India, 2011). Current estimates put the population around 2.5 million, and the department of Town and Country Planning is projecting a population of at least 4.2 million by 2031 (Town and Country Planning Department, 2012). Dubbed the 'millennial city', the urban environment is one characterized by glitzy corporate parks that house offices for nearly every Fortune 500 company, and large-scale, high density gated residential developments. This has led some to argue that the region

¹ This is a pseudonym given to the development firm studied. The company and their projects have been anonymized throughout.

² 'Executive' is a term used to describe a golf course that is shorter in length than a standard golf course. Executive courses tend to have more par-3 holes than typical golf courses.

resembles a city of disconnected islands, built from the ground up by private corporations with little to no oversight from state agencies. As a state planner put it to me: “there are two cities of Gurgaon. You look up and you see the beautiful shiny spaces, you look down and you see crumbling or non-existent infrastructure”. The landscape is highly fragmented with pristine enclaves – segmented off from informal settlements and overflowing waste patches – that are connected together by crumbling roads with little drainage, often resulting in flooding that grinds movement to a standstill during the monsoon rains. The state continues to struggle to provide infrastructure to keep pace with the private-led development in the region (Goldstein, 2016; Kalyan, 2017; Srivastava, 2014). I use this one case of the Golf Gardens to better understand the development and implications of these sorts of spaces, how the boundaries of these spaces are socially constructed and negotiated, and how the particularities of these places arise from structures, forces, and relationships outside their specific confines.

To address these themes, I ask the following questions: 1) how is this community produced physically and discursively by public and private actors; 2) what are the multiple, contested, and contradictory meanings of the spaces within and around the development; 3) how are decisions made regarding the development of gated residential complexes, and what is the role of sporting brands/identities in the building of such spaces; 4) how is land made available for the development of such spaces, and how do the experiences of dispossession and exclusion by those who had land acquired for this development reflect broader relationships between the state, populations, and spatial fragmentations; and 5) how is the development of these spaces connected to broader financial capital, neoliberal urban reforms, and legacies of colonialism.

This dissertation research was designed with the aim of contributing to a range of literatures, including literatures on sport and urban (re)development, economic liberalization in

India and urban land use changes, and gated community developments. In the area of sport and urban (re)development, although there are a number of studies that examine how sport/leisure is implicated in large scale spatial changes for mega-events (i.e. the Olympics/World Cup) or the development of stadia for professional sports teams (Andrews, Batts, & Silk, 2014; Raco & Tunney, 2010; Raco, 2012; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Manley, 2012; Sze, 2009), there is a surprising scarcity of research that investigates how sport and leisure is implicated in large scale urban changes outside of these settings. Moreover, the majority of work in this area has focused on spatial projects and practices in North America/Europe, with little attention directed to the ways in which sport/leisure is mobilized in urban (re)development practices and policies in the global south, including India. Additionally, little research on sport and urban (re)development has utilized a postcolonial theoretical perspective to examine relationships between urban spatial changes and (ongoing) histories, impacts, and legacies of colonialism and capitalism. This dissertation will address this gap in the literature by focusing on the development of a sport/leisure focused space outside of the context of mega events, as well as by theorizing this development through the use of a combination of political economic and postcolonial theoretical perspectives and concepts – perspectives and concepts that will be used to support my examination of how this gated development is tied to macro-structural institutions and other localized forces.

In a similar vein, there has been considerable attention to how economic liberalization policies promoted by the Indian state in the 1990s led to dramatic shifts in land use arrangements, the privileging of middle class groups and their interests in redevelopment strategies at the expense and exclusion of ‘Others’, and how these policies have reconfigured relationships between the state, the city, and its citizens (Baviskar, 2011; Bhan, 2009; Bjorkman,

2015; Ellis, 2012; Fernandes, 2006; Ghertner, 2015; Srivastava, 2014). This dissertation will extend this literature by considering the potential role that sport/leisure may play in these processes – while also connecting sport-focused gated community development to legacies of colonial productions of nature/space, and to current contexts of private led urban development.

Additionally, this dissertation looks to contribute to scholarship on gated community development. Existing research on gated communities has tended to examine the ways in which these urban forms are exemplars of neoliberal urban development and both products and drivers of neoliberal practices and policies (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006; McGuirk & Dowling, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Pow, 2009; Shen & Wu, 2012; Silk & Manley, 2017). Others studying gated communities around the globe have critiqued these environments as representing new forms of colonialism, through mimicry of spatial layout and design that references places in the Global North, or through analyses that highlight how these developments are financed through real estate companies based in Europe/North America (Brosius, 2010; Falzon, 2004; Shen & Wu, 2012; King, 2004). The research here looks to destabilize these dominant readings of gated communities by exploring how these developments are connected to broader neoliberal practices/policies, while also questioning ‘origin stories’ of these forms of urbanism as coming from the Global North and transplanted to locations in the Global South.

As an introduction to this dissertation, I will begin by offering a historical overview of Gurgaon in order to contextualize the region in which the development of this gated community is taking place. After, I explain the guiding theoretical framing and approach for this dissertation. I conclude this chapter with an overview of the rest of the dissertation and explain how this document is organized.

1.1 Context: The City of Gurgaon

It is important to situate this study in the context of the historical evolution of the city of Gurgaon. Gurgaon is often described as different to other Indian cities, constructed as an example of the ‘new’ urban environment of the ‘modern Indian nation’ that emerged after economic liberalization in the early 1990s. Below I chart the historical context of the city and the ways it has always been a site of ‘exception’ (Ong, 2006) – exempted from the gaze of colonial city improvement practices, the ‘Green Revolution’ of ‘modern’ Indian nation building between the 1950s-1970s, and a site selective expansion for urban development projects targeting those deemed valuable and connected to global flows of capital after economic liberalization in the 1990s. Charting the ways in which Gurgaon has been excepted from or selectively included in urban policy decisions at various time periods help to tease out the complex ways in which the groundwork for a landscape of gated residential enclaves were laid over time through conflicting ideas of modernity and ‘proper’ city planning.

1.1.1 Gurgaon and the colonial imaginary of city improvement

The region of Gurgaon was part of the Mughal Empire, that was then relinquished to the British East India Company in 1802 – marking the birth of the relationship between Gurgaon and the British imperial project (Kalyan, 2017). The city was enveloped in the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 and after being forcefully and violently brought back under control by the British, it became a site of administrative headquarters of the district (Kalyan, 2017). In the decades after the rebellion, Gurgaon had been ignored by British colonial city development efforts as the Crown’s focus was on improving and containing ‘problem native’ areas of Delhi that were deemed a threat to British rule (Kalyan, 2017). While having an outpost dedicated to British

control and governance, Gurgaon was exempted from city making projects and was constructed and defined as having poor, unskilled, uneducated farmers who were working on underproductive lands with poor crops (Kalyan, 2017).

While Gurgaon was understood to be rural and agriculturally struggling, the Delhi Improvement Trust (DIT) was established in 1937 by the British colonial government in an effort to spearhead ‘modern’ city building in Delhi based on a report on the ‘congestion’ in the city and a desperate need for ‘improvement’ in urban areas (Legg, 2007; Srivastava, 2014). After the establishment of the DIT, the Trust had extensive powers to improve city building and living through direct intervention into colonial citizens’ spaces of dwelling, leisure, and commerce and to look for ways to expand the city of Delhi to decrease the threats of congestion (Legg, 2007; Srivastava, 2014). Not only were the congested areas of the city deemed a political and health risk, they were also constructed as a threat to the appearance of the capital region. Thus, aesthetics became central to city expansion and cleansing schemes of the time (Legg, 2007). In this context, private developers were able to acquire land in two main ways – either directly from landowners in areas that were outside the jurisdiction of Delhi city proper (like Gurgaon or other fringe cities to the capital), or through direct negotiation with the DIT (Srivastava, 2014).

It was in 1946 that the Delhi Land and Finance Corporation (DLF) was established as a private real estate corporation by Chaudhury Raghvendra Singh, an Indian civil servant and landowner (Hiro, 2015; Searle, 2016; Srivastava, 2014). Through various negotiations with the DIT, the DLF was able to slowly stake a large presence in the private real estate market by receiving permission to build through one of the city’s expansion schemes. As part of the permission to build private real estate ventures, the DLF also had to agree to develop public infrastructure to the standard and satisfaction of the Trust (Srivastava, 2014). The ‘acceptable’

and desirable forms of developments stipulated by the Trust included regulations around road width and distance between buildings and roads, maximum house height and width based on street width for optimal aesthetics, technologies for drainage hidden from view, provisions of latrines with sufficient ventilation, restrictions on ceiling height, and necessities of every room having a window (Legg, 2007). As Srivastava (2014) highlights, the promotional materials produced by the DLF advertising new housing colonies of the time reflected a mix of British, American, and Indian stylistic, aesthetic, and urban dwelling references. For example, privately developed residential communities reflected hybrid ideas of ideal forms of living with distinctly Indian names (i.e. Hauz Khaz, Rajouri, Shalimar) and references were made to ‘pleasant’ living defined by roads lined by flower beds, swimming pools, and pristine gardens (Srivastava, 2014). Importantly, these forms of living as advertised by the DLF, are strikingly similar to those of the gated residential communities of Gurgaon, showing ‘modern’ Indian individuals relaxing in pools, using jogging tracks, and walking through manicured gardens (Srivastava, 2014).

It is crucial to note here that, at the time, Gurgaon was excepted from view as the focus on urban improvement and city making was centred around Delhi. It is this exception, alongside the relationship between the DLF and city improvement efforts spearheaded by the colonial government, that is important context for the development of Gurgaon in post-independence India.

1.1.2 Post independence, Gurgaon as exception, and competing ideas of modernity

After formal decolonization and the partition of India in 1947, the state professed a socialist and anti-consumerist orientation and focused on industry development as a means for building a modern and independent India. However, and importantly, this idea of modernity

driven by the state also sat alongside continued negotiations of private corporations such as the DLF to further private enterprise and privatize urban development (Srivastava, 2014). It is essential, then, to consider these parallel and competing ideas of modernity and city-making in order to understand the evolution of Gurgaon as a city defined by gates and walls. Particularly, it is during this period of post-independence India, that the activities and perspectives of the centralizing state – with its emphasis on curbing consumption and corporate lobbying to promote consumerist modes of urban living – had a profound impact on Gurgaon as a space of ‘exception’ (Ong, 2006) and laid the ground work for the contemporary expression of gated community living in Gurgaon (Srivastava, 2014).

The DLF’s ability to continue to develop private colonies in the areas of South-East Delhi through working with the DIT came to an abrupt end in 1957 when the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) was created (Gururani, 2013; Srivastava, 2014). The DDA was established in response to a highly critical report about corrupt and inefficient operations of the DIT (Legg, 2007). The first task of the DDA was to centralize urban development in the region of Delhi and to create the first city masterplan (Legg, 2007; Srivastava, 2014). While the new masterplan for the city was being created, the DDA put a freeze on all development on vacant or urbanizable land within the limits of Delhi (Kacker, 2005). In this moment, the DDA became the only agency that was legally authorized to develop land, effectively putting an end to the small window that private developers such as the DLF navigated to gain rights to build property (Gururani, 2013; Searle, 2016). The DLF was forced out of Delhi and needed to look elsewhere for opportunity.

This was a crucial moment in the context for urban development in Gurgaon. While Delhi was the focus of the urban improvement project of both the colonial and immediately postcolonial era, Gurgaon remained neglected and excepted from government gaze. In the 1960s,

after two droughts and two wars, and changes in US food diplomacy during the Cold War, the Indian government launched a new agricultural policy termed the “Green Revolution” (Gururani, 2013). This policy reflected the Indian state’s idea of modernity at the time and focused on heavy investment in agricultural production of high yield crops. The state of Haryana was one of five states targeted for the Green Revolution, however Gurgaon was deemed unfit for (agricultural) development (reminiscent of the British characterizations of the landscape) because it was cut off from water supplies, had poor drainage, and limited possibility for effective irrigation (Gururani, 2013). Because the land in Gurgaon was deemed agriculturally unworthy, it remained excepted from land use policies that targeted the preservation and expansion of land use for agricultural purposes, and the conversion of agricultural to non-agricultural land in the area was relatively easy and facilitated by the government (Gururani, 2013).

It was at this disjuncture that DLF (and a few other large real estate corporations) began to treat Gurgaon as an area of exception through careful navigation of laws around land development and use. Particularly, large real estate developers such as the DLF were able to negotiate with state officials, manipulate regional maps, and convince the state to make tracts of land available for private development (the methods through which are detailed more thoroughly in Chapter 4). This was made especially possible because the city was controlled by a municipal council, which meant that development decisions were made by a chief minister (who had sole discretionary power to authorize development licences) located in the capital city of Chandigarh, 275km away from Gurgaon (Cowan, 2015; Gururani, 2013; Hiro, 2015). This arrangement lasted decades, and it is in this context that the DLF was able to assemble 3500 acres of urbanizable land in Gurgaon (Kalyan, 2017). The DLF also acquired its first licence to build residential

developments in 1981. Thus, the groundwork for the ‘Gurgaon model’ of private-led urban development was laid during this time.

1.1.3 Economic liberalization, exceptional development, and the fragmented gated city of Gurgaon

As India liberalized its economy in 1991 and began embracing global capital flows, Gurgaon quickly became aligned – through the mechanisms noted above – with new ideas of modernity pushed by the state. As the economic borders of India were reoriented towards integration with the global economy, the federal branches of government decentralized state sovereignty to local nodes of government and empowered cities to shift city organization to meet the imperatives of global capital (Cowan, 2015; Dupont, 2011).

Following economic liberalization, projections about population and economic growth were used by the state to shift government policy towards commercialization and privatization of various infrastructure and housing provisions (Searle, 2016). The state began to look to foster an environment that encouraged growth of housing markets (through facilitating more private sector involvement), rather than taking on the task of building the facilities itself (Searle, 2016). A few ways this took place was through the legalization of foreign direct investment in township construction (and allowing investment in real estate to proceed without approval from the government), and through the invocation of the Special Economic Zone policy in 2005 which helped to make large tracts of land available for real estate and corporate development projects by providing various incentives to developers and industry.

In Haryana – the state in which Gurgaon is located – the state pledged preferential land allotments for urban development projects targeting the IT sector (whether through call centres or other outsourcing facilities) and further relaxed already flexible land use conversion

procedures (Chatterji, 2013). In Gurgaon alone, the state approved the transfer of 9400 acres of land for private development of luxury gated developments, corporate parks, and special economic zones between 2005-2014 (Kalyan, 2017). The speed at which land was transferred, and that private developers were able to lead large waves of development targeted at attracting global capital investment, has had profound impacts on the landscape and infrastructure of the city (Chatterji, 2013; Kalyan, 2017).

The Haryana Department of Town and Country Planning was given the responsibility of managing and ensuring coordination between the public and private agencies building urban spaces, but in practice, land configurations and project phasing by the private developers tend to follow the logics of land they assembled rather than the planned strategies drawn up in the Gurgaon masterplan (Chatterji, 2013; Kalyan, 2017). Importantly, and while unprecedented urban development of corporate parks and residential enclaves was taking place after 2000, the Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon was not formed until 2008. At this point, and through various negotiations with and manipulations of the Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon, the DLF and other developers essentially have been “build[ing] the city from the ground up” (Goldstein, 2016, p. 6).

Private-led development of gated residential complexes, special economic zones, shopping malls, and corporate parks often pop up in ways that are fragmented from broader public developments. As a result, there were and are different speeds of development, where “the difference between the pace of private development and the pace of extension of city infrastructure by the public agencies aggravates the problem of disjointed growth, leading to private developments completed and sold to investor-residents well before public infrastructure services are in place” (Kalyan, 2017, p. 135).

The history and evolution of Gurgaon that I have just outlined above is important to consider, as this is the context in which GLD is building their Golf Gardens. It is also history that I will return back to at different points in this dissertation to contextualize the findings. Now, I turn to the theoretical approach(es) guiding this dissertation.

1.2 Theoretical Framing and Approach

In looking to open space for new ways of theorizing and understanding urban experiments in cities in the Global South, Ong (2011b) argues that it is essential to examine how an urban phenomenon can be unique to a particular localized context, while also being undeniably connected to global socio-political-historical relationships and structures. She asserts that the city in the Global South cannot solely be approached as a bounded container of (global) capitalism or a site for subaltern agency, instead suggesting that these approaches to investigating urban experiments are not mutually exclusive but are necessarily complementary (Ong, 2011b).

Using Ong's (2011b) arguments as a departure point, this dissertation draws on theoretical tools from political economic as well as postcolonial approaches to studying the urban. Through the research presented here, the goal is to combine and connect different theoretical tools and concepts in order to explore the implications and meanings of large-scale gated residential developments unfolding in Indian cities. In the discussion below, I first outline debates about political economic approaches to studying the city and offer a brief explanation of the political economic theoretical tools used throughout this dissertation. Following, I discuss postcolonial approaches to studying the urban, noting how this research is influenced by the idea of provincialization (Chakrabarty, 2000). While each chapter in this document draws on different

theoretical concepts (as will be explained later), the goal of this section is to contextualize the theoretical tools that I am drawing from and use together throughout this dissertation.

1.2.1 Political economy and spatial implications

Processes of globalization are often theorized through the concept of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is thought of as an economic and political project emerging after the Second World War, especially under the Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan administrations in the United Kingdom and the United States respectively (Brown, 2009; Harvey, 2006; Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2010). The 1970s and 1980s saw the rise in economic policies (especially in North America and the United Kingdom) that were associated with an increased emphasis on individual freedom and personal responsibility, a capitalist orientation of the market, the increasing role of the private sector and an associated change in or diminishment of government regulation (with the goal of ‘freeing up’ the marketplace), and a dismantling of social welfare systems (Brown, 2009; Harvey, 2006; Peck & Tickell, 2002).

Often, urban geographers employing a political economic framework to examine the city view capitalism and neoliberalism (as envisioned in and led by Global North-based organizations and countries) as the master driver of globalization. Under this perspective, cities tend to be viewed as nodes in an integrated planetary capitalism at the mercy of the implementation of neoliberal policies or practices that create hierarchies of cities across the globe, and work to splinter spaces within cities according to perceived value (Graham & Simon, 2002; Hardt & Negri, 2001; Ong, 2011; Sassen 2001). Many scholars examine economic regulations and how they result in ‘localized neoliberalizations’, whereby the investigation centres on how neoliberal policies achieve ‘model status’ and circulate and mutate between cities and places through

various policy networks (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck, 2015; Peck, Theodore, & Brenner, 2013; Peck & Tickell, 2002).

These political economic perspectives on the effects of neoliberalism and capitalism on the city – that emphasize how the state makes specific and calculated interventions (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Brown, 2009; Ong, 2006; Peck & Tickell, 2002) – have been critiqued for assuming that there are universal experiences and processes underlying capitalism and neoliberalism (Robinson & Roy, 2016; Roy, 2016; Sheppard, Leitner, & Maringanti, 2013). That is, according to critics, even if scholars are interested in examining how the deployment of neoliberal practices/policies results in uneven geographical development (Harvey, 2006), often cities/spaces in the Global South become conceived of, and reduced to, variants of a universal form originating from the Global North (Robinson & Roy, 2016).

With these critiques in mind, this dissertation draws on theoretical concepts and tools stemming from Ong's (2006) theorizations of globalization and neoliberalism and their implications for spatial arrangements, global relationships, and citizenship. Ong's (2006) approach to neoliberalism is especially useful for studying changes in spatial arrangements in India as she opens possibilities for analyses of the ways in which states in the Global South are impacted by broader macro-structural and macro-regulatory forces that shape global relationships between the Global North and South (Hardt & Negri, 2001; Peck et al., 2013; Peck & Tickell, 2002) – without reducing states or cities to being passive recipients of universalizing and globalizing neoliberal ideologies, practices or policies. Instead, Ong focuses on the agency of the 'entrepreneurial state' in the Global South and the calculated and deliberate decisions states make to invoke neoliberal policies. In doing so, Ong (2006) offers a nuanced theorization of neoliberalism and its impact on space by conceiving of neoliberal policies and practices as

malleable technologies of governing and governance that are taken up in different ways, by different regimes, with different impacts on varying populations.

In particular, in this dissertation I utilize theoretical concepts including hyperbuilding (Ong, 2011a) (Chapter 3), neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship (Ong, 2006) (Chapter 4), and the politics of aesthetics (Rancière, 2004) (Chapter 5) in order to explore the calculative deployment of neoliberal policies and strategies by the state to facilitate global flows of capital, the impacts of these policies on spatial arrangements and fragmentation, and how these policy shifts reconfigure relationships between the state and its populations (Ong, 2006). These specific concepts and their utility are explained briefly later in this introduction, and in further detail within the chapters in which they are used.

1.2.2 Postcolonial urbanism

Postcolonial approaches to investigating the city were born out of a frustration and skepticism of the ‘world’ or ‘global’ city models, with criticisms directed towards ethnocentric accounts of urban relationships and Western experiences (Robinson, 2002, 2006). Postcolonial urban theorists look for ways to disrupt understandings of cities in the postcolony as passive recipients of (exploitative) modernity, and have argued for the creation of new theories of the urban that are generated from the Global South instead of simply using theories generated from the Global North (Parnell & Robinson, 2012; Roy, 2009a). For example, Jennifer Robinson (2006) problematizes the ‘world city’ model of urban studies that assumes a binary between ‘Global cities’ and ‘Third World cities’, instead arguing that urban studies should flatten the hierarchies between cities and approach all cities as ‘ordinary’. This entails a rejection of seeing certain cities as originators of urbanism, and instead approaching urban difference as diversity

from the position that all cities are distinctive and not exemplars of any particular category (Robinson, 2006).

Another strand of postcolonial urban studies features work inspired by subaltern approaches to studying (urban) life in the postcolony. Scholars using this approach look to give voice to those silenced or marginalized through global capitalism, imperialism and colonial relationships, focusing on the agency of subaltern groups and how they resist, appropriate, and mobilize against forms of subordination. For example, scholars have written about the political agency of the urban poor through strategic engagements with the state to secure certain entitlements through acts of vote-bank politics (Appadurai, 2002; Benjamin, 2008; Chatterjee, 2004). Another focus has been on forms of informality, and how the poor, unpropertied, and dispossessed participate in economic activities outside organized labour forces (Bayat, 2007; Benjamin, 2008; Chatterjee, 2004; Gibson-Graham, 2008; Gidwani & Reddy, 2011).

Postcolonial urbanism has been critiqued by scholars such as Scott and Storper (2015) and Peck (2015) for privileging the proliferation of case studies of the particular that are positioned in contrast to cities in the Global North or as exceptions to hegemonic processes such as neoliberalism. As Peck (2015) argues, while postcolonial critiques of ‘over-generalized’ theories have undoubtedly opened the field of urban studies to different lines of analyses, there is also a tendency of postcolonial critiques to equate political economy with universalism. This, according to Peck (2015), forecloses what might be points of connection between approaches to studying the urban. He asserts that presuming theoretical distance between urbanisms of the South compared to the North creates optical illusions as differences between places become over-privileged and highlighted. Similarly, Brenner, Madden, and Wachsmuth (2011) critique these approaches for neglecting or rejecting political economic processes that tend to diffuse

from the Global North and significantly impact processes and experiences of urbanization all over the world.

A response to such critiques has come from scholars such as Roy (2009a, 2011, 2016), Derickson (2015), and Leitner and Shepard (2016), who have advocated for the ‘provincializing’ of urban studies research. These scholars, drawing from arguments advanced by Dipesh Chakrabarty in his book, *Provincializing Europe*, assert that in order to transcend the dualisms between political economic and traditional subaltern/postcolonial approaches, urban researchers need to question and challenge taken-for-granted assumptions about what we think we know about the experiences in the postcolony, and question the applicability of conceptions or theories in diverse contexts (Leitner & Sheppard, 2016; Robinson & Roy, 2016; Roy, 2011a, 2016; Sheppard et al., 2013). For Derickson (2015), this means studying processes of urbanization in a manner that disrupts the narratives of capital and urbanization being constitutive, and opening space for the exploration of everyday life “as it shapes and is shaped by power structures, social relations, political economic processes, and geopolitical orders” (p. 654). For Roy (2016), a provincialized urban studies project is one that does not deny the globalization of capitalism, but instead adopts a perspective that sees historical difference and variation as both fundamental and constitutive forces in processes of (global) urbanization – while also tracing relationships between place, knowledge, and power (Roy, 2016). In this light, this dissertation is influenced by and follows calls to provincialize urban studies research.

In this way, I am also influenced by Dipesh Chakrabarty’s book, *Provincializing Europe* – especially his argument that a provincialization of Europe needs to take place through a recognition of alternative histories that precede colonization. Chakrabarty’s (2000) project is not one of cultural relativism that looks to reject ideas of modernity and concepts stemming from the

West (Chakrabarty, 2000). Instead, he argues that “European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes the task of exploring how this thought – which is now everybody’s heritage and which affect us all – may be renewed from and for the margins” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 16).

Chakrabarty makes a distinction between two histories, which he names ‘History 1’ and ‘History 2’. History 1, he posits, is the “universal and necessary history we associate with capital. It forms the backbone of the usual narratives of transition to the capitalist mode of production” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 63). History 2, on the other hand, are histories that do not necessarily “contribute to the reproduction of the logic of capital [but] can be intimately intertwined with the relations that do” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 64). History 2s are not pasts that are separate from capital, “they inhere in capital and yet interrupt and punctuate the run of capital’s own logic” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 64). To help explain the interrelationships between History 1 and History 2s, Chakrabarty documents how for mill workers in Calcutta, ideas of work are inseparable from religious identity. This, he argues, cannot be easily translated into dominant narrative of History 1 (capitalist production), as these often rely on explanations that are based on the necessity of secularity. For him, this is an example of an alternative form of modernity – one deeply related to History 1, but one that should not be interpreted as ‘lagging behind’. History 1 and History 2s are always in constant interaction whereby History 1 is always attempting to destroy the multiple and alternative possibilities that belong to History 2, yet there is nothing to guarantee the subordination of History 2s will ever be complete. Ultimately, Chakrabarty (2000) argues that:

History 1 and History 2, considered together, destroy the usual topological distinction of the outside and the inside that marks debates about whether or not the whole world can be

properly said to have fallen under the sway of capital. Difference...lives in an intimate and plural relationship to capital, ranging from opposition to neutrality (p. 65-66).

What makes Chakrabarty's approach particularly useful is his attempt to link (ongoing) histories, impacts, and legacies of colonialism and capitalism with alternatives that are not necessarily subsumed into these processes – meaning one can study resistances, responses, and alternative arrangements without foreclosing their relationships with broader macro structural-historical forces and institutions. Indeed, postcolonial approaches to the urban that are inspired by Chakrabarty allow for investigations into the interconnections in urban outcomes (i.e. gated residential developments), while also encouraging the possibility “to speak from elsewhere, to think otherwise, and...subtract from dominant narratives by seeking the limits of their force rather than feeding them with (conforming data)” (Robinson & Roy, 2016, p. 184).

Throughout the research presented in this dissertation, I draw on a variety of postcolonial theoretical tools and concepts as a way to challenge and destabilize dominant narratives of gated community developments. These include hybridity (Bhabha, 1994) (Chapter 3), informality (Roy, 2009b) (Chapter 4), as well as backgrounding and hyperseparation (Plumwood, 1993) (Chapter 5) – all of which will be discussed in further detail at different points in this dissertation.

1.3 Navigating This Document

It is at this point that I will outline ‘what is to come’ in this dissertation to help as you navigate through my discussion about my methodological choices and broad methods used throughout the research, presentation of three different studies that describe and contextualize distinct but related aspects of the imagination and development of the Golf Gardens, and a conclusion.

In Chapter Two, I present my methodology and discuss how I conducted a global ethnography (Burawoy, 2000) of GLD's Golf Gardens. I explain why this methodological approach is well suited for tracking the webs, flows, and networks between the key groups (i.e. consultants, developers, architects, city planners, land owners, etc.) involved in or impacted by the development of this space. I argue that the value in this approach is that it facilitates the exploration of how this gated community in Gurgaon is connected, disconnected, and how it reconnects to structures, histories, and groups beyond its specific boundaries – while also paying particular attention to the way this development this looks and is experienced from the perspectives of those who are differently positioned. Additionally, and in response to critiques of Burawoy's global ethnographic approach that note that it tends to confine explanations of a localized phenomenon as an example of transnational capitalism at work (with varying impacts and responses), I complement this methodological discussion with a postcolonial theoretical perspective. My aim in bridging these approaches together is to open ways to decentre dominant discourses of capitalism that may be inscribed through gated community developments such as this one.

In this same chapter, I also provide an overview of the broad methods used in my global ethnography. Specifically, I outline my use of observations, semi-structured interviews, and qualitative document analysis – and discuss tactics of data analysis. I then discuss issues of research ethics and the ethical-political commitments of my research. I conclude this chapter with a reflection on my positionality, the ways in which my racialized and gendered body and other markers of identity shaped this research by impacting who/what I was able to access and the decisions that I made in the field.

In Chapter Three – the first of three studies presented here – I investigate how the GLD Golf Gardens was imagined and conceived by executives of GLD, architects, and consultants – and how the gated community is promoted to potential buyers through various media outlets and sales personnel. Through analyzing the ways in which the GLD Golf Gardens is promoted and marketed, and taking seriously the ways in which ideas and histories associated with polo and golf are mobilized in the imagination of space, the goal is to explore how gated residential developments are ‘homegrown’ phenomenon – structures that are linked to global flows of capital and legacies of colonialism, but cannot be reduced to either of these explanations. Drawing on Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hybridity and Ong’s (2011a, 2011b) approach to studying Asian urban experiments through the idiom of ‘hyperbuilding’, I argue that gated residential developments such as this one are not reflective of new forms of urban colonialism, but instead forms of urban living that have been modified, reinvented, and reinterpreted in this particular context. I also consider the ways in which sport and leisure are utilized in the making of ‘everyday’ spaces, demonstrating the centrality of sport/leisure in the development of space outside of the ‘spectacular’ and temporary moments of mega events. This study serves as context, as well as a departure point for the two other studies that make up this dissertation.

The focus of Chapter Four – the second study of this dissertation – is on the strategies used by GLD to acquire land for their developments. This chapter details experiences of dispossession, resistance to (il)legal land acquisition, and responses by the state to such protests. Grounded in Ong’s (2006) theorization of neoliberalism as exception and her concept of graduated citizenship, combined with provincialized approaches to urban studies anchored by Roy’s (2016) concept of urban informality, I explore how (in)formal modes of governance differentially manage and discipline people and places through inconsistent applications of law. I

demonstrate how the strategies used by GLD were intended to compel individuals to sell land, as well as the specific ways in which developers bend and break land laws in the acquisition of development licences (and how the state directly facilitates these maneuvers). I also highlight how even though some were, and are, able to stake ‘legal’ claim to space through the production of ‘proper’ land ownership documents, the use of these records has proven to be ineffective – and that while resistance might temporarily shift the balance of power and stave off development, in some ways, these protests might contribute to the emboldening of the project of world class city-making as the courts find ways to justify them as ‘legal’.

In Chapter Five – the third study – I investigate the architectural and design decisions made by architects and executives of GLD in the development of the GLD Golf Gardens. I utilize Plumwood’s (1993) critique of the interrelationship between the ‘purification’ of nature and other modes of othering and domination alongside Rancière’s (2004) theory of the politics of aesthetics, to take seriously the politics of the architectural decisions in the design of the community and the particular *aesthetic* uses of golf to produce a sanitized environment. I also use these approaches to situate this analysis in colonial imaginations of civilized landscapes (and populations), and contemporary politics of urban beautification. I demonstrate how architecture (re)produces and normalizes an aesthetic sensibility predicated on exclusionary practices, despite the fact these spaces are created and maintained by those who are deemed ‘not to belong’.

These three chapters (Three, Four, and Five) are presented as stand alone, independent studies, with each differing enough to be considered on their own terms. As such, they are structured to be read as individual manuscripts, and as a result of this there some repetition between the chapters. In some cases, and as will become clear, different chapters will draw on similar literatures or theoretical concepts, and each of the chapters is contextualized with similar

explanations of the methodological approach (while still highlighting differences in focus or data featured).

However, at the same time, they are also intended to be read together as each chapter is inextricably linked to one another. The dissertation, and the studies presented within it, are organized with these connections in mind. While focused on one development, each chapter represents a different economy of scale in some way. Chapter Three, the first study presented here, focuses on how the space developed by GLD was conceptualized and imagined, the ideologies that underpinned this particular development, and how these ideas were translated into marketable and marketed realities. Chapter Four, the second study, explores the forms of dispossession that enable the ‘imaginations’ presented in Chapter Three to become a reality through making the physical land available for such uses. Chapter Five, the third study, explores the product and environment that was ultimately created – a landscape that is deeply connected to, and born out of interactions between, the imaginations of space presented in Chapter Three and the politics of land use and development discussed in Chapter Four.

I conclude this dissertation with a discussion of the contributions and significance of this research in relation to literatures on sport and urban (re)development, economic liberalization and citizen/spatial relationships, and gated community developments. In this chapter, I also discuss the limitations of this research and provide avenues for future scholarship.

2. Methodology

In this chapter, I describe the overarching methodological approach for this dissertation. I first describe my use of global ethnography (Burawoy, 2000) to study the GLD Golf Gardens and explain how this approach is complemented by a postcolonial theoretical approach. I then discuss the research context and the specific methods employed throughout my dissertation – namely participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and qualitative document analysis. Following, I reflect on the ethical considerations for this research, my positionality and its impact on research access and experiences, and issues of translation.

2.1 Global Ethnography

The research conducted for this dissertation was guided by Michael Burawoy's (2000) notion of a 'global ethnography'. Burawoy conceives of global ethnography as a response to 'sedentary and perspectival' anthropological ethnographies that look at everyday life in an ahistorical manner and in bounded physical locations. Instead, Burawoy aims to use ethnographic methods to explore everyday life in ways that grapple with experiences that transcend community or national boundaries – investigating how the global is constituted in the local (Burawoy, 2000, 2001).

While offering a framework for studying globalization, Burawoy (2000, 2001) remains cognizant of issues associated with adopting approaches that universalize and conceive of globalization deterministically. For this reason, he offers three ways to conceptualize globalization. First, he argues that global forces are constituted at a distance – and that these forces are adopted, adapted, resisted, and negotiated locally. Second, he suggests that global forces are the product of social processes and relationships– arguing that such a view aids

researchers in exploring the flows of people, objects, goods, and ideas. Third, he suggests that there is value in interpreting global forces and connections as imaginative. By this he means that these forces/connections are mobilized by those in power with particular end goals in mind, but also by social movements seeking to resist these forces and related domination (Burawoy, 2001).

Burawoy's global ethnography is useful for the study of the development of gated residential communities in a variety of ways. This methodology provides a way to explore how the global is produced in the local through a chain of "(dis)connections and [through the] dissemination of ideologies" (2001, p. 156) – and how global forces and connections have a different look when viewed from different parts of the chain. This is in line with Pow (2011) and McGurik and Dowling (2009), who argue that gated communities are too often conceptualized as spaces bounded to particular areas, and thus advocate for research that attends to the connections of these places with broader social, historical, and structural (global) relationships. While certainly attuned to how these spaces are globally-oriented sites, Burawoy (2001) also argues that "global forces are the manufacture of powerful connections or disconnections" (p. 150) that are transmitted through inequalities between transmitter and receiver.

The insight that can be attained through a multi-sited approach to the connections, disconnections and reconnections is what makes Burawoy's methodology especially useful. Burawoy (2001) argues that studying different locations and positions remain essential, as studying how the global is produced in the local means studying the processes and implications of these projects from diverse perspectives. For example, the phenomenon of sport-branded community spaces will look different depending on the 'locales' one is situated in. In this dissertation, I explored the perspectives of the GLD executives/sales personnel, consultants, architects, lawyers, city planners, land aggregators, engineers, property brokers, and individuals

who had land acquired for this development. In this way, adopting a multi-sited approach as a way of studying different perspectives – from different ‘nodes in the chain’ – is not to contrast the perspectives from each site, but rather to build a montage that lends greater insight into the whole (Burawoy, 2000). That is to say, it is important to get a collective sense of how these different localities are connected, how they disconnect, and how they reconnect. Thus, and with Hayhurst (2016), I see a global multi-sited ethnography as a useful approach to exploring the interests of specific institutions or groups, and considering how these interests connect to other sites “up and down as well as beyond the global chain [where] they are interconnected (Burawoy, 2001, p. 158).

While Burawoy is especially helpful in conceptualizing processes of constitution, connection, and disconnection of various global flows, Hart (2004, 2006) suggests that Burawoy’s methodology does not specifically engage with issues of space. Hart (2006) argues that there is a tendency for Burawoy to conceive of “spaces of flows” and culture as sitting “in places” even as he looks to shift understandings between ‘local processes’ and ‘external forces’ (Hart, 2006, p. 994). While Burawoy (2001) admits that he is moving this methodological approach towards a more specific conceptualization of space, Hart (2006) looks to cement this leap through an explicit embrace of how particular spaces are produced through connections between objects, ideas, events, and ideologies. In her words, “particularities and specificities arise through *interrelations* between objects, events, places and identities; and it is through clarifying how these relations are produced and changed in practice that close study of a particular part can generate broader claims and understandings” (Hart, 2006, p. 996, emphasis in original). In this way, Hart (2006) offers a way to pay attention to the development and implication of these specific *places* by investigating how they are formed in relation to other

places, how the boundaries are socially constructed and contested, and how the specificity of a place arises from interrelations with what lies beyond its identifiable boundaries. In other words, the goal is not to compare pre-existing objects, places, or spaces, but instead to focus on *how* they are made in relation to one another.

I complement Michael Burawoy's methodology with a postcolonial theoretical perspective as postcolonialism is associated with a commitment to exposing the past and ongoing terrors of colonialism (McEwan, 2009; Mohanty, 2003). Adopting a postcolonial theoretical perspective to inform a global ethnography provides avenues to challenge, critique and decentre dominant discourses of capitalism and globalization that may be inscribed through development projects such as the one I study here (Hayhurst, 2016). Additionally, adopting a postcolonial theoretical approach that is inspired by Chakrabarty's (2000) project of provincialization opens space to explore the alternative ways of being and belonging that Burawoy hints at but does not fully develop in his explication of globalization. As Blok (2010) contends, regardless of Burawoy's assertions that his project is one that emerges from an interest in studying globalization from 'below', he still emphasizes that 'global forces' are felt in localities that either fight back, adapt, or are destroyed. Burawoy, according to Blok (2010), seems to already know which global forces (namely capitalism) are at work everywhere, despite issues of capital not necessarily being the only type of globality in transnational social relations. Thus, the goal of adopting a postcolonial approach was to help me to see these sport-focused gated communities as more than localized examples of transnational capitalism at work.

For example, in discussing possibilities for urban studies methodologies that are inspired by postcolonial approaches, Leitner and Sheppard (2016) argue that provincialization requires a serious engagement with "the monist core, challenging the seeming naturalness of its knowledge

claims, and questioning their core-like status by unpacking their own situated – provincial – origins” (p. 231). However, this does not mean only taking up the cause of “emergent genres of urban theory, ignoring the monist core” (p. 231). To Sheppard et al. (2013) the project of provincialization requires: a close engagement with the multiplicity of actors that are involved in and are affected by the production of urban processes, across sites, cultures, and histories; the utilization of field research to explore new ways of seeing that question the theoretical predispositions that accompany a researcher into the field; attention to the ways that agency is not simply rooted in the rational choices of specific actors or in the hands of powerful institutions/structures; a focus on situated knowledges of those most familiar with particular contexts through working with the variety of urban actors in fieldwork and theorizing; and, maintaining reflexive ethical-political commitments through constructing responsible relationships with those I interact with in my researcher role, and being reflexive about subjectivities and positionalities in relation to the topic of study. Thus, one can still adopt a political economic perspective that is simultaneously attentive to the relationships between place, knowledge, and power (Roy, 2016).

2.2 Research Context

The research for this study took place over two fieldwork trips to Gurgaon (30km southwest of Delhi). The first was between May 1 and August 1, 2017, and the second during December 2017. The majority of research took place in and around the GLD Golf Gardens, which is located on the southern periphery of the sprawling urban metropolis of Gurgaon (these locations are illustrated below in figure 2.1 and 2.2. respectively). The Golf Gardens is a 75-acre development built around a 9-hole ‘executive’ (i.e. shortened) golf course. It is primarily conceived as a

luxury residential community, but also has commercial outlets and other amenities for the use of residents. The development is split into two phases, with Phase 1 consisting of 16 condominium towers, and Phase 2 consisting of 6 condominium towers. The golf course is split between the two phases (holes 1 and 9 in Phase 1, and holes 2 through 8 in Phase 2). At the time of the first research trip, much of the Golf Gardens was still under construction – Phase 1 was nearing completion and Phase 2 was still being built. Some families had begun to take possession of units in Phase 1, and by the second research trip, Phase 1 was complete, and parts of Phase 2 were nearing completion.

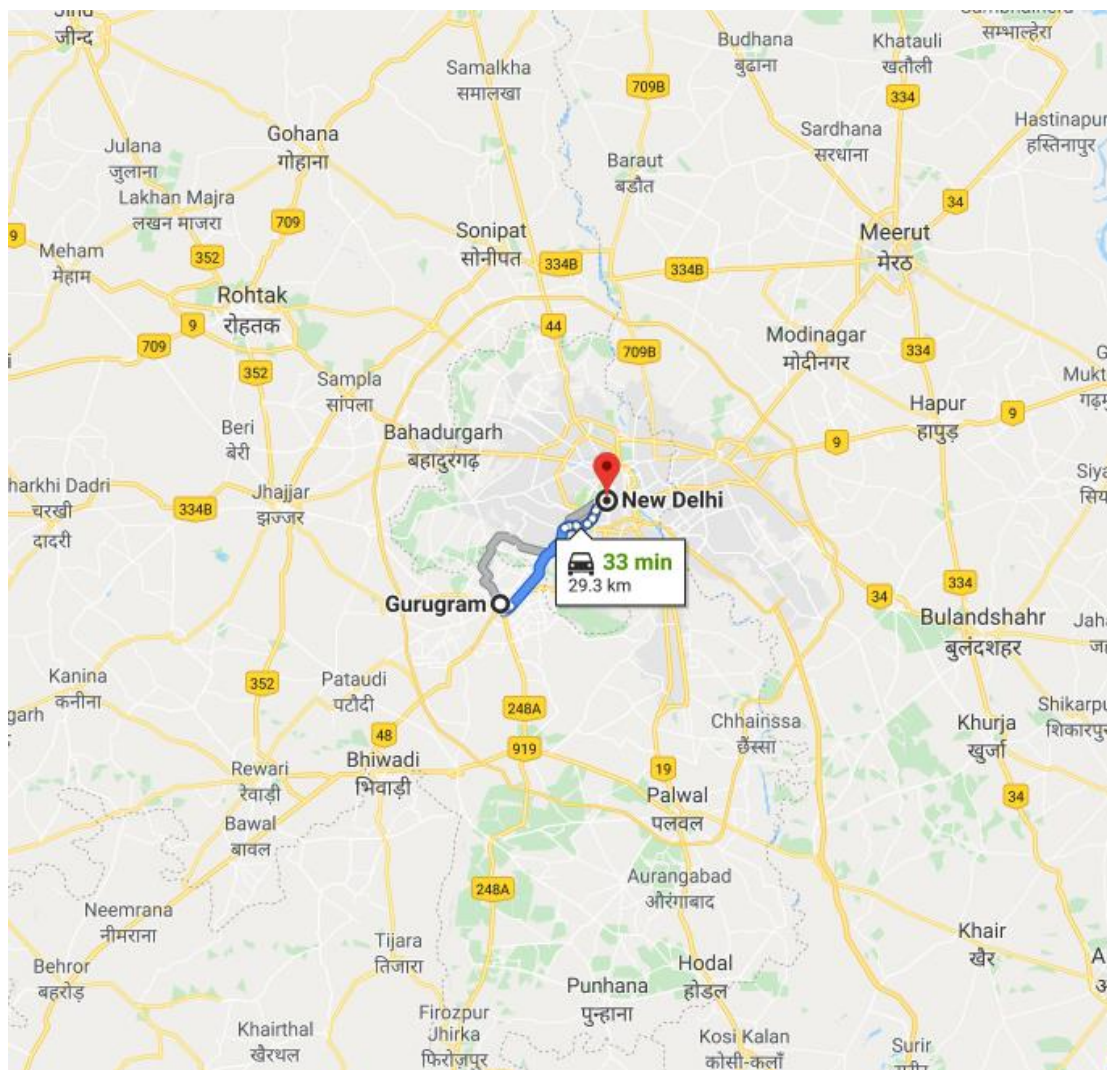


Figure 1: Map of Distance Between New Delhi and Gurgaon

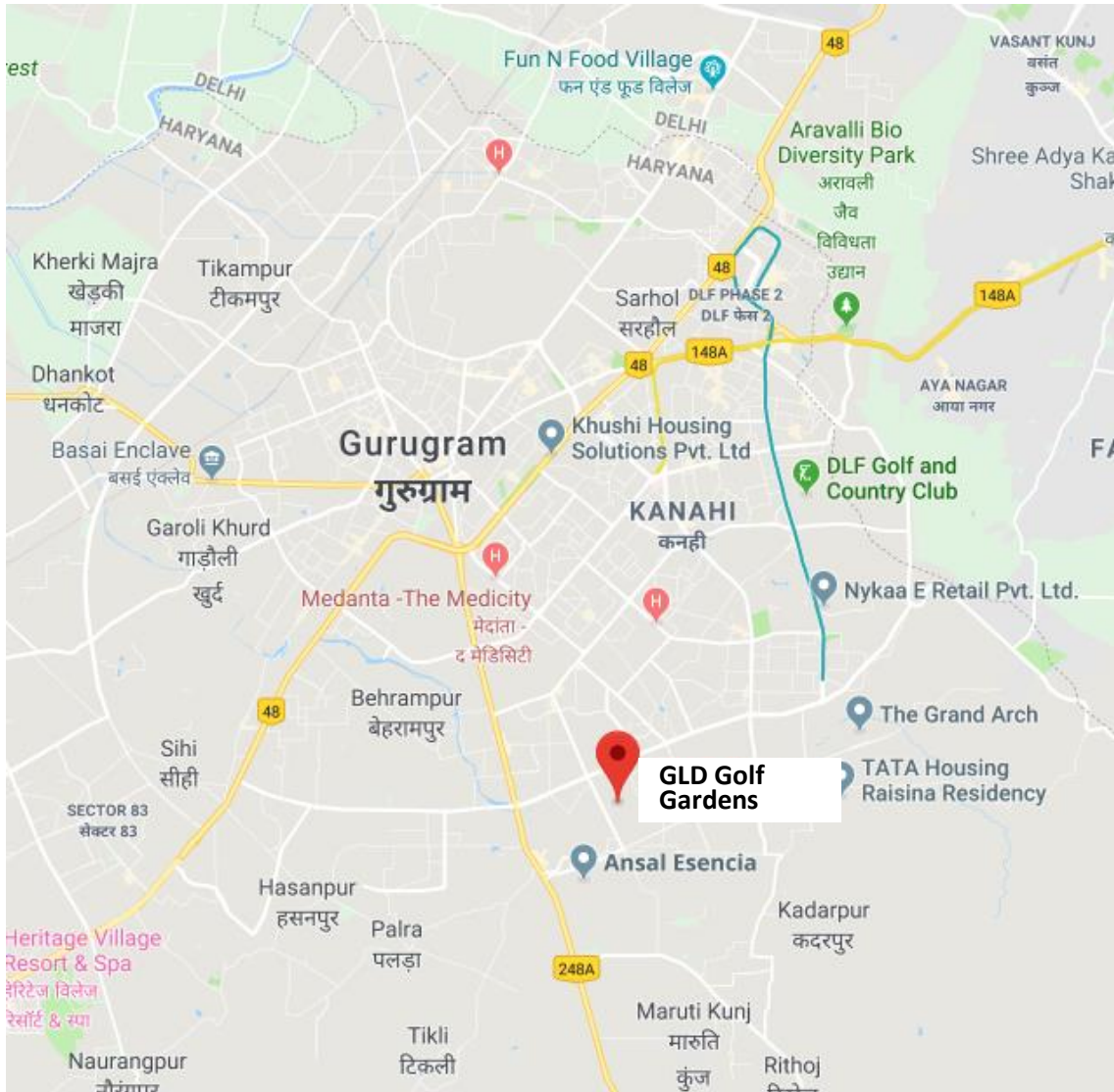


Figure 2: Map of Location of GLD Golf Gardens

2.3 Multiple Methods

As mentioned in the introduction, each of the ‘substantive’ chapters (Chapters 3, 4, and 5) can be read as stand-alone pieces, but can also be read alongside one another. In other words, each chapter is related to the others, and should be read with this in mind. Each of these chapters is informed by the same methodological approach. Below, I discuss the different methods used throughout the dissertation, provide an explanation of why these methods were employed, and

how they align with the theoretical framing of the dissertation. Each chapter also has a short method(ology) section in which I explain the nuances in the methods as they pertain to the focus of each specific chapter.

2.3.1.1 Observations and fieldwork

Observation is a common ethnographic technique that is helpful when gathering a range of data within a particular setting and to help gain a sense of everyday life/movements through space. At the outset, my intent was to rent a unit in the Golf Gardens and live within the community. Once I arrived in Gurgaon in May 2017, I quickly learned that this would not be possible as even though Phase 1 of the Golf Gardens had received an ‘occupancy certificate’ (a certificate issued by the Town and Country Planning Department that deems the development fit for use because of water, electricity, and sewage connections), a lot of the compound was still under development. This meant that only a few families had taken possession of their units and the majority of others were still ‘unfurnished’ (which in this case meant no fridge, stove, toilets, and other necessary amenities). Instead, I rented a room in a villa in a low-rise gated community on the other side of Golf Course Extension Road, on the southern periphery of Gurgaon – the closest I could get to the Golf Gardens in a place that would allow a temporary rental (about a five minute drive to the Golf Gardens gates). Unsurprisingly, this changed the trajectory of my research. I decided to then centre my intention on how the space was imagined, promoted, and designed – while also paying close attention to the way it was built, the aesthetics of the community, the deliberate use of architecture to make certain aspects and individuals visible at the expense of others, and the use of markers of sport/leisure in the creation of the gated community.

Observations were central to the research process, and the goal of this part of the research was to observe the actors operating in a variety of spaces (offices, in construction spaces, within the gates of the community, etc.) in order to explore the *processes* involved in the creation of the spaces, and how this place is made through connections and flows between different groups of people. I made many trips to the Golf Gardens over the course of my fieldwork. Sometimes I was accompanied on these field visits by individuals (i.e. GLD executives, architects, sales personnel, engineers/site managers) and sometimes I made visits alone. During these visits, I paid specific attention to how the spaces of the Golf Gardens are produced, managed, built; how space is allocated and used; the aesthetics of the community (i.e. how it is made to look, feel); the architecture; the role of sport/leisure brand/identities in the imaginations of place and how meanings associated with sport and leisure mark the design of the community; the (im)permeability of gates/boundaries; the layout of the floorplans in units I was allowed to visit; how the spaces were maintained and who did the maintenance; and spaces outside the gates bordering the Golf Gardens. I also paid particular attention to *how* the space was presented to me by different individuals who gave me tours: what was shown to me, what was deliberately hidden, who I was introduced to, what was emphasized in sales walk-throughs, how I was funnelled through the Golf Gardens (through golf cart tours), and how different individuals could enter/exit the property.

I also conducted observations outside and away from the Golf Gardens community in other locations. These included the executive offices of GLD and two different Real Estate conferences I attended (one hosted by GLD, the other by the real estate lobby). The GLD corporate offices were located within the grounds of the Golf Gardens, but at a separate part of the property. Here, I observed who entered/exited the offices, how the offices of GLD denoted

hierarchical relationships within the company, promotional materials scattered throughout the space, and the ways in which individuals managed meetings with me. The real estate conferences were held in two different locations – one at a luxury hotel in Gurgaon, the other at a luxury hotel in Delhi. I used these conferences to get a sense of the relationships between the executives of GLD and other executives of development firms, banks, and state officials. In both of these cases, I also used the conferences and meetings within the GLD corporate office to meet others in the company (or those who were working with GLD on their projects), to build rapport with potential interviewees and to contextualize semi-structured interviews and the document analysis methods that I outline below.

As Emerson et al. (2001) contend, “observation involves not only gaining access to and immersing oneself in new social worlds, but also producing *written accounts and descriptions* that bring versions of these worlds to others” (p. 352). With this in mind, I wrote qualitative field notes to describe what occurred during my observations, and I expanded on these field notes at the end of each day to further reflect and elaborate on what was observed and experienced. I made these written descriptions in my field notes as ‘thick’ as possible – charting descriptions of events, people, movements, images, conversations heard/overheard, as well as my own impressions and reactions to events and happenings that took place (Emerson et al., 2001). Together, these observations were meant to assist in grounding the global in the local (as described by Burawoy), but also how the flows of ideas/people/capital manifest in the making of place and space (Hart, 2008). For me, this meant writing three different kinds of fieldnotes daily. First, I wrote descriptive fieldnotes detailing conversations had and observations made. Next, I made a separate entry connecting these conversations and observations to other experiences, conversations, observations, and academic literatures. Third, I wrote fieldnotes describing my

embodied experiences, reactions, thoughts, and emotions relating to the research process and experience.

2.3.2 *Semi structured interviews*

I conducted semi-structured, open ended interviews with a variety of people who are involved in and impacted by the development of these spaces. This included executives from GLD (with various positions in the company) (n=8), architects involved in the design of the community structures and layout of the community (n=5), engineers working on the building of the space (n=2), lawyers involved in civil cases relating to the GLD Golf Gardens (n=2), property brokers selling residential units in Gurgaon (n=2), a consultant employed by GLD (n=1), city planners and officials (n=3), a land aggregator hired to purchase land from villagers/farmers (n=1), and individuals who had their land acquired to make way for GLD's developments (n=8). All of the individuals interviewed for this study were men – except for three women - which reflects broader themes around gender inequities within the real estate industry in India.

Because each of the different substantive chapters in this dissertation focuses on a different element of the Golf Gardens (i.e. the imagination/promotion of space, strategies of land acquisition/experiences of dispossession, and the use of architecture/aesthetics/design of space), each will feature different perspectives and interviews. In each of these chapters, I go into more depth about who was interviewed for that particular chapter, the focus and objectives of the interview, and how those objectives pertained to the study featured in the chapter. The intention is to get perspectives of those who occupy different positions in the development 'chain', which is essential for reasons outlined earlier.

I conducted semi-structured and open-ended interviews. Semi-structured interviews were used because this strategy ensures that there are systematic and consistent questions that attend to the research questions across each interview (Bryman, 2012). While ensuring consistency, this interview technique offers flexibility for a researcher interested in pursuing lines of inquiry that may emerge serendipitously (Bryman, 2012). When appropriate, interviews were recorded. When recording interviews was inappropriate (or not feasible) in the context in which they were happening, they were documented in my fieldnotes. All interviewees provided informed consent before participating (issues of ethics and anonymity will be elaborated later in this chapter). Interviews lasted between 30 minutes to two hours in length and a combination of purposive and snowball sampling were used for recruitment. Interviews took place in various locations of the participants' choosing and/or on the spot. The importance of the location of these interviews is discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

2.3.3 Qualitative document analysis

Observations were complemented by a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) of planning documents and promotional materials produced by GLD (e.g. sales books, Instagram, videos, websites), local urban and city planning documents/archives, advertisements of the development and related press releases, floorplans and architectural renderings, court proceedings and rulings, police reports, archival land ownership records, and news articles written about GLD and their developments. Altheide et al. (2008) describe QDA as a tool for “locating, identifying, retrieving and analyzing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning” (p. 128). QDA is ethnographic in nature as it requires the researcher to immerse themselves in numerous documents and examples while constantly comparing the documents to

each other, and to emerging themes in the search for new meanings (Altheide et al., 2008).

Considered an emergent methodology, QDA focuses on tracking discourses over time, over issues, and across different media – allowing for unanticipated themes to emerge.

For this study, the use of QDA is informed and inspired by theories and methodologies associated with contextual cultural studies. The role of cultural studies in research on sport and physical culture has been to understand the experiences of people and cultural texts and representations, within the broader context of political and economic structures (Hall, 1980; S. King, 2005). Millington and Wilson (2013) argue that QDA is especially appropriate for those that are interested in examining the processes through which particular meanings and representations (in documents) come to be privileged and taken-for-granted.

I complemented a cultural studies approach with that of archival anthropology. Stoler (2010) argues that it is too common in archival research to assume that there is a universal, seamless, and consistent power at work that informs the composition of documents of rule. In particular, she asserts that archival studies tend to remain more of an extractive rather than ethnographic enterprise – whereby documents are utilized in highly selective ways in order to confirm already assumed cultural claims (Stoler, 2002). For example, Stoler (2002, p. 99) emphasizes that critical approaches to colonial archives can be described through a commitment to “read against their grain” – to reconstruct colonial histories of resistance, silence, and refusal among the colonized “from the bottom up.” While gleaning important insights into documents that demonstrate technologies of rule and power, Stoler (2002) asserts that archival documents have too often been considered counterweights to ethnography instead of the site of ethnographic research. Instead, she suggests that it is essential to immerse oneself ethnographically into archives and documents of the state, and read ‘along its grain’ – which means, to “read for its

regularities, for its logic of recall, for its densities and distributions, for its consistencies of misinformation, omission and mistake..." (Stoler, 2002, p. 100). The aim of archival research, in Stoler's view, is to gain a more thorough understanding of uncertainties, contradictions and disagreements between those involved in the creation of documents (Stoler, 2010). This means paying attention to the "prose, style, repetitive refrain, arts of persuasion, affective strains that shape 'rational' response, categories of confidentiality and classification, and not least, genres of documentation" (Stoler, 2010, p. 20), and not just to the content of the documents themselves. In this way, it is possible to more thoroughly investigate the power in the production of the archive itself (Stoler, 2002).

Ultimately, I am looking to combine and connect the data from the sources outlined above through processes of 'articulation'. Articulation is both a theory and a methodological practice – and is described as a way of contextualizing the object of one's analysis, and at the same time, considering what is 'expressed' through the object, and how it is expressed (Slack, 1996). Context, in this case, is not something that exists *out there* and something that shapes practices (Slack, 1996). Rather, articulation within a contextual cultural studies framework suggests that "identities, practices, and effects generally, constitute the very contexts within which they are practices, identities or effects" (Slack, 1996, p. 125). Therefore, I look to articulate my data as a way of making sense of how these sport/leisure residential complexes are built, promoted, imagined, lived, and negotiated – and how these spaces are connected to forces and flows beyond their specific boundaries. That is, articulation directs attention to links between these spaces, and the broader contexts in which they are produced and experienced. As Grossberg (1992) describes: "Articulation links this practice to that effect, this text to that

meaning, this meaning to that reality, this experience to those politics. And these links are themselves articulated into larger structures” (p. 54).

2.4 Ethical Considerations, Reflexivity, Research Reflections, and Access

In this section I discuss issues of research ethics, reflect on my positionality, access, and the research process. I group these three themes together in this section because I feel it is difficult, if not impossible, to separate ethical considerations from my experiences in the field, how my positionality impacted the research process and who I got access to – as well as how I was impacted by the research.

2.4.1 Ethical approval

This study was approved by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board at the University of British Columbia (certificate number: H17-00915-A001). I was also affiliated with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras during my research, but the University does not have a research ethics review board, so I used the research ethics approval from the University of British Columbia during my research in India. That said, my host supervisor, Dr. Mathangi Krishnamurthy, reviewed and approved my research proposal and together we discussed issues of ethics and the research processes.

All research participants read or were told about the study’s objectives, procedures, and potential risks before participating in the study. I emphasized that participation in the study was completely voluntary and that each participant could refuse to partake in any part of the study and/or withdraw at any time, without penalty. Also, because this study required access to the private property of the Golf Gardens to conduct observations, consent was obtained from GLD

executives to enter and view the spaces. In a similar manner, the goals of the study, as well as the particular focus of the observations were emphasized during the consent process, and it was made clear that consent to access any of the spaces within the Golf Gardens could be withdrawn at any time.

All participants were anonymized using pseudonyms and all identifying information was removed from the data collected in interviews. Individuals are broadly identified by their place of work or belonging (i.e. GLD executive, architect, consultant, farmer, land aggregator) and not their specific position or name. Additionally, the development firm and the name of the community development was anonymized through the use of pseudonyms. Any photographs I took did not include individual faces, and if any identifying features or clothing were present, they were blurred to maintain anonymity. Images were also redacted to hide any brand features of the community that would identify the developer by name.

2.4.2 Ethical commitments, research access, reflexivity, and reflections

Issues of ethics go well beyond institutional approvals and technical discussions. In particular, it is essential to acknowledge the colonial legacies embedded in ethnographic studies. As Said ([1978] 2014) emphasizes, ethnographies are deeply implicated in colonial technologies of representation and domination. In his acclaimed book, *Orientalism*, Said ([1978] 2014) highlights how a formalized study of the ‘Orient’ worked to consolidate specific ways of seeing, thinking, and knowing that contributed to the perpetuation of colonial power. He argues that Orientalism (the study of the Orient) worked to physically demarcate a geographical area whose people and characteristics colonizers were supposedly free to study, represent, and produce knowledge about at will. Said asserts that despite claims that studies were rooted in ‘objectivity’,

the result was that the knowledge produced worked to construct the Orient as distinctly ‘Other’ and inferior to those located in the Occident.

Writing in a different context, Smith (1999) argues that ethnographic studies have often aimed to discover, extract, appropriate and distribute knowledge (p.61). She asserts that “the ethnographic ‘gaze’ of anthropology has collected, classified and represented other cultures to the extent that anthropologists are often the academics popularly perceived by the Indigenous world as the epitome of all that is bad with academics” (p.70). Indeed, the very act of invading a specific population or locality in order to better understand what is done in their space continues to have colonial implications (Hayhurst, 2016; Li, 2007; Smith, 1999). Burawoy (2001) attempts to move away from the problematics associated with anthropological ethnographies by emphasizing that a global ethnography seeks to examine global forces, connections and imaginations from the standpoints of those located at various intersections.

One way I have tried to navigate these ethical concerns with ethnographic research is by grounding my dissertation in postcolonial theoretical perspectives. Using postcolonial theoretical perspectives necessitates postcolonial ethical commitments. Recognizing the colonial implications of ethnographies, Gonzalez (2003) outlines four ethics that underpin a postcolonial ethnography: accountability, context, truthfulness, and community. Accountability is taken literally by Gonzalez to mean the ability to account, to tell a story. This means “the telling of *our* story, of how we came to know the ethnographic tale...explain[ing] how we know what we know...” (Gonzalez, 2003, p. 83) and the decisions and actions that were made while engaging in ethnographic research. Context is about engaging in open-eyed mindfulness to the political, social, environmental, physical, and emotional surroundings of the story. Truthfulness means to see beyond what is in one’s social and environmental context to see what is not visible. It means

adopting a decolonial voice, recognizing the colonial imperatives and “rather than fighting against them, daring to speak... in spite of them” (Gonzalez, 2003, p.84). An ethic of community implies that the ethnographic tale cannot be separated from those with whom the story was shared and created with. Ultimately, in a postcolonial ethnography, all four ethics are inseparable and interwoven together and necessary in the move towards an ethical ethnographic study (Gonzalez, 2003).

There are additional ethical considerations that must be addressed in regards to my positionality as a researcher studying spaces in India. As Benson and Nagar (2006) highlight, positionality is a critical concept and practice to help address questions of voice and authority. Reflecting on work by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Kapoor (2004) argues that a researcher must be vigilant and hyper-self reflexive about one’s complicities in order to open up possibilities for ethical encounters with subaltern groups. This helps to contextualize the claims we make as researchers and to reduce the risk of “personal arrogance or geoinstitutional imperialism” – moving one towards a non-hierarchical encounter. Being reflexive of one’s privilege, complicity, and positionality is combined with “unlearning one’s privilege as loss” (Kapoor, 2004, p.641) – casting a keen eye on the taken for granted. This is not simply an attempt to “benevolently step down from one’s position of authority”, as this would work to reinforce privilege. Instead, the project is retracing and explicating the history of one’s prejudices and working to unlearn “dominant systems of knowledge and representation” and “learning to learn” (coming to terms with difference and agency, and being ready to accept unexpected responses) (2004, p. 641). Additionally, Kapoor (2004) notes that there needs to be a commitment to work without guarantees. Working without guarantees means “reckoning with the impossibility of knowing [the Other], accepting that it exceeds our expectations” (Kapoor, 2004, p.644).

Ultimately, my ethical stance and commitments are aligned with those put forward by Andrews and Silk (2015) in their explanation of the physical cultural studies project as one that is reflexive towards the institutional, societal, and historical conditions through which research is produced. Drawing on their work, I aspired to explore ways of challenging power structures and relations through a transdisciplinary, political, and self-reflexive study. Using a provincializing approach inspired by Chakrabarty (2000), my goal was to work to inhabit rather than discard epistemological problems of Eurocentrism, while recognizing the possibility of a variety of truths. This means thinking hard about who I am, the institutional baggage I bring with me, and working to understand and question the assumptions and biases I have. What I have written in this dissertation, I hope reflects this attempt, recognizing this is always ongoing, messy – and acknowledging at times, I also failed.

2.4.3 Reflexivity, access, and the politics (and realities) of research

This section is an attempt to reflect on my positionality and engage in the hyper-self reflection that Kapoor (2004) rightly argues is essential for ethical ethnographic research. Following Gonzalez (2003), the intent here is to ‘account’ – to explain and contextualize the decisions that were made in the research process, who it is that is featured in this research and why, and how it is I came to report what you will read in my dissertation in the way I do (i.e. the ‘truths’ at play). This does not mean simply stating my social location – as a white, middle-class, English speaking, cis-gender female from Canada, and conducting graduate research through a North American institution – as I do not think these forms of acknowledgements are enough to question the various forms of entanglements that arise from conducting ethnographic research in a postcolonial setting. At the same time, as Gillian Rose (1997) observes, as many advocate

(rightly) for the centrality of the use of reflexivity as a tool to understand and unpack how knowledge is situated, scholars also note that there is difficulty in “actually doing it” (p. 306). Admittedly, the impact of my positionality on the research, as well as myself, continues to feel uncomfortable and even narcissistic. This is far from my intention. My hope is to try and be transparent and honest about the complexities/contradictions inherent in the research process, as often the day-to-day experiences that greatly impact research decisions are often left out of methodological accounts.

I will start by saying that, in many ways, I am the limit to this research. If this project had been undertaken by someone else – say a white male, an Indian male, or an Indian woman, or any other person with a social location different to my own – the contents, focus, and findings reported in this dissertation would undeniably be different. In some cases, my positionality opened doors to access those involved and connected to the development of the community that others might not. My gender – as it intersected with my whiteness, and age – had a significant impact on shaping who, where, and how I was able to get access to different people and spaces, and greatly influenced the processes/politics of my research. In particular, and as I will discuss below, my white, young, English-speaking, and female identity granted me access to elite Indian men involved in this development for largely three different, yet related reasons – I was seen as unthreatening and innocent, I was seen as an object of desire, or I was seen as a way for elite men to reinforce their status. I also want to be clear that these three reasons did not define *all* of my encounters through the research process, but definitely shaped most of them.

2.4.4 *Unthreatening and innocent*

It is important to begin with how my study got ‘going’, as it is illustrative of the many ways that my research was shaped by my positionality. Shortly after I arrived in India and was settled in Gurgaon, I learned of a real estate investment conference that was being hosted by GLD in conjunction with NAREDCO - the National Real Estate Development Council – a nationally powerful lobby group focused on real estate interests. I looked up the event and saw that it was posted publicly on Facebook. The post included the location and timing of the conference, but no information on how to register or the cost of attendance, so I decided I would try to attend not knowing what would happen. It was being held at an incredibly ornate and luxurious hotel on the border of Gurgaon and Delhi. When I arrived, I was greeted by a hotel staff member inquiring about what or whom I was looking for, and I mentioned I was looking for the Invest Haryana conference. I was then personally escorted to the check-in desk six floors up. When I got to the registration desk, I asked if I could attend the conference and explained that I had seen information for it online. The man behind the desk looked at me inquisitively and then left for a while before coming back to ask me if I had registered and paid the fee. I admitted that I had not but that I was a researcher from the University of British Columbia studying Real Estate Development in Gurgaon, with a particular focus on GLD. I also handed to the man the information sheet for my study. He read it and turned back to me, looking me up and down, before asking (rhetorically) what interest ‘a young girl like me would have in these complicated matters of Real Estate’. He turned away and took the document to another man who appeared to be a supervisor, and who I later learned was the director of NAREDCO, before I could answer and came back with a name tag that was printed for me on the spot with the designation

‘attendee’. As I walked away, without being asked to pay the fee, he told me that he hoped that I would learn something and to ‘have fun’.

The minute I walked up to that desk, I quickly learned that I should not have been granted entry if any kind of formal criteria were adhered to. The programme was on the table, with the speakers being CEOs of major development firms, heads of investments of key international banks and hedge funds, and state officials, and it appeared that those in attendance were limited to members of the real estate elite. And yet, at the same time, I was allowed in (as intimated in my exchange with the man at the registration desk) because I was seen as non-threatening – non-threatening because of my white, young, and female identity. Undeniably, these markers of identity afforded me a great deal of privilege here and elsewhere throughout my research site. The minute I went inside, it was all the more apparent that I did not belong there. I was one of less than 5 women, the only white woman, and one of two white people (the other was a speaker and manager of a major hedge fund), and unsurprisingly, as a result I was the focus of a lot of intense and curious stares.

At one of the refreshment breaks, I was approached by a man who introduced himself to me, shook my hand, and immediately asked me who I was and what exactly I was doing there. He handed me his card and I learned that he was the founder and CEO of a consultancy firm. As I explained my research interests to him, he interrupted me and told me that he is, in fact, a consultant for GLD. He said he could easily help me achieve my research objectives, introduce me to other pertinent individuals, and told me to come meet him at his office the next day. For the rest of the refreshment break he pointed out all the people in the room who might be able to assist me, telling me what they did, their names, and other important information. I was incredibly grateful for his help, and thanked him for his time. He responded by saying it was no

problem and he liked having the opportunity to ‘teach me about how things work here’. He too approached me as a young, naïve woman who would not necessarily be able to understand the practices of real estate development. While this of course is in part true, he had insight into GLD and the real estate context of the region that I definitely did not, our relationship was defined by a patriarchal (and at times) condescending structure that reflected his belief that he could ‘teach’ me ‘a thing or two’ (in his words). This man was central to the research process. He acted as a key gatekeeper by setting up meetings with top-level executives of GLD, city officials, architects and other elites that I would likely not have been able to get access without his help.

My relationship with him was also similar to that of some of the other men in my research who perceived me as someone who needed to be properly taught, and the vernacular of our interviews reflected this relationship. Many men would comment on my age, that I was a woman, and therefore they could help teach me about practices of real estate because this world must seem so confusing and complicated to me.

2.4.5 *Object of desire*

When I was preparing to leave for fieldwork, I asked a few of my colleagues (both men) who had also done ethnographic studies for some advice on how to ‘get access’ to groups of interest. These individuals told me that the best advice they had was to ‘always say yes’ – if a group is going for dinner or drinks, if you are invited out to an event, or asked to join for social situations, always say yes. This, for them, was the best way to build relationships and start to learn about the context in which they were working. However, I quickly learned that I could not always say yes, as some men encountered in my research seemed to approach me as a potential intimate partner or sexual object.

I will provide one pertinent anecdote to explain this. One GLD executive I met suggested we meet at 7pm near the offices to have a more formal interview after his workday was over. We agreed to meet close to his office location. He sent me an address of where to meet, and asked me where I was coming from, and I left to meet him in an Uber (the easiest mode of transport in that part of Gurgaon). The ride was taking longer than expected and he sent me a message asking where I was. It was not uncommon for drivers in Gurgaon to ignore the Uber mapping software because the use of ‘typical’ addresses was uncommon - most things were referenced by landmark or by sector name - and because it was outdated or didn’t accurately reflect the road arrangements. Up to that point, I had travelled without incident, and did not think much of us taking a different route than the one prescribed by the Uber maps.

The GLD executive I was meeting messaged me and asked if I could ‘share’ my ride with him (that way he could track where I was going). After receiving the live update of my Uber journey, he called me immediately, asking me to put him on the phone with the man who was driving the car. I pass the phone over, and listen as this GLD executive and the driver get into a heated yelling match in Hindi before the driver threw my phone to me in the back seat. He had ended the call, but the GLD executive had messaged me and said that “everything was ok now. the driver was not taking u to the right place. U are safe now, I changed the location. Not to worry, now meeting at Machan, restaurant public place” (text message, May 13, 2017). Up until that point I did not realize that I was in a potentially unsafe situation: there is no way to know what would have happened – it is entirely possible it was a misunderstanding with the driver. In Gurgaon, it is less common for ‘foreign’ women to travel via Uber, taxi or similar transportation as most located there work for multinational companies and part of their employment package tends to include a personal driver. At the time, there had also been a few high profile news

reports about sexual assaults that had taken place by Uber and Ola (Uber's competitor) drivers on local women, so there was a heightened awareness of potential gender-based violence that many people I encountered continued to warn me about.

We went on to have a nice, professional interview and conversation while eating dinner, and I left that night feeling a mix of insecurity about being in potential danger, and gratefulness to him for being vigilant, if this were the case. This moment had a significant impact on how and when I moved through the city and what time of day I agreed to hold meetings.

I followed up with him to have another interview a few weeks later as I had learned some more things about what GLD was up to and was hoping to get some clarification. He agreed, and we scheduled a meeting at the same spot on June 16, 2017. At the end of the meal as things were winding down, he turned to me and said (direct quote) "I would like to fuck you tonight". I felt alarmed and also thought back to how safe I had felt after he carefully navigated a situation to ensure my safety from a potentially uncomfortable or dangerous encounter. Other thoughts ran through my head such as, 'this man is an important contact and gatekeeper', 'what will he do when I say no', 'how do I diffuse the situation to preserve our professional contact', and others. In the end, and because I was unsure about what would happen next, I attempted to deescalate by laughing it off. He responded by pressing the subject, and I tried to explain that I wasn't interested, not least because this is a professional relationship, while also telling him I was flattered (trying not to anger him). He kept pushing further, saying it didn't matter, we could have fun, we were friends, and "women like me from America fuck all the time, so why not him too". He continued to ask if I was turning him down because I didn't find him sexually attractive or if I was too snobby for a man like him. In the moment, I felt no option but try to protect his ego (i.e. assuring him he was not unattractive, lying and saying in different circumstances maybe

things would be different even though I knew they wouldn't). He eventually backed down, and given the circumstances, I never contacted him to meet or for assistance.

I also, under similar circumstances, with another man, got invited on a water-rafting trip with his all male friend group from the GLD organization. Again, sensing that saying 'yes' might give an impression of intimacy I was not interested in, I said no, and I did not follow up with him to have another formal interview. Some others asked me out formally on dates, or sent me daily photos of flowers (similar Valentine's notes with Cupid's bows) via text message, or messages talking of my beauty and wishing for me to have a good day.

2.4.6 Used to portray status

In other cases, the elites featured in this study appeared to grant me access, while also looking to use me as a young, white, woman to 'show' off to their colleagues, competitors, or other friends. For example, one of the high-level executives requested that I meet him at his home at a high-end luxury condominium development (where he gave me a tour of the grounds and the clubs). Along the way he stopped to introduce me to everyone he encountered, always emphasizing where I was from, that I was interested in learning more about his work and his developments, he was humbled that I felt that he could teach me, and that people in North America will learn more of his work. In another example, I met an executive of NAREDCO at his home, who also happened to be the CEO of a large development firm. He offered to arrange for one of his employees to give me a tour of all of their different development projects, including ones currently under construction. I agreed, even though this company was not GLD, I wondered if it would have some relevance, and because it felt rude to say no in this context. What I thought was a tour (and it mostly was), was also apparently a photo and marketing

opportunity. There was a camera crew that followed us around as the chief engineer explained the different elements of the development to me. These images later became published in a magazine (without my consent) produced by this company looking to generate sales for their new projects. In this publication, photos of me visiting the sites was accompanied by claims that an individual from a Canadian university came out to see the magnificent work of this development firm and was impressed with the level of construction and amenities on offer.

2.4.7 Other issues of (perceived) safety

In my research proposal, I had initially intended to try to feature the voices of the dispossessed and excluded. While one of my dissertation chapters ended up being about this topic, I was not able to feature as many voices and experiences as I had hoped. This is largely due to two reasons, one of which I will detail here, the other is discussed later. First, in July, with the help of the consultant I met earlier on, I was scheduled to meet with a high-level executive of GLD. However, on the day of the meeting, this executive called me to cancel abruptly. Not even 10 minutes later, I got a call from the consultant demanding I come meet him immediately at a hotel in Gurgaon where he was for other meetings.

Confused, I headed over there right away and we met in the lobby. I told him the meeting with the executive was suddenly cancelled, but that I had really hoped that we would be able to reschedule and I asked about how to go about doing that. After letting out a long sigh, the consultant explained that he knew it was cancelled and that's why he asked for us to meet. We then, it seemed, started to play a game of twenty questions. It first started with him asking me if I read the news, then if I read American news, and then more specifically the Washington Post. I answered honestly – of course I read the news, while at home I often read American news outlets

but while in India I've been reading local newspapers, and that I get email alerts for the Washington Post but haven't read much of the publication since I've been in Gurgaon. He seemed unconvinced and went on to say that he trusted me with important and proprietary information, and that him (and the others) believed who I was, until they decided they didn't anymore.

I was completely unaware of what he was talking about, so I asked him to explain more. In our first meeting, he had told me that GLD had entered into an agreement with the Trump Organization to build two towers in the Golf Gardens. At the time, the deal was not publicly released (it was officially announced in January, 2018), and he told me that I was not allowed to disclose any information about the deal and that the information he gave me was for my own interest (not for research purposes). I agreed, and did not bring it up in conversation with any others I met. However, the day that I was supposed to meet this high level executive, a journalist from the Washington Post (who is female) had published an article about Trump's real estate practices and partners in an attempt to demonstrate shady/illegal land development practices. This article named GLD as a specific partner in the article. I had not seen or read the article, but the consultant after telling me about it, accused me of being this journalist (and that I was posing as a graduate student from Canada).

I did my best to make clear that I was, in fact, who I said I was, and that while of course I find Trump interesting, his dealings are not the direct focus of my research. He followed up with sharp and not-so-subtle threats about them being able to track me, follow me, see my research and make sure that I 'am staying in line'. The initial meeting with the executive was rescheduled and we met two weeks later – which I presume, to a degree, was so that GLD could continue to 'verify' who I was.

To be honest, I was quite scared and shaken after this encounter. I immediately went back to my apartment and backed up all the information on my computer, while password protected and encrypted, to two separate hard-drives that were also encrypted and kept separately from my computer.

After this moment, during this particular trip to the country, I also made the decision not to pursue any attempt to locate those who had been dispossessed off their land to make way for the GLD developments. I made this decision because I was unsure about what kind of harm that would put me in (if I was, in the end, being followed), as well as the potential risks to those I was hoping to talk to. Neither of these risks I was willing to take. On my second trip to India, I did decide to follow through with my goals of talking to those who had sold their land to GLD. I did this on the second trip because I did not tell any of the GLD executives, including my gatekeeper, that I was returning to Gurgaon a few months later, and was staying in a different location.

2.4.8 A focus on elites and the embodied costs of (ethnographic) research

Through a discussion of the anecdotes above, my dissertation research tends to feature, though not exclusively, the voices and perspectives of differently positioned elites, which in part seemed to relate to my position as a young, white, North American, female. These were the individuals who I was able to gain access to. In some ways, that this research is able to speak to the perspectives and decisions made by those who designed, built, and imagined the spaces of the Golf Greens responds to calls by researchers for more work that ‘studies up’ (Becker & Aiello, 2013; Desmond, 2004; Herod, 1999; Holmes & Marcus, 2005; Morris, 2009). These scholars argue that research, particular those relying on ethnographic methods and interviewing,

tend to focus on those who are deemed to be ‘underprivileged’ in a variety of ways instead of the powerful (Becker & Aiello, 2013). Interviews and ethnographic data that focus on the position and influence of a relatively small group of people is relatively rare because of difficulty accessing these groups, privileges they are afforded, and protections around these individuals and organizations (Delaney, 2007; Rice, 2010). In this way, the research presented in this dissertation sits alongside other important contributions by scholars such as Ghertner (2015), Searle (2017), and Bjorkman (2015), by providing insights into the decision-making processes in the design and planning of this community, specific strategies used to acquire land for development, as well as the ideologies and aspirations that influenced the creation of this space.

At the same time, throughout the research process I continued to struggle with questions about how/why I was granted this access. As Hanson and Richards (2019) note, so often in the discussions of positionality in ethnographic research, women tend to ‘sanitize’ our accounts, wiping them clean of experiences of harassment, sexual assault, fear, or various threats of violence. These experiences, they argue, drawing on Joan Fujimura, becomes ‘awkward surplus’ – they are difficult and risky to fit into narratives about findings and theoretical framings, and become cut in efforts to feature the ‘real’ data (Hanson & Richards, 2019). Writing these embodied experiences out of the research, despite the fact that these encounters often powerfully shape the research processes and outcomes, reproduces:

A concept of validity inherited from an androcentric, positivist, and colonial pasts that obscures the embodied nature of fieldwork...[and] encourages researchers to adhere to a homogenized narrative of data collection. This narrative conceals the multiple paths ethnographers take to collect their data. (Hanson & Richards, 2019, p. 12).

Reflecting on the above, this is an attempt at what Wanda Pillow (2003) calls ‘uncomfortable reflexivity’ – a discussion of the uncomfortable and unfamiliar instead of recounting

positionality in more palatable and typical ways. What is presented in this dissertation emerged from experiences and interactions shaped by the bodies (mine and others) that engaged in the research (Hanson & Richards, 2019).

Kimberly Hoang (2015), reflecting on her experiences conducting ethnographic fieldwork in the field of sex work, discusses the embodied costs of her research experiences. Particularly, she notes how she often had to perform acts of ‘submission’ and ‘subservience’ to powerful men (i.e. ignoring being touched without consent, being subjected to comments about her appearance, needing to present herself in ways that appealed to the desires of men) were difficult to reconcile when she considered how differently she acted in ‘the field’ compared to the way she presented herself (and would respond to different kinds of sexual advances or comments) at home. Similarly, Hanson and Richards (2019), describe how female researchers often responded to sexual harassment, assault, and threats of violence with feelings of blame, failure, self-doubt, fears of reduced access, and reduced mobility.

My intent in discussing these various experiences is not to obfuscate how my ability to access these individuals and spaces is related to my position of privilege, which is also undeniably connected to colonial histories and legacies. Indeed, I was often able to walk through doors relatively unquestioned because of my whiteness (and femininity), whereas others, especially individuals of colour (female or male) would likely not have been afforded such easy mobility between and within these spaces.

At the same time, I also wrestled with these gendered and embodied experiences and ‘costs’ (Hoang, 2015) of fieldwork. The different reasons why I garnered access – perceptions of being unthreatening because I was a young woman who needed to be taught, as an object of sexual desire, and as a means to portray status – were difficult to reconcile as I navigated through

my fieldwork. In downplaying sexual advances and harassment or ‘playing into’ perceptions of me being unknowledgeable, I felt guilt, shame, and worries of different kinds of failure. I worried, as though I might not have been ‘correctly’ managing my sexuality or men’s desires (i.e. was I leading them on in some ways that I was unaware of?), and that because research participants perceived me as unthreatening/unknowledgeable that they also assumed my research would be uncritical (even though I was honest about my research objectives). I was unsure of the extent to which I might be ‘using’ my body/identity to facilitate my research.

As Cupples (2002) notes, our positionality is not just about how and what we feel as researchers, but also about how we are positioned by those whom we research. This makes it equally important to situate these experiences, and the reactions of individuals to me, in the broader postcolonial context in which this research took place. This means to question what my white womanhood specifically meant to, and for, this project – and how my racialized and gendered body influenced encounters with those I had in ‘the field’. As Sara Ahmed (2000) argues, every encounter “informs and is informed by the general: encounters between embodied subjects always hesitate between the domain of the particular – the face to face of this encounter – and the general – the framing of the encounter by broader relationships of power and antagonism” (pg. 8). By this she means that every interaction between ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ is shaped by not only what is happening in that particular moment, but also broader socio-political histories and ‘assumed’ knowledge of who ‘the Other’ is. She continues by asserting that when we face and meet others, we attempt to recognize who they are by “reading the signs on their body, or by reading their body *as* a sign” (Ahmed, 2000, p. 8). The anecdotes discussed above point to different ways in which my body was read as a sign – a possible projection of an idea of a white woman from ‘the West’.

In the context of this research, I was read in different ways by different people – as non-threatening and eager to learn or as sexually desirable/available. Following Faria and Mollett (2016), my whiteness (and gender) – as it is shaped by colonial pasts and presents that give it its meaning – certainly afforded me many entitlements and access, based on readings of me as unknowledgeable and innocuous. At the same time, and as the experience with the executive who assumed I would be willing to sleep with him based on assumptions of ‘American women’ highlights, it also evoked other reactions that impacted research encounters in different ways. This underscores how histories of race mark and shape research experience, and as Nayak (2006) notes, how the “seemingly knowable object... ‘white woman’ cannot be understood outside of the specific historical and geographical processes that constitute this subjectivity as intelligible, and the symbolic regimes of language that summon this representation to life” (p. 417).

2.4.9 Language, translation, and the stories of the dispossessed

It is also important to acknowledge that the majority of the conversations that took place through this research were done in English. This is another reason why this dissertation features the views of elites (as many are trained in English and do most of their business in English) and fewer perspectives of those who had their land acquired. While I know some Hindi, I was not proficient enough to conduct interviews in the language. The conversations that I had with farmers/villagers who had their land acquired and the hired land aggregator (featured in Chapter 4) were facilitated with the aid of two different translators.

The first translator, Tuba, was a woman I met through a contact I made while I was in Gurgaon. She was an undergraduate student pursuing a degree in journalism and was looking to get some experience doing translation work. We met in December 2017, where I explained to her

that I was hoping to walk through one of the villages close to GLD's developments that many of the farmers had relocated to after selling their land to GLD or their subsidiaries. We spent a couple of hours talking about the goals of the research – namely, meeting some people who had their land acquired by GLD, talking to them about their experiences regarding the acquisition or dispossession, and the strategies that were used to convince them to sell their land. We went over the sample interview guide together before we went to the village, and thoroughly discussed issues of research ethics, and how to ensure that individuals we spoke to all gave free and informed consent.

Tuba was incredibly helpful in the context of walking through the village. She was outgoing and comfortable walking up to individuals in shops or on the streets and initiating a conversation. If these individuals had encountered or experienced some of the things we were interested in, she would carefully explain what I was studying to the potential interviewees, and asked if they agreed to participate, explaining they would be anonymous and could refuse to answer any question, or withdraw at any time. She then asked if they had potential questions or concerns, translated these questions back to English for me (which then I would answer, and she would translate back to Hindi), stress again they could refuse to answer any questions or refuse to participate, and confirm that I could record or document the interviews. With her assistance, we conducted 7 interviews together (6 farmers, 1 land aggregator).

When Tuba and I went to the land aggregator's office, a group of men were sitting outside in the courtyard smoking hookah together, eating, and gossiping. One of the men in the circle introduced himself to me (in English) and asked what I was looking for. He then brought us into the land aggregator's office, and the five of us proceeded to have a conversation about strategies of land acquisition and development. At the end of the conversation, he told me he

could help me find some others to talk to who had their land acquired by GLD. We exchanged contact information, and he called me a couple days later saying he could arrange meetings with two different farmers and gave me the specifics.

I did not know him well, and had hoped Tuba could go with me for these other meetings (and she had intended to), but the morning they were scheduled she told me she was ill. I asked the man if we could reschedule the meetings, feeling uncertain about going with him alone, he said it was not possible because these individuals were only available at that time because they spend the other six days working in fields elsewhere. I decided, in the end, to go with him to have these meetings. He was already familiar with the goals of my research, but before going to meet the farmers, I also had a discussion with him about the interview guide, issues of ethics, and getting informed consent. The ‘mechanics’ of the two interviews conducted were the same as the ones described above.

There are of course ethical considerations that arise through issues of translation. These ethical dilemmas are especially pertinent in ethnographic research. As Chakrabarty (2000) notes, “the problem of capitalist modernity cannot any longer be seen simply as a sociological problem of historical transition...but as a problem of translation, as well” (p. 17). Chakrabarty highlights here how research that involves the process of translating diverse forms and practices of the ‘Other’ into universalist political-theoretical categories of European origin is commonly seen as unproblematic, not least through the production of English language monographs that often included ‘rough translations’ that fit the methods of colonial rule (Chakrabarty, 2000). Similarly, Hall (1997) argues, because language is central to culture and representation, it is essential for researchers to acknowledge and work to address power relations between speakers through acts of translation.

In this context, it is essential to remember and consider the ways in which English is a technology of colonization. In this vein, West (2005), suggests that difference becomes flattened to a degree through acts of translation because knowledge is lost as local people lose agency over their dialect and linguistic representation. As Swadener and Kagendo (2008) powerfully warn, translating experiences into English might result in what they term lin-guicide:

Lin-guicide has become a powerful force, with the hegemony of the English and other ‘globalized’ languages threatening indigenous languages and the language rights of those who speak such ‘endangered’ languages or feel pressures to write in English when many indigenous concepts do not accurately translate – if they translate at all – into English or other European languages. (2008, p. 39).

These ethical concerns constantly surfaced as I conducted interviews and had conversations with non-English speakers. In this regard, and it is my hope through utilizing an approach inspired by Chakrabarty (2000), that this dissertation reflects an attempt to write a narrative and analysis that produces “translucence – and not transparency – in the relation between non-Western histories and European thought and its analytical categories” (p. 17-18). That is, to chart relationships between European thought, concepts, and theoretical ideas, to the urban experiences in India, while also leaving space for and accepting various forms of difference.

3. Selling spectacular spaces: hyperbuilding and hybridity in the creation of the Golf Gardens

As Arjun told me, aspirational people want to live at the GLD Golf Gardens. He kept emphasizing that these themes of sport – themes of golf, themes of polo – were central to this aspiration. He used this to segue into all the other amenities that were included here in the Golf Gardens. The themes of golf and polo seemed, in his view, as just as important as all the other things on offer at the Golf Gardens. From this conversation, I began to understand it as a small city, designed to be self-contained, isolated.

I left that afternoon in a cab, as we continued down the highway, we passed numerous corporate parks – including the DLF Cyber City, with signs flashing the offices for KPMG, Accenture, IBM, Deloitte, Samsung, Google, among others. There were more malls, more cinemas, and even more high-rise gated communities with names such as ‘Malibu Town’, ‘Nirvana’, and ‘Central Park Resorts’. Each were impressive, looming, taking up immense amounts of space – at times vertically and horizontally. The Golf Gardens seemed it might be one city, in a city of cities, and all these cities portrayed some version of this ‘aspiration’. (Fieldnotes)

3.1 Introduction

In this study, I investigate how the GLD Golf Gardens was imagined and conceived by executives of GLD, architects, and consultants – and how the gated community is promoted to potential buyers through various media outlets and sales personnel. In doing so, I explore how

particular understandings of sport/leisure are mobilized in the development of a gated community built around golf and polo. In analyzing this gated development, and following calls by McGuirk and Dowling (2009), the goal is not to study this space as a contained entity, but rather as an environment that is inextricably linked to the contexts and histories beyond its identifiable boundary.

Particularly, I aim to make three contributions through this study. First, and informed by (Ong's 2011a, 2011b) assertions about the need to unpack how urban experiments unfolding in Asian cities destabilize hegemonic assumptions about what counts as 'global', this study looks to explore the ways in which large-scale gated residential complexes such as the one studied here are 'homegrown' phenomena – that are linked to global flows of capital, neoliberal forms of urbanism, and legacies of colonialism, *but cannot be understood exclusively in these terms*. Second, and related to the first, and using Bhabha's (1994) concept of hybridity, I investigate how the building of this gated development – especially when taking seriously the selective referencing of nostalgic/colonial sport histories – might challenge explanations of gated communities representing new forms of urban colonialism unfolding in cities in the Global South. The third is to highlight how ideas of sport and leisure are deeply embedded in the making of 'everyday' spaces outside of the 'spectacular' spaces of mega events.

In what follows, I first introduce Ong's (2011b, 2011a) approach to studying urban experiments in Asian cities that looks to both destabilize understandings of the Asian city as a passive recipient of neoliberal practices and policies, as well as challenge postcolonial approaches that over-privilege subaltern forms of resistance or analyses that emphasize how the colonial past marks urban features of the postcolonial present. In doing so, I highlight the utility of her concept of 'hyperbuilding' to investigate how large-scale gated residential developments

like the Golf Gardens are reflective of intense and rapid building unfolding in Asian cities that are used by states to portray a specific imagery to the world – and to unpack how a gated residential development can be both at once uniquely particular to the context of Gurgaon, and also irreducibly global. I then outline Bhabha’s concept of hybridity and explain how this concept can be used to challenge unidirectional understandings of both sport and gated communities as (neo)colonial by-products, by focusing on how these institutions are taken up and remade through colonial and postcolonial interactions and transmissions. Following, I provide an overview of literatures that inform this study, including scholarship on gated residential developments; economic liberalization in India, the evolution of the new Indian middle class, and gated community living; and sport and urban (re)development. Next, I explain my methodology, data collection and analysis. I then outline the findings from the research, focusing specifically on the centrality of sport and leisure in the promotion of an exclusive and hierarchical environment, the nostalgic and colonial references to sport, and the imagination of the Golf Gardens as an all-encompassing environment.

Based on these findings, I will argue that the GLD Golf Gardens is reminiscent of Urban Real Estate Megaprojects unfolding in other Asian cities (Shatkin, 2017), and that conceiving the Golf Gardens as a self-contained mini-city is reflective of a particular response to middle class perceptions of the failure of the state to control, plan, and develop the city. At the same time, I will show how the Golf Gardens can be read as an aspect of hyperbuilding (Ong, 2011a), demonstrative of the ways in which the state facilitates the development of these sorts of spaces to increase economic development, but also how the city (through spectacular developments such as these) portrays an imagery to the world of a globally connected urban future (Ong, 2011a). Additionally, I will argue, through an analysis of the place/role of sport and leisure in the

imagination of space in the Golf Gardens, that these spaces are hybrid (Bhabha, 1994), and cannot be reduced to forms of urban (or architectural) mimicry. Together, the hope is to demonstrate how sport and leisure can, and do, drive large-scale urban changes outside of the context of the spectacular moment of hosting a temporary mega event, and, following Roy (2011b), to approach these sorts of developments as unstable and corrupt, rather than weak copies of urban forms imported from elsewhere.

3.2 Theoretical Perspective

This study is inspired by the theoretical position outlined by Ong (2011b) in her discussions of the urban experiments of Asian cities in the ‘art of being global’. Particularly, she argues that the two dominant modes of investigating a variety of ‘global’ urban conditions (political economic discussions of globalization, or postcolonial approaches that privilege subaltern agency and resistance) in cities across the Global South both “bear a Marxist pedigree and are thus overdetermined in their privileging of capitalism as the only mechanism and class struggle as the only resolution to urban problems” (Ong, 2011b, p. 2). While not rejecting the importance of these frames of thought – indeed, there is immense value in analyzing how the city is a site of capital accumulation and the stage through which citizenship is remade, as well as understanding the variety of methods of resistance to modes of domination – she asserts that there are a variety of experiments unfolding in Asian cities that challenge us to rethink what urban norms ‘count’ as global (Ong, 2011b).

Her critique of scholarship exploring processes and impacts of globalization is twofold. On the one hand, she critiques those who utilize political economic theoretical perspectives privilege capitalism, as envisioned in and led by those based in the Global North, as the

dominant driver of globalization. While these analyses highlight how cities and spaces within them become deeply fragmented and splintered due to impacts of transnational flows of capital (Graham & Marvin, 2001), she also argues that these explanations put variations in urban development and city life everywhere at the mercy of the universal forces of capitalism (Ong, 2011b). This, she asserts, occludes examinations of unique solutions, interventions, and challenges that exist on the ground in diverse contexts, while also tending to reduce spaces in the Global South as variants of universal forms originating from the Global North (Robinson & Roy, 2016).

On the other hand, she also critiques certain postcolonial approaches to studying the urban for their emphasis on how the colonial past continues to map itself onto the postcolonial present (and future). The focus in these analyses is on the ongoing continuities between legacies of colonialism and contemporary expressions of the organization and development of space (Ong, 2011b). An example of this approach comes from King (2004), in his exploration of gated community developments in India and China. Using the term ‘globurbs’, King (2004) describes the proliferation of gated communities in the peripheries in major (postcolonial) cities like Delhi as forms of urban living where:

the origins of which, economic, social, cultural, architectural – are generated less by developments inside the city, or even inside the country, and more by external forces beyond its boundaries. The influences as well as the capital come from afar...globurbs, as with previous historical experience, continue to be generated not just by ‘international’ or ‘global’ forces, but more particularly, by those of imperialism, colonialism, nationalism as well as the diasporic migratory cultures and capital flows of global capitalism (King, 2004, p. 103).

While not necessarily wrong, as gated residential developments like the one studied here are undeniably linked to legacies of colonialism and imperialism, his account is partial. Thus, I follow Ong’s (2011b) call to explore the particularity of urban transformation through an

investigation into how urban environments (in this case, a large-scale residential development) is formed “through specific combinations of the past and the future, the postcolonial and the metropolitan, the global and the situated... [and] not dominated by any single mechanism or principle” (2011b, p. 9-10). This is especially important because Asian cities as

booming centres of expansion of a new middle class...have begun to compete with one another to provide improved conditions of working and living. By tweaking urban desires and aspirations in emerging countries, citational practices put into circulation a symbolic language of globally significant urban style that has travelled beyond Asia. (Ong, 2011b, p. 18).

By this, she means it is important to consider how Asian cities compete with and inter-reference one another (i.e. not necessarily or exclusively their counterparts in the Global North) in the creation new modes of being and living (Ong, 2011b). The ultimate goal, through this approach, is to liberate the city in the Global South as a container of capitalism or subaltern agency in order to explore how an urban situation – in this case a gated residential development – can be both heterogeneously particular (i.e. unique to the context in which is developed) and irreducibly global at one and the same time (Ong, 2011b).

In this light, Ong (2011a) challenges traditional approaches to studying the ‘spectacle’ of grand city building that views impressive and fantastic architecture in cities located in the Global South as an example of forms of capital colonizing ‘foreign’ markets. Instead, she uses the term ‘hyperbuilding’ to explore how forms of urban (or architectural) spectacles shape urban forms and experiences in Asian cities. She uses the term to denote the processes of *intense and rapid* building to project a specific imagery to the word, but also how states use spectacular developments to demonstrate their power or aspirations of greatness. She argues that hyperbuilding (i.e. grand architectural developments like the Burj Khalifa, or large scale speculative urban mega projects in Manila or Indonesia) is used in Asian cities to play an

aesthetic role “in promoting future values and new political orientations” (Ong, 2011a, p. 209). Frenzies of hyperbuilding – characterized by large amounts of large-scale development – is used to leverage gains through the inflation of real estate values, as well as to elevate hope and expectations about the anticipation of national growth and urban futures (Ong, 2011a). Additionally, and as Ong (2011a) notes, hyperbuilding begets more hyperbuilding projects as the inter-referencing of rival (Asian) cities fuels more speculative development. These modes of hyperbuilding that are so prominent in Asian localities, she argues, are new ways that cities look assert their power and strive to be seen as ‘global’.

I supplement Ong’s approach to exploring urban experiments in the Global South with Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hybridity. As Bhabha (1994) asserts, colonial power should be understood as a production of hybridization, rather than as simple commands of the colonizer and/or silent repression of local traditions. He highlights that every concept/institution that the colonizer brings to the colonized will be reborn, renewed, and reinterpreted in light of the local culture. This results in hybridity, which shifts power, questions authority, and suggests that colonial discourses and outcomes are never exclusively in control of the colonizer. Bhabha’s (1994) concept of hybridity is helpful for destabilizing unidirectional understandings of the building of gated developments, as he notes that encounters/developments such as these will always be reinterpreted and the outcomes are never guaranteed. Indeed, using Bhabha’s (1994) idea of hybridity as a guide opens avenues to question and destabilize ideas of transplanted and borrowed urbanisms (Roy, 2011a).

Additionally, there is important utility in Bhabha’s concept of hybridity because this gated community is built around the concept of a golf course, references the St. Andrews Golf Club (in Fife, Scotland), and uses the sport of polo in the marketing of some of the internal

towers. In short, ideas (and histories) of sport are of central importance to the development of this space. Many have highlighted the deep relationship between the British Imperial project and the diffusion of sport in colonial contexts (Appadurai, 1996; Carrington, 2015; Cashman, 1998; Malcolm, 2012; Mangan, 1998). In the context of India, while many sports and leisure activities, including golf, were brought to India from those involved in the British East India Company, in most cases, local populations were excluded from these forms of sport involvement. While there was no formal policy in place to utilize sport as a means to support the Raj, sport gradually became part of the British civilizing process (Cashman, 1998). Many British officials, including college teachers, businessmen, military personnel, and bureaucrats in government agencies, were enthusiastic missionaries for the introduction of sport to the Indian population that were targeted under this Anglicization policy (Appadurai, 1996; Cashman, 1998; Mills & Dimeo, 2003). Importantly, and as many remind us, sport was not just merely imposed and passively taken up by colonized groups, it was appropriated, resisted, and reinvented in unintended ways in a variety of contexts (Appadurai, 1996; M. Bose, 2006; Carrington & McDonald, 2001; Fletcher, 2011). Taking seriously the histories, uses, and meanings associated with sport and leisure through the lens of hybridity challenges unidirectional understandings of sport as a colonial product by focusing on the complex and unanticipated ways that sport/leisure practices were taken up and remade through colonial and postcolonial interactions and transmissions. In turn, the hope is to similarly challenge assumptions of gated communities – especially ones built around golf courses – as a prototypical example of a North American form of living that has been transplanted into the Indian context.

3.3 Literature

3.3.1 *Gated community developments*

The proliferation of gated, master planned, and ‘fortified’ communities in cities across the world is not particularly novel. Through a number of iconic projects in North America such as Celebration, Florida created by the Disney Corporation, Northwest Landing in Washington, or Thames Town in Shanghai, master planned communities are an entrenched aspect of international housing markets (Bartling, 2006; Bosker, 2013; A. King, 2004; Pow, 2011; Shen & Wu, 2012). Gated communities tend to share a number of features including: definable boundaries marking inside and outside (along with surveillance and security technologies); consistent design and architecture features; a single entity controlling design and development processes (whether corporation, government, or another group); private ownership of facilities and amenities within the boundaries; an emphasis on features that display social status and privilege; and enforcement of community covenants by community associations (Blakely & Snyder, 1997).

Many have discussed gated residential developments as exemplars of neoliberal urban development that are reflective of coordinated efforts between pro-growth local governments and private actors that have increasing power to define, regulate, and reconstitute space (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006; McGuirk & Dowling, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Pow, 2009; Shen & Wu, 2012; M. Silk & Manley, 2017). In this way, gated residential developments are interpreted as both products and drivers of neoliberal practices and policies, and are reflective of what Brenner and Theodore (2002) describe as spaces of ‘actually existing neoliberalism’ – i.e., spaces that have been (re)appropriated under neoliberal policies in ways that privilege urban entrepreneurialism, privatization, consumption, and capital accumulation. Under this framework,

and following broader urban spatial changes, the emerging middle classes are targeted and advantaged in the development of such spaces at the expense and exclusion of ‘others’ (i.e. those who cannot afford to live in such spaces) – just as social inequalities and related power relations are obscured and class distinctions become naturalized (Low, 2003; Pow, 2009). For example, while living in gated residential complexes is only available to those with particular purchasing power, these communities remain porous – with those living inside relying on the poor to nurture and sustain their lifestyles (i.e. through low wage work, servants’ quarters, informal sector work etc.) (Fernandes, 2004; Schindler, 2014).

Scholars have also investigated the role of spatial aesthetics in the design, features, and marketing strategies for gated residential developments. Particularly, space is presented as controlled, separated, sanitized, ordered, and beautified with ‘real estate’ being increasingly marketed and reconceived as ‘ideal state’ that is self-contained and presented as superior to the outside world (Pow, 2009; Raposo, 2006). In these contexts, middle class populations are able to imprint residential landscapes with specific ideologies of ‘niceness’, and utilize the aesthetics of space to maintain spatial exclusions that work to protect and secure the landscapes from the poor, the dirty, the different, and the ‘dangerous other’ (Pow, 2009; Raposo, 2006; Shen & Wu, 2012; Walks, 2006). The strict aestheticization of these spaces articulates hegemonic class identities and a neoliberal global capital order that exploits a dualism between beautiful/ugly, high/low class, and desirable/undesirable (Pow, 2009). Moreover, through masking (hyper)polarized developments of suburbia (Shen & Wu, 2012), spatial design practices are centred not only on the promise of a narrow idea of an ideal future, but also on a nostalgic yearning for a (mythic) sense of (homogenous) ‘community’ that is interpreted to have been lost through processes of globalization and modernity (Brosius, 2010; Raposo, 2006).

However, McGuirk and Dowling (2009) argue that is important to avoid reductionist accounts of gated residential developments that discuss these spaces as passive sites where neoliberal practices/policies are enacted. Instead, they suggest viewing them as open and messy assemblages that involve co-evolving governance projects, strategies, and practices that must be contextualized appropriately within both national and transnational scales. In light of this, scholars such as Pow (2011) and Sigler and Wachsmuth (2016) argue for the adoption of a “critical transnational urban perspective by considering gated communities as globally-oriented sites where local and transnational practice intersect to produce new geographies of wealth, privilege, and exclusion” (Pow, 2011, p. 383).

One way these critiques have been addressed is through investigations of how gated residential developments emerging in cities across the globe represent “weak copies of a Western urbanism” (Roy, 2011a, p. 310). For example, scholars such as Bosker (2013), King (2004), and Shen and Wu (2012), have discussed how the proliferation of gated residential developments in the suburbs of China’s cities mimic iconic features and architectural design structures in Paris (i.e. the Eiffel Tower), London (i.e. London Tower Bridge, and Thames River), Venice (i.e. the river canals with gondolas) and Washington (i.e. the Capitol), among other cities. Particularly, Bosker (2013) uses the term ‘duplitechture’ to describe the all-encompassing re-creation of the superficial appearance of Western historical cities in new build gated communities in suburban China, as well as the ‘feel’ (atmosphere and experience) of these spaces through usage of colour, names, signage, architecture, and lifestyle amenities. Drawing on Baudrillard’s concept of simulacrum, Bosker (2013) argues that it is possible to read these imitations and mimicries as so accurate that they blur the distinctions between the original and the copy. Similarly, King (2004) investigated the proliferation of gated communities in China and India that promote

‘international’ (read: Western) aesthetics, amenities, community layout/design, and naming.

While King argues that these sorts of developments are reflective of new colonization(s) of urban peripheries, Roy (2011a) emphasizes that it is important to unpack and question ‘origin stories’ and work to erode ideas of original and borrowed urbanisms. This kind of unpacking and questioning opens up space to demonstrate how seemingly original templates of modernism, developmentalism, and neoliberalism emerge through a variety of global circulations, yet also how all of these urbanisms are hybrid and corrupted – the origins are never what they seem (Roy, 2011a).

In some ways, this is similar to arguments advanced by Gavin Shatkin (2011, 2017) in his investigations of the proliferation of urban real estate megaprojects (UREMs) in multiple Asian and South Asian cities. He defines UREMs as environments conceived as self-contained entities at the city or urban-district scale (often consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, offices, schools, entertainment, and other facilities) that are built on a for-profit basis by a single developer. He argues that governments and elites across Asia have embraced the notion that allowing private developers to acquire large land banks for the development of large-scale, all-encompassing urban enclaves is an effective way (and a prominent state strategy for urban development) to meet goals of modernization and cater to the perceived lifestyles of growing consumer classes (Shatkin, 2017). Importantly, he asserts that UREMs in Asian cities should not be read as a form of urban mimicry for two reasons: 1) the context of their evolution is dramatically different to those in America or Europe in that ones in Asia are built in contexts of population growth and economic expansion, and 2) many UREMs inter-reference other Asian models of development. This inter-referencing happens through inter-Asian foreign direct investment in developments and modelling spaces in ways that mimic land use designs

elsewhere (i.e. from Singapore or Shanghai) that are seen as “appropriately ‘Asian’ models to be emulated through the development” of UREMs (Shatkin, 2011, p. 79). The inter-referencing of Asian development models challenges assumptions that cities follow the paths to globalization laid by cities in the Global North and that these urban forms duplicate examples from North America/Europe (Shatkin, 2011).

3.3.2 Economic liberalization, new Indian middle class, and gated community living

In the early 1990s, the Indian state began liberalizing its economy, moving towards an orientation that focused primarily on (re)integration in the world economy and which privileged free market capitalism, corporatization, and privatization (Fernandes, 2006; Pedersen, 2000; Reed, 2002). Many scholars have noted that these neoliberal economic reforms that took place in India have shifted the relationships between the state, the city, and forms of (urban) citizenship (Ellis, 2012; Falzon, 2004; Fernandes, 2004, 2011; Mathur, 2010; Rao, 2010; Waldrop, 2004). Using lines of inquiry that follow political economic approaches to exploring urban landscape changes, researchers have explored how a variety of federal and state level policies were deployed in order to facilitate the re-organization of cities around the facilitation of global flows of capital – many of which had a significant impact on the design and development of urban space (Weinstein et al., 2014). For example, a new federal Housing and Habitat policy was deployed in 1994 that mandated that the government foster an environment for the growth of the housing industry, rather than taking on the risk of building the facilities through the state directly (Searle, 2016). The focus at this moment began to shift to facilitating private-led corporate development of various residential infrastructure. Not long after, the federal government legalized foreign direct investment in township construction, and in 2005 liberalized this policy

further by allowing foreign direct investment in real estate to proceed without prior approval from the government or Reserve Bank of India (Chatterji, 2013; Searle, 2016). At the same time, a new Special Economic Zone policy was deployed, which enabled large sums of land to be made available for real estate and corporate developments in areas targeted for IT sector expansion (or housing for those connected to the finance/technology industries) (Chatterji, 2013). As a result, the residential landscape drastically changed throughout the nation, with large-scale, gated residential developments dominating development efforts in urban and peri-urban localities around major metropolitan regions (Chatterji, 2013; Searle, 2016; Shatkin, 2017). These types of developments, as Shatkin (2017) argues, represents attempts by the state (or its corporate allies) to monetize land – that is to capture revenue streams from using land as a site for capital accumulation.

Many have situated the rise of gated residential developments in India alongside the evolution of the ‘new Indian middle class’ – a group that is thought to enact cosmopolitan (not only Indian) dispositions and preferences in cuisine, clothing, housing, city spaces, physical practices, and spectator interests (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2004, 2011; Mathur, 2010; Munshi, 2001). These scholars argue that the new Indian middle class have become the model for the ‘modern Indian nation’ – where this population has been transformed into an object for the projection of political, cultural, and ideological products, while also privileging this group and their interests in urban redevelopment strategies (Ellis, 2012; Fernandes, 2006; Mathur, 2010; Schindler, 2014). Scholars analyzed how desires and perceived aspirations of new Indian middle class groups have driven the development of gated residential developments, as well as how private developers work to create these desires through the promotion of residential projects that are presented as elite, segregated, and complete with all sorts of lifestyle amenities for ‘the

World class citizen’ (Brosius, 2010; Falzon, 2004; Fernandes, 2004, 2006; Shatkin, 2017; Srivastava, 2014; Waldrop, 2004).

Shatkin (2011) argues, for example, that middle class groups perceive that the state has failed to control the development of the city (i.e. through haphazard development, lagging infrastructure, proliferation of informal/slum settlements). One result, Shatkin (2011) argues, is the investment in large-scale gated residential and urban megaprojects that create elite spaces that are insulated from the disorder of the urban core and that privatize infrastructure and city-buildings – reflecting a specific response to the fears and desires for middle class groups (Shatkin, 2011).

Alternatively, Fernandes (2004, 2006) argues that increased real estate prices in metropolitan hubs such as Mumbai have driven middle class individuals into suburbs. In this context, corporate developers, while looking to cater to the desires of these groups, have created new forms of urban living through the development of communities that feature more-than-residential spaces (i.e. clubs and entertainment facilities). The state, she argues, is implicated in a ‘politics of forgetting’, where the needs of the urban poor become ignored in the context of the push to create urban spaces (such as privatized residential developments) that are beautified and cleansed of markers of their presence (Fernandes, 2004).

Others have explored the promotional materials of new-build gated residential enclaves, and how developers promote/create desires for forms of segregated urban living. For example, scholars such as Falzon (2004) and Waldrop (2004) have highlighted how these developments are increasingly restricted to selective groups, and offer lifestyles where residents do not just *live* within the compound, but also *reside*. Brosius (2010), in particular, has emphasized how the iconography used in gated development sales materials produce desires for seclusion, social

purity, and inclusion into the well-travelled universe of the modern, world-class elite. Sales pitches often hinge on the promises of security from the dangerous ‘Other’ that is excluded from the spaces, as well as on beautified and green environments, and a cosmopolitan lifestyle (Brosius, 2010; Falzon, 2004). At the same time, analyses into promotional materials reveal nostalgic references to English (colonial), American, or European architecture and living (Brosius, 2010; Falzon, 2004; A. King, 2004). Some promote the inclusion of schools modelled after the British private school system (Falzon, 2004; Waldman, Silk, & Andrews, 2017), a duplication/romanticization of English and European identities in naming (i.e. Central Park, Buckingham, Victoria) (Brosius, 2010; A. King, 2004), or European inspired designs in architecture or community layout (Brosius, 2010; A. King, 2004). As Brosius asserts, the prevalence of referencing to Victorian, English, and European imagery, architecture, and histories point to a possibility that “on a global scale, colonial lifestyle are back in fashion...” (Brosius, 2010, p. 115).

Some scholars have noted that the residential landscape of Gurgaon in particular is dominated by large-scale gated residential communities, informal settlements with migrant workers building or servicing these elite spaces, and villages that have been enclosed by corporate developments (Chatterji, 2013; Goldstein, 2016; Srivastava, 2014). These scholars have investigated private developers, with direct and indirect involvement of the state, have acquired licenses to build gated residential or corporate developments across 37,000 acres of land over the 30-year period between the late 1980s-2010s. Against a backdrop of the state’s facilitation of the development of spaces that cater to the development of the information technology sector (and housing geared to the elite classes who work in global finance or technology), many have argued that the city is now made of disconnected enclaved islands (i.e.

gated residential developments and corporate parks), fragmented governance structures, and a severe lack of public infrastructure to accommodate a burgeoning population (Goldstein, 2016; Kalyan, 2017; Srivastava, 2014).

Although implied in many analyses of the proliferation of gated residential developments in India is the central importance of leisure spaces, few unpack how ideas of sport and leisure anchor design or imagination of these spaces. This study builds on this work by investigating how and in what ways sport and leisure are utilized explicitly in the development of urban spaces.

3.3.3 Sport and (urban) space

The majority of the work on sport and urban spatial changes centres on articulations of the spectacle of sport – particularly mega events or stadia for professional teams – and the spectacle of the city. One way this has been examined is through investigations into how sport/leisure/physical culture is intimately tied to global capitalism and the project of world class city making – and how projects that feature sport/leisure/physical culture may act to catalyze processes of neoliberalization already underway in cities (Andrews, Batts, & Silk, 2014; Raco & Tunney, 2010; Raco, 2012; Silk, 2004; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Manley, 2012; Sze, 2009).

For example, many scholars note that the hosting of mega events and stadia building leads to strategizing by developers and/or organizing committees on the presentation of a specially curated image of the city that privileges the perceived aspirations and values of the international tourist gaze. Particularly, Raco and Tunney (2010) and Raco (2012) examined how the visions for East London in preparation for the 2012 Olympics led to the eviction of over 200 small business owners who were determined to be unsightly, unproductive and not in line with

the policy-makers' aspirations for creating marketable images of 'creativity' and 'vibrancy'. Similarly, Silk and Andrews (2006) discussed the central role of sports teams and facilities in the re-branding and re-imagining of Baltimore as a destination city, leading to the redevelopment of the Baltimore Westside anchored by the Camden Yards Complex, the stadium for the Baltimore Ravens, entertainment facilities, and upscale trendy apartments. They emphasized, however, that these redevelopments are little more than a market-oriented attempt to curate an image of Baltimore that is attuned to the attraction of gentrified, creative, and white tourist classes – the desired new urban populace (Silk & Andrews, 2006). As a result, the images of place become abstracted from local culture and translated into marketable meanings that are often remarkably different from the lived surroundings of the urban landscape (Gibson, 2004; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Manley, 2017; Sze, 2009). Fusco (2012) focuses on how neoliberalism acts as a mode of governance, leading to the production of 'healthified' spaces that work to normalize and celebrate active, healthy, productive, self-governing bodies (while excluding others) through architectural and spatial technologies.

In a similar vein, scholars have been interested in how these privileged images of space that are mobilized through the sporting spectacle also work to symbolize who properly belongs in rejuvenated city spaces. For example, Kennelly (2015) investigated how the coming of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics led to a focus on the cleansing of the Downtown Eastside (a low-income neighbourhood often considered by city officials as a blight on the reputation of Vancouver as a global city) through increased surveillance and policing. Kennelly emphasizes how the cleansing politics associated with the Olympics led to an understanding of the homeless by city officials and Games' planners as an 'undesirable' population that needed to be either hidden or removed from view. Similarly, Silk (2014), in his study of the regeneration of selective

pockets for the London 2012 Olympic Games, points to the ways in which minority communities were positioned within hierarchies of belonging – noting that particular narratives were crafted by groups such as the London Organizing Committee, the media, politicians, and developers that positioned white (middle class and consumptive) individuals as a desirable majority whereby ‘others’ became marked against this category. While such narratives superficially promoted inclusion, Silk suggests that it would be more accurate to see these narratives as endorsing assimilation – where the acceptance of ‘other’ identities is based upon perceived loyalty to the core (Silk, 2014). In this way, certain bodies become more visible, while others are erased from view (Silk, 2014).

Related to scholarship on sport mega events/stadia building as a form of development is a growing body of literature on issues surrounding golf course development (Horne, 1998; Jönsson, 2014; Millington & Wilson, 2016b). Scholars investigating golf and golf development have considered a wide range of topics pertaining to, for example, relationships between media coverage of events such as the Masters Tournament and changes of golf management techniques (Millington & Wilson, 2016b), the economy of the golf tourism industry and politics of course development (Horne, 1998; B. Stoddart, 1990), concerns regarding environmental damage (Jönsson, 2014; Millington & Wilson, 2016b), and the relationship between golf course development and neoliberal forms of governance (Millington & Wilson, 2016b; Neo, 2010). For example, Jönsson (2014) and Millington and Wilson (2016a, 2016b) investigated the controversial building of Trump International Golf Links in an environmentally protected location on the ocean in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. The building of the golf resort necessitated the stabilization of sand dunes in the area – dunes valued for their environmentally unique *dynamic* qualities (Jönsson, 2014; Millington & Wilson, 2016a, 2016b). Ultimately, the Scottish

government supported the development in face of resistance – articulating the view that economic gain would outweigh environmental damage (Jönsson, 2014). Millington and Wilson (2016b) connect the decision by the Scottish government to support Trump’s golf development to broader neoliberal forms of governance and globalization that promote the opening of borders to the movement of capital across space and scale. In a similar vein, Neo (2010) investigated the relationships between opponents and proponents of golf course development in Singapore, noting that ‘consensual politics’ is a deliberate and conscious tactic that is utilized by planners and developers in order to manage and circumvent resistance to the construction of golf courses.

However, in this context, little research (with some notable exceptions) has investigated the role that sport/leisure play in urban land transformation in the context of Indian cities. For example, Baviskar (2011) used the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi to explore the relationships between everyday life in the city and the ‘extraordinary’ moments that occur when that life is transformed and illuminated on a world stage. She argues that the Commonwealth Games was mobilized to enact large-scale social and spatial transformations that would be difficult to achieve through routine processes. These processes were justified through the promotion of the belief that national prestige and status were at stake, and that the sporting spectacle would be an ideal way to promote Delhi as a world class city. However, she does not describe the Games as ‘only’ a means of accelerating the ordinary business of political economy. She also argues that the Commonwealth Games served to re-present the city to its citizens in the process, conjuring consent to waste of large sums of public money, and spearhead drives to initiate large scale slum removal across Delhi. Andrews et al., (2014) provide another notable exception, through their study of the Commonwealth Games and the fitness culture within India. Particularly, they emphasize how relationships between economic liberalization policies,

combined with the emergence of the new middle class, works to re-make sporting cultures that valorize particular bodies (productive, consumptive) and pathologize others (impoverished, disposable). Despite the examples above by Baviskar (2011) and Andrews et al. (2014), many scholars concerned with large scale urban changes taking place in Delhi at the turn of the millennium often mention Delhi being awarded the 2010 Commonwealth Games as a key moment where many urban policies and practices shifted drastically, yet few unpack the role of sport as a potential driving force for changes in spatial arrangements and citizen relations beyond those of mega events (Bhan, 2009; Rao, 2010; Routray, 2014; Schindler, 2014). This study was designed to begin filling this gap in the literature by exploring how sport and leisure are central to the re-imagination of space outside of the context of mega events or stadium development, and to consider how ideas of sport or sport are centrally important to the imagination of residential space in the Indian context.

3.4 Methodology

This study is informed by Burawoy's (2000) notion of global ethnography – an approach that is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two. Particularly pertinent to this study is Burawoy's notion that this methodological approach is a helpful way to explore how 'the global is produced in the local' through (dis)connections and dissemination of ideologies. This is in line with Ong's (2011b) approaches to investigating urban experiments in Asian cities in ways that explore how gated residential developments can be unique in the context of Gurgaon, but also irreducibly global. Similarly, this aligns with Pow (2011) and McGuirk and Dowling (2009), who argue for analyses of gated communities that destabilize dominant narratives that see these developments as bounded areas and disconnected to the broader 'outside'. When combined with a postcolonial

theoretical perspective, this approach can provide avenues to challenge and decentre dominant discourses of capitalism and globalization that characterize many analyses of gated community developments unfolding in contexts of the Global South (Hayhurst, 2016).

3.4.1 Methods and analysis

I draw on multiple methods in conducting this global ethnography including observations, field visits, formal and informal interviews, and qualitative document analysis (for more details on the rationale behind these methods, refer to Chapter Two). This particular study draws on data collected from time spent in and around the GLD Golf Gardens; the corporate offices of GLD, the transnational architecture firm designing the Golf Gardens, the consultancy group working directly with GLD on their products, and two real estate investment conferences (one hosted by GLD, and one by a real estate lobby group).

My observations centred on how the spaces were produced, aesthetic choices in design, the ways in which the development was being promoted to potential buyers (i.e. through sales pitches and tours given, promotional materials, and sales-related paraphernalia in/around the Golf Gardens), and the role of sport/leisure in the imaginations of place. These observations also complemented and contextualized formal and informal interviews.

Interviews were conducted with a variety of people who were directly involved in the design, development, and imagination of space for the GLD Golf Gardens. This included high level executives from GLD (n=4), sales representatives (n=2), property brokers in Gurgaon (n=2), architects (n=5), and a consultant (n=1). The goals of the interviews were to get a sense of how the spaces were being imagined, who they were being designed for, how decisions were

made to develop and design space in specific ways, how developments are promoted to potential buyers, and the usage of sport/leisure in the organization and conceptions of the community.

Observations and interviews were supplemented with a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) of promotional materials (sales books, sales presentations, Instagram marketing, videos), information on websites, architectural renderings, and floorplans of the GLD Golf Gardens. Following Altheide et al. (2008), these documents were approached ethnographically, where I immersed myself in them and constantly compared them to each other as well as emerging themes in search for new meanings. The goal of this was to examine the ways in which particular meanings and representations of the Golf Gardens (in documents) come to be taken-for-granted.

At the same time, and informed by Stoler (2002, 2010), I also looked to read these documents along their grain (not just against it), in order to investigate the power in the production of various documents (Stoler, 2002) (See Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion on this method). I used her approach in this study to explore how this gated community development is linked to global flows of capital, neoliberal urban reforms, and legacies of colonialism without reducing it to a mere product of these relationships.

3.5 Findings

In this section, I describe the decisions by executives of GLD, consultants, and architects to design a gated community around golf, polo, and the St. Andrews Brand (the use of which is particularly interesting because the Royal and Ancient Andrews Golf Club in Fife, Scotland is often referred to as the ‘Home of Golf’, and this club still retains rule making authority of the game throughout the world except for North America), and how ideas associated with sport/leisure were mobilized in the imagination (and promotion) of gated community living. The first section discusses how understandings of golf and polo were deliberately used to create and

market a community that was reserved for the elite – and how markers of sport were used to create hierarchies of belonging *within* the community (not just between those included and those on the outside of the gates). The second part highlights the specific ways in which different (nostalgic and/or colonial) legacies of golf, polo, and the St. Andrews brand were directly used in marketing the GLD Golf Gardens to potential consumers. The third section illustrates how the Golf Gardens was also (and at times primarily) sold as a more-than-residential and leisure focused space – despite the fact that ideas of sport/leisure were central in the conceptualization of the community.

3.5.1 Centrality of sport in promoting exclusivity and hierarchical differentiation

Ideas associated with sport and leisure (especially golf and polo) were crucial to the constructions of exclusivity of the space. In particular, the decision to build a community around golf, with the name Golf Gardens, was a deliberate means through which GLD could differentiate their product compared to other gated residential complexes in the region, as well position their product at a much higher price-point.

For example, Arjun, the director of a consultancy firm that works directly with GLD on their corporate strategy for their different products told me:

The average unit price for a flat in Gurgaon is roughly \$150-\$180 per square feet. This would be a typical condominium development. But other projects, more premium developments are centred around themes... sports themes, golf course themes, entertainment themes...if you add any theme like a golf course or attraction, the price automatically goes up 30%-40%. This of course also depends on the location you are sitting on and the richness of your facilities too.

GLD's Golf Gardens, like many gated residential complexes in Gurgaon, is imagined and promoted around highly specific themes – particularly leisure-based themes of golf, polo, and the St. Andrews golf club. Indeed, the choices to utilize golf, polo, and the St. Andrews brand were

deliberate decisions by the developers, architects, and consultants involved in the creation of the GLD Golf Gardens, and these decisions were based on assumptions about the meanings attributed to those who participate in (or desire to be in environments dedicated to) these particular leisure practices. This point was also emphasised by Ansh, a top-level executive in GLD. He explained that positioning the community around golf was a specific strategy for demarcation and also a means to increase profit margins because of the sport's associations with elite lifestyles:

If you look at a golf community which is done in Noida or Greater Noida by Jaypee Group or what is being done by DLF, I think both of these properties have commanded a substantial premium to the product in their vicinity. And the premium is as high as 40-50% of the rest of the market. So that was another point. What I'm saying is as a developer I would like to maximize my profit and if my costs of doing such are the same, might as well do a product which will fetch me a higher return. What I'm saying is, one is the positioning of the product, so that it positions it automatically into a different set of developers, because this was our first project. And the second thing is, we are able to create a lifestyle product which we can be very happy about in the long run.

Above, Ansh argues that golf helped to position the community as a place of 'prestige' and elite lifestyles, and thus would allow GLD to demand a higher price for units within the gates.

Ansh goes on to explain the particular importance in choosing golf and polo to anchor the GLD Golf Gardens to drive home the 'elite' differentiation of the community compared to others:

So, if you look at both of these sports very closely, they have always been associated with the upper strata of any society over the world. So, for example when I talk about golf, so golf is a theme or a community is always positioned for the people who are rich, super rich, in any given city in the micro market, right. And polo is even more elite than that... The point I'm saying is that has been the driving force for all of these. If I were to position my product a notch above the rest of the market, then I need to be clever enough to figure out what should be done and how it should be done. So that was the starting point.

Interestingly, as Ansh underscores, both golf and polo were starting points in the imagination of space for the GLD Golf Gardens, and these two sports were chosen precisely due to the associations of these practices with exclusivity, wealth, and an elite whiteness.

However, Vijay, a property broker in the region, explained to me that based on the location of the Golf Gardens (the southern edge of Gurgaon), sale prices should have been much lower because the Golf Gardens is located on the periphery of the sprawling metropolis of Gurgaon, is a thirty minute drive from the nearest Metro station (although there is an extension proposed for the area), and a thirty minute commute from CyberHub and other major employment sectors. Yet, because the community was built around a golf theme, GLD were asking double what equivalent properties in the area (in terms of provisions and amenities) just because of the very virtue that it was *golf*.

The notions of the exclusivity and prestige of golf as a leisure activity was heavily emphasized in promotional materials. For example:

A concept of life where your health, happiness and exclusive peace of mind are supremely achieved...So, just imagine waking up to the sprawling greens and play a game that's a class apart. And mastered by even fewer. That's the beauty of this golf course. (p. 14)

Where golf is more than a game... it's a lifestyle! (Instagram marketing)

A world of exclusivity! It has often been said that the first impression is the last impression. That's why it is essential to give those who live here and who visit the residents to know at the very glance that this is a different world. People who have made this their abode are in a different league. These are people with fine achievements and finer tastes. (p. 22)

When we were developing the concept of a golf-resort like residential complex, we were in a dilemma. What would a world-travelled, highly successful health-conscious person like as a home?... The unique idea of building luxury homes around a 9-hole executive, 'in city' golf course came to mind. (p. 4)

While golf was utilized to police boundaries of class and privilege by demarcating who were privileged enough to afford to live within the Golf Gardens and those who could not, ideas associated with sport/leisure were also mobilized to provide avenues for demarcation for those *within* the gates as well. Specifically, the residential buildings are divided into three different types – the general Golf Gardens buildings (16 of 23 towers), the Polo Suites (4 of 23 towers), and the St. Andrews Tower (1 of 23 towers). These three different themed buildings were largely sold at different price points (with the Golf Gardens towers starting at the lowest), the Polo Suites priced higher, and the St. Andrews Tower being the most expensive. The units in the Golf Gardens buildings start at 2850 square feet to 11,000 square feet for penthouses and the current asking prices range from \$458,316 (2.4 cr) for a 2850 square foot unit to \$954,825 (5.0 cr) for a 5900 sq foot unit (penthouse pricing is unavailable). The Polo Suites offer units that are either 3980 or 4995 square feet and are currently listed at \$1.2 million (6.3 cr) and \$1.5 million (7.9 cr) respectively. The St. Andrews Tower offers units that range from 6200 – 6450 square feet and are listed at \$1.6 million to \$1.7 million (8.6 cr - 8.9 cr). In other words, to live in an apartment in the Polo Suites, one would pay 26% *more* to have 40% *less* space when comparing square footage and price in the largest advertised unit in the general Golf Gardens buildings. Similarly, one would pay 68% more for 5% more space (300 square feet more) to live in St. Andrews compared to a largely comparable unit in the general Golf Gardens.

Living in one of the differently themed buildings gives residents exclusive benefits that are then used to ascribe and reinforce hierarchical divisions within the community. While everyone in the Golf Gardens gets access to the golf course, the club, the sports facilities, and community spaces, there are particular advantages that those who reside in the Polo Suites can take advantage of. For example, the promotional materials state:

Once you step into your abode, you belong to the regal world

- Provision for access to Polo and riding facilities
- Complementary exclusive passes to top Polo events
- Welcome kit: caps, silver coasters, Polo t-shirts
- All GLD Polo Suites are designed to suit your exclusive lifestyle with provision for Polo Lounge and Polo Club Room
- Invitation to Polo Events
- Exclusive hospitality at Top Polo Events
- Access to Riding Classes, Polo Clinics and Horse Rides
- Annual Gala Polo Ball

By purchasing a flat in the Polo Suites, you would then be transported into a world marked by a lifestyle more exclusive than that of the ‘general residents’ of the Golf Gardens. These boundaries are defined by having particular clothing, access to special events, and a separate club and lounge only for residents and guests. Importantly, however, the references to polo and polo-related branding have no ‘real world’ on-site referent as there are no polo pitches, stables, or other horse-related facilities on the premises.

If one were wanting to differentiate themselves further between those in the Golf Gardens and those who live in the Polo Suites, one could purchase a property in the branded St. Andrews Tower. This tower, the namesake of the ‘home of golf’, St. Andrews Links in Scotland, has only “64 limited apartments” located in the tallest building in the compound (47 stories). The residents of the St. Andrews Tower would have access to a separate, multi-floor rooftop club (different from the one in Golf Gardens and Polo Suites), another lounge and bar, a rooftop garden retreat, private spa, and additional concierge services (which include on-call dog walking and valet housekeeping). Ansh explains how using St. Andrews as a brand helped to provide prospective buyers with a way to distance themselves from other residents throughout the Golf Gardens:

So, we were looking to come up with a tower that would have much bigger apartments than the rest of the Golf Gardens. So, the smallest apartment in that

would be about 1.5 times the size of the apartments which are in the rest of the Golf Gardens. So automatically the choice was to differentiate that product. It has to be a golf centric product, but still has to be a notch above the rest. So, what we ended up doing is we positioned it differently and then we ended up giving it some additional facilities like we have created a club which will exclusively be for those that are living in the St. Andrews apartments. So that is how it has been created.

He goes on to underscore the exclusivity of the St. Andrews Tower:

They will have a restaurant, they have a wine and dine, and they'll have other facilities, a swimming pool. My point is, I'm saying, it's exclusive and it will be used by a limited number of people. And above all, I would say it can be used only by the guests they would like to come. So, it's a very simple way of looking at it.... In my view, the club is just an extension of your drawing room. It's where you can wine and dine and entertain your guests in a much more organized environment...it will have everybody at your service.

Arjun, the consultant for GLD, emphasizes that the decisions to design a community that was hierarchically organized and provides opportunities to demarcate boundaries is an important facet in appealing to the perceived desires of their target population:

Within this project they have special units which are a higher price for the suites. One of them is polo... so it's a taste that gives a feel-good factor to somebody, eh. It's only a perception whatever this is, they are selling a dream and nothing else. Selling their aspiration, their dreams.

He goes to explain further:

If you look at the developments 10-15 years back, aspirations of the consumers have grown, propensity to spend has grown. Real estate companies have to cater to these new aspirations... they need to add flavours to [residential] attraction. Golf adds value...but also you have to have the best clubs, it needs to be best, exclusive... you basically satisfy people's aspirations... this comes from the aspirational demands of the people, so we need new strategies for real estate.

In this way, Arjun argues that the landscape of real estate has changed, with developers needing to come up with creative ways to cater to the assumed aspirations of wealthy/upwardly mobile individuals to live in exclusive spaces and perform their 'eliteness' through their choice of living.

Interestingly, in this case, the way GLD chose to do this through using sport/leisure identities and brands (in the case of St. Andrews) to denote prestige, and to provide additional exclusive amenities.

3.5.2 *Nostalgic and colonial references of sport*

The choices to use golf and polo were deliberate also because of their associations with various forms of ruling classes in the Indian context. Associations with royalty and power were central to the positioning of the Golf Gardens as a space for the elite. When discussing the choice to use polo, Arjun explained its appeal because it is “a game in India... game of rulers, a game of royals”. Similarly, Ansh elaborates on this point by explaining the relationship of the sport to both Indian and English royalty:

Polo is even more elite than that because polo historically has been played by the maharajas or the kings... even if you look at Prince William in the UK. You know, the people who have always been associated with polo are the people who come from the royal families or the people who come from the Indian army.

In Ansh’s explanation, he emphasizes that the sport has a long history as practiced by *maharajas*, which is a Sanskrit term to describe the kings of the princely states in addition to being a contemporary practice by the English royal family.

References to both Indian and English polo also litter the promotional materials of the Polo Suites. The promotional book for the Polo Suites advertises a space “Where the gentry reside”, with “the spirit of a royal game imbibed in every square inch of your life [and] where Maharaja lifestyles are reborn”. Similarly, a promotional video produced by GLD advertising the features of the Polo Suites also has a curious mix of English and Indian associations. For example, the video opens with a quote from Winston Churchill – an avid polo player, learning to play and compete in the sport in India – saying: “it is believed... that a true powerful being is

first baptized in the fire of combat, taught never to retreat and never to surrender”. Throughout the rest of the video, the narrator highlights that polo is “a game so majestic in nature that it has drawn the attention of the most renowned celebrities of our time”. Images on the screen featured through the scene include famous Bollywood celebrities along with Prince William and Kate Middleton. While emphasizing that the Polo Suites will suit “the lifestyle and contentment of a maharaja”, “offering invitations to the best polo matches nationwide and internationally”, imagery of white celebrities such as Kate Beckinsale rubbing elbows with English royalty and Indian upper classes are foregrounded. Importantly, the video also claims that through the Polo Suites, GLD will bring “back the royal game to the place where it all began... India”.

In terms of golf, throughout the promotional materials, many references to the distinct history, tradition, and lavishness of St. Andrews (and the Scottish tradition) are prominent throughout in order to indicate further markers of distinction. For example:

Discover the true extravagance of a distinguished elite life. Inspired from the heritage and lifestyle of refined Scotland, GLD St. Andrews golf residences will be the signature elite living amidst the golf greens

Named after the famous St. Andrews Golf Club in Fife, Scotland, the tower soars to almost 125m, and pays homage to the lifestyle of its namesake – modern healthy living combined with tradition and luxury. Immediately apparent are the intervening ribbons that run the height of the tower, which echo the symbols of this ancient golfing nation and provide shading and privacy to the spectacular balconies that adorn the tower.

While the St. Andrews Tower would provide additional and exclusive amenities, nostalgia for the ‘St. Andrews tradition’ is what is interpreted by GLD as more desirable for their potential clientele. The reference to the ‘ribbons’ that ‘echo the symbols of this ancient golfing nation’ are particularly interesting. As Ajay, an architect from the multinational company designing the project, explained:

It was cross members that went across the whole tower at an angle, creating an argyle pattern, for the sweaters they have, yeah? So that's the St. Andrew's and that's how he called it St. Andrews.

Ajay alludes to the fact that the architecture of the tower would be a direct reference to sweaters that are stereotypically Scottish. The architectural rendering below demonstrates how this idea was translated into building design:



Figure 3: Rendered Image of St. Andrews Tower

And yet, after reading the promotional materials and having lengthy discussions with the architects involved in designing the tower and executing the imagination of GLD, I asked Ansh about the decision to relate this particular tower to St. Andrews golf course in Scotland.

Interestingly, he asserted that it was coincidence:

DW: Was there any conversation with St. Andrews golf club in Scotland?

A: We have no idea... I think the name was given by a marketing team. Our thought was just to position it differently and higher. So there is nothing.

DW: I've seen the promotional materials that you have available. You're marketing it in a certain way and it has sections about St. Andrews and the home of golf, so I thought it might have been a deliberate decision.

A: It's not about whether it is deliberate or not... the marketing team is more capable.. they came up with the solution.

Using St. Andrews and relating it back to histories associated with the game of golf was a 'solution' created by the marketing team for the problem of finding a way to help differentiate the tower from the rest in the community in order to sell it at a much higher value for higher returns.

3.5.3 Exclusive, all-encompassing space

In conceiving and promoting the GLD Golf Gardens, the GLD executives emphasized that the gated community would be all-encompassing. This meant that it would be a more-than-residential space, envisioned as a place where once inside there would be no incentive to leave the gates – everything one could need would be inside or could quickly be brought in through concierge/servant services. This was an important feature when GLD was conceiving of the Golf Gardens, and this was consistently emphasized in all aspects in the marketing and sales of the community to potential buyers (i.e. promotional books, social media marketing, and in-person sales pitches). Ansh, a top-level executive of GLD, emphasized this point:

That is what matters to the people and if you have [everything] within your own community, within your own tower, you don't even have to walk out. So, it's convenience, that's how it gets added to the proposal...the club is fantastic, it's a phenomenal club. It has two very nice banquets, it has mini theatre, it has a business centre, all your needs are done at one location.

On offer is a seemingly endless supply of amenities and facilities geared towards catering to any possible need of residents and their guests.

This ‘one stop shop’ nature of the Golf Gardens was present throughout online promotional materials and promotional videos on the GLD Golf Gardens website, and on a marketing blitz on their Instagram page that claim that there are “101 Reasons to Live at GLD Golf Gardens”. Included in these 101 reasons are amenities such as:

- A pet’s zone
- Sports facilities including: 9 hole pitch and putt golf course, a sports arena, indoor cricket pitch, basketball and mini football field, squash courts, tennis courts, jogging track, and a beach volleyball court
- 4 Fitness centres (including 1 outdoor fitness facility)
- 5 swimming pools as well as an infant splash pool, a watershooter, and water park
- 6 restaurants/eateries/bars, a wine cellar, and whisky lounge
- 3 lounges,
- 2 libraries
- 2 business centres
- 2 salons and 2 spas
- a shopping centre, 2 grocery and convenience stores, a pharmacy, and a laundry/dry cleaning service
- 2 childcare facilities
- Entertainment amenities including: 2 movie theatres, digital games room, billiards room, fooseball, amphitheatre, 2 banquet halls, and an art gallery.

Indeed, and although the gated community was termed ‘Golf Gardens’, it appeared that more emphasis was placed on all of the other facilities that GLD provided within in the boundaries of the community. Specifically, the golf course and the residence are only two of the 101 reasons to live at the Golf Gardens, the other 99 contribute to this complete lifestyle for sale.

This point was also underscored by Manish, a sales executive for GLD. When I met with Manish, he took me to the sales centre and walked me through the sales pitch to potential buyers for the GLD Golf Gardens Units. In his discussion with me, the extra facilities and amenities were heavily featured while the theme of golf seemed to be pushed to the background:

When we went to the sales centre, Manish played a power point presentation for me that he said is used when selling the Golf Gardens to interested buyers and investors. The presentation started with the branding of the GLD Golf Gardens

with the phrase below it stating, “finest golf resort-living for the whole family”. Immediately after, it became clear that it was the ‘living’ that was what was most important as the presentation segued right into all of the facilities present for use – multiple swimming pools, salons, restaurants, bars, lounges, hosting facilities, private clubs, kids areas, sports courts and fitness centres, grocery stores and more. All of these were mentioned and highlighted before that of anything to do with golf.... When the presentation was over, I questioned Manish about the decision to emphasize all of the amenities present in the Golf Gardens. He explained to me that prospective buyers wanted a place where they could live, and reside. Their clientele, he went on to say, were directors, CEOs, CFOs, and other executives of large companies, and they want a space that has everything they could possibly need at a drop of a hat. As he said, ‘they don’t want the hassle of going outside, so we have everything right here’. (Fieldnotes)

To Manish, the most important thing to emphasize was the all-encompassing and convenient nature of the Golf Gardens. In his words, “yes, there is a golf course, but it is so much more than that”.

The perceived value of having a self-contained micro-city was also emphasized in promotional videos produced by GLD that interviewed residents about their favourite parts and experiences of living in the Golf Gardens. In these videos, one resident explains that he loves “the resort living... there’s a café to wind down in, a restaurant, a lot of different things, even a library...”. Another describes his choice to purchase a flat in the Golf Gardens because he “is always concerned with the amenities”. A parent of young children highlights that she “really likes the club house here...[and the] outdoor kids play area...”. Two children discussed how they “loved how many sports amenities there are” and that they “enjoyed com[ing] to the mini theatre with [their] friends”. In these videos interviewing residents, using the golf course came up only once, with one resident explaining that he liked “to use it on the weekends.

3.6 Discussion

3.6.1 *Spectacular developments geared towards the new Indian middle class*

My findings revealed that the GLD Golf Gardens was conceived as a spectacular, more-than-residential space. As highlighted through the interviews with key executives and sales personnel, as well as the promotional materials, the homes provided were only one small aspect of the community that was designed with the intention of providing all residents with every sort of entertainment, dining, drinking, health/fitness, relaxation, and shopping amenity that could possibly be desired or required. In this way, this is similar to Shatkin's (2011, 2017) observations regarding the conceptualizations of Urban Real Estate Megaprojects across various metropolitan regions of Asia as high density, self-contained, urban cities that are built on a for-profit basis by one developer. Indeed, the size, scope, and imaginations of the GLD Golf Gardens (24 high rise towers) more similarly resemble other projects in Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, and China than gated residential developments in forms that are prominent in North American suburbs (i.e. sprawling, low density, and low-rise).

Importantly, and as Shatkin (2011, 2017) emphasizes, these sorts of developments are the most *prominent* strategy for urban development agendas in cities and peri-urban regions across Asia, South East Asia, and South Asia that states are employing (using a variety of tactics) to achieve various goals relating to economic advancement. That is, these UREMs, which the Golf Gardens is an example of, could be read as a specific and deliberate intervention employed by the state (or corporate allies or private-public partnerships) into providing solutions for urban development problems regarding drastic population growth, finding mechanisms to re-orient cities to align with the facilitation and attraction of domestic/foreign capital through speculative development, and to satisfy the perceived demands of growing consumer classes (Shatkin, 2017). The GLD Golf Gardens, and the decisions made to promote it as a self-contained, mini-city

should be considered with this in mind, and through a consideration of the specific context of the real estate landscape of Gurgaon.

As many have previously discussed, the landscape of Gurgaon is typified through the notion of the ‘Gurgaon Model’ of rapid, private-led development, the results of which have been a characterization of the landscape of the city as one of disconnected enclaved islands, almost like archipelagos (Soja, 2000) – at times barely connected by infrastructural provisions that are struggling to keep up with the hyperdevelopment in the region (Goldstein, 2016; Kalyan, 2017; Srivastava, 2014). Considered in this context, the positioning of GLD’s Golf Gardens as a place where once inside there is no reason to leave, is reflective of dominant urban development trends in the city. That is, the Golf Gardens is but one of many developments positioned in the same manner, and can be seen as a response to particular urban problems afflicting the city (i.e. lack of public infrastructure, amenities, leisure facilities, etc.). In other words, the state enables and facilitates these particular forms of development as a city building tactic, and they are built and imagined as such because the city was built largely from the ground up by private corporations following the logics of the land they assembled rather than the pace of city infrastructure development (Kalyan, 2017). In other words, one possible explanation, is that the Golf Gardens is imagined and designed in this way because it has to be – in part because all the competitors in the region are designed as such, and in part because private developers are expected to provide these amenities and services because there is a lack of public provision by the state. This is reflective of Shatkin’s (2011) and Fernandes (2004, 2006) assertions that these sorts of developments are driven by perceptions of middle and upper class urban residents of the failure of the state to control, plan, and develop the city, which serves to underpin and drive increasing privatization of infrastructure and city building.

This is also reflective of Ong's (2011a) discussions of the characteristics of hyperbuilding unfolding in Asian cities. GLD's Golf Gardens represents one aspect of the frenzied hyperdevelopment in the region (i.e. the pace and scope of urban residential developments that are built to include all sorts of amenities, related to the lack of public provisions), and also how these forms of hyperdevelopment beget more – and more spectacular – hyperbuilding. The proliferation of spaces like this one, one that is facilitated and encouraged by the state through the issuing of land licencing and land use approvals, speak to the broader processes of hyperbuilding that increase financial gain through inflation of real estate values. At the same time, this also points to how the city (through spectacular developments such as these) portrays an anticipation for growth and a globally connected urban future, especially through facilitating developments that attract elites connected to and involved in the global finance and technology industries (Ong, 2011a).

Relatedly, and through conceiving the Golf Gardens as a self-contained, exclusive entity, GLD's promotional materials produced an imagery of a *lifestyle* associated with living in the community. Littered throughout the promotional books and advertisements were references to exclusivity, elite class and exquisite tastes – and the idea that those who belong to this community are a part of a 'different world' of high travelled individuals. Similarly, interviews revealed that in designing and imagining the spaces and environments of the Golf Gardens, there was a conscious effort to sell to potential buyers' 'aspirations' and 'dreams.' Particularly, the promotional materials (and the decisions behind marketing the Golf Gardens in such ways) indicates that GLD are selling an imagined experience of an exclusive and elite lifestyle that they assume will be appealing to their target audience – a population that is thought to yearn for opportunities to draw boundaries between themselves and other populations through the

performance of particular dispositions, tastes, and identities (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006, 2011). The emphasis of the spaces here, like the ones analyzed by Brosius (2010) and Falzon (2004), is on spatial and social purity – i.e. the production of a distinct, yet generic, ‘utopian’ space, filled only with those who are of a similar class and taste. Following Pow (2009) and Raposo (2006), real estate in this context is marketed as ‘ideal state’ – an environment that is self-contained, cleansed, aspirational, transnational, and superior to the outside world. This is also reflective of Ong’s (2011b) observation that as the urban becomes a site for the expansion for new middle class populations, corporations and the state have begun to compete with one another to provide ‘improved’ spaces for working and living – with each one being different and better than the last.

Taken together, and following McGuirk and Dowling (2009) and Sigler and Wachsmuth (2016), the GLD Golf Gardens, while a gated community, cannot be conceptualized as a bounded entity that is confined to this particular locality. To be sure, the context in which this development is possible is unique (as evidenced in the real estate and development landscape of the city of Gurgaon more broadly), but it is also a globally-oriented site where both transnational and local practices intersect to (re)produce geographies of privilege and exclusion (Pow, 2011). Specifically, the Golf Gardens is reflective of broader city development practices that cater to groups that are connected to the facilitation of flows of capital, as well as land monetization strategies employed by the state.

3.6.2 Centrality of (hybridized) sport in the making of space

My findings indicated that ideas of sport/leisure were central to the imagination and promotion of the Golf Gardens community. Particularly, the interviews and promotional

materials revealed that golf was mobilized as a means through which to monetize land and that associations between golf/polo and prestige were utilized to demarcate hierarchical boundaries between privileged groups within the community. Additionally, an analysis of promotional materials and advertisements revealed referencing to historical and colonial sporting practices.

Shatkin (2017) argues that Urban Real Estate Megaprojects are a manifestation of attempts to capture revenue streams through utilizing land as a site for capital accumulation. Interestingly, my findings revealed that identities associated with sport were deliberately mobilized by the executives of GLD as a direct strategy of land monetization (Shatkin, 2017). While Shatkin (2017) implies that ideas of leisure are embedded in the value making projects of the positioning of Urban Real Estate Megaprojects, he does not directly consider the role that ideas associated with particular physical practices may have in driving the prices (or perceived value) of real estate projects. In this case, and as the interviews illustrated, understandings of golf and polo as practices of the elite were used to differentiate from competitors, and to assist in the portrayal of the Golf Gardens as a prestigious, exclusive, and luxurious environment in order to increase the value of the residential units, despite the location indicating that the true value of the units should be much lower when considering comparable gated developments in the region.

In some ways, my findings align with those offered by scholars who have investigated how sport/leisure are intimately tied to global capitalism and shown how the presentation of a specially curated image of the city that privileges the perceived aspirations and values of the tourist/international gaze. Scholars such as Kennelly (2015), Sze (2009) and Silk (2014) – primarily focused on the hosting of mega events and/or development of stadia for professional sports teams – have demonstrated the central role sport/leisure plays in driving the re-branding and re-imaging of city spaces around conspicuous consumption, and the production of

purified/cleansed urban environments. The findings presented here are reflective of those by Kennelly (2015) and Silk (2014) who found that sport is directly mobilized to symbolize hierarchies of belonging where some individuals become selectively included in (re)developed city spaces. In the case of the Golf Gardens, golf, polo and the St. Andrews brand are used to denote different hierarchical positions of belonging/privilege within the community – a point that is discussed in further detail in Chapter Five. The meanings associated with these sporting practices (i.e. elite, wealthy, white, royal) were what were utilized to construct an image of a space that was exclusive and for the privileged. To be clear, though, while sport is used to delimit distinctions between privileged groups within the community, the result is still the production of an exclusive space and purified space (with only certain groups included by way of their purchasing power), anchored by the consumption of identities associated with these particular leisure practices. At the same time, and while Baviskar (2011) argues that sport mega events can be utilized to enact significant spatial transformations that would be difficult to achieve without the ‘extraordinary’ moments of the temporary sport spectacle, my findings indicate that sport can act as a driver of large-scale urban interventions outside of the hosting of mega events.

The choices to use golf and polo were deliberate by the executives of GLD – and the nostalgic references to royal/colonial pasts were featured heavily throughout a variety of promotional materials. Brosius (2010) and King (2004) both highlight how many spaces of gated residential developments throughout the Delhi National Capital Region reference nostalgic Victorian, English, or European imagery, architecture, and histories – and are undeniably embedded in the inherited legacies associated with colonialism. In asserting that “...colonial lifestyles are back in fashion” (Brosius, 2010, p. 115), Brosius (2010), drawing on Bhabha’s

(1994) concept of mimicry, describes these spaces (and the colonial referencing therein) as not just a replica, but an appropriation and alteration that are reflective of “transnational asymmetries and flows that challenge us to revise the very concepts of modernity” (p. 120). King (2004), on the other hand, argues that the development of gated residential complexes that mimic colonial or North American forms are new examples of (neo)colonial development unfolding in various locations in the Global South. With Brosius (2010), I too think that these spaces are not merely reflective of passive relationships between the West and the South. I am less convinced, however, that these are reflective of asymmetric flows of ideas or forms of urbanism. Instead, in departing from King and Brosius, I do not think these spaces are mimetic. Reflecting on the ways in which the histories of the sports of golf and polo are selectively and deliberately mobilized by GLD, I want to suggest these spaces reflect hybridized (Bhabha, 1994) forms of sport and space – a position I take based on the histories of these specific sports and institutions discussed below.

The choice to utilize polo – and to reference both Indian and English expressions of the game – is an interesting one as the sport has been seen to challenge common notions of sport as a deliberate tool of (British) colonialism. While the popularization, diffusion, and institutionalization of polo is undoubtedly a product of colonial encounters, polo as a practice was not one that originated in the ‘West’ and brought elsewhere. Polo has origins in central Asia (connected to the Parthian Dynasty of 247-224 CE, and in Persia through the Turkic and Mongol rulers) and spread westward to India through the Islamic conquest of northern parts of India beginning in 711 (Chehabi & Guttmann, 2002; Parrish, 2018). It was in the 1850s that a British soldier first witnessed a polo match between tea workers in Manipur and took to playing the game himself (Chehabi & Guttmann, 2002; Parrish, 2018). The game was subsequently introduced to other British officers and the popularity of the sport spread among the British army

personnel as the game spread to Calcutta, Dacca, Punjab, and Delhi between the 1850s-1870s. As polo was appropriated by British colonial subjects stationed in India, it became institutionalized and exported back to England by British soldiers returning from their stations – where it remained a practice restricted to upper middle class men (Mcdevitt, 2003).

The history and diffusion of polo is important in the context of GLD proclaiming that through the Polo Suites they are ‘bringing the game back to home to where it all began’. While there is some nodding to nostalgic forms of the game practiced by Indian rulers as well as the ways in which it continues to be popularized by the English royal family, the imagination of the Polo Suites is not one of duplication or mimicry. As Homi Bhabha (1994) asserts, hybridity is “less than one and double” as every colonial concept will be reinterpreted in light of the ‘Other’s’ culture (Childs & Williams, 2014). As the promotional materials highlight, the Polo Suites is neither a reassertion of Indian royal sporting pastimes, nor is it an invocation of the distinctly English ways in which the practice had been taken up and remade by upper class Englishmen. The imaginations of these spaces are at once neither of these things, but selections of both. GLD offers highly specific meanings of polo as Indian and English, and abstracts these meanings in the creation of a new space. There is no polo pitch, no stables, and no open grassy spaces for riding. Yet, simultaneously, this is a space where sport/leisure – and particularly identities associated with polo – anchor a cordoned off space in a gated community complex that is considered to be more valuable and exclusive to that of golf.

The choice to utilize St. Andrews as a brand to differentiate apartments within the community (and to reference the particular Scottish elite tradition of golf and the St. Andrews Club) is also a curious one, especially because of the specific relationship between the Royal and Ancient St. Andrews in Scotland and the origins of golf in India, and the way in which golf in

reified forms such as this one had been utilized by Indians to construct forms of identity in a postcolonial context. Like many sporting practices, golf was exported to colonies through the British Imperial project. However, and as Dimeo (2005) asserts, unlike other sports (which were introduced to or included Indian populations to varying degrees), golf courses were exclusive spaces reserved for the British elites alone – in many cases, and unlike other sporting clubs (like polo clubs in India), even high status and elite Indians were not invited in as guests (Dimeo, 2005). Despite this, the oldest (still used) golf courses outside of Scotland are all in India, with the oldest being the Royal Calcutta Golf Club (established in 1829). In fact, the Royal Calcutta was founded by an individual stationed in India with the British East India Company, who was also a member of the Royal and Ancient St. Andrews in Scotland. As Dimeo (2005) argues, the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion within spaces of the Royal Calcutta Golf Club remained heavily policed along racial lines (with the exception the caddies that were used to serve the wealthy, white members). The first Indian member was reluctantly admitted in 1946, and the first Indian captain of the club was appointed in 1963 – 16 years after formal decolonization (Dimeo, 2005).

And yet, as Dimeo points out, the middle class and elite Indians who took over the Royal Calcutta Golf Club after 1947 left in place, preserved, and revered the club as it was ‘inherited’, despite its incredibly exclusionary politics. The Royal designation was kept, the English names of the internal spaces remain (i.e. Mountbatten Room), and portraits of English royalty such as Prince Phillip and Queen Elizabeth continue adorn the walls. Dimeo (2005) argues that the contradictory ways in which the club was taken over by Indian elites add nuance to discussions on the relationship between sport and the colonization of land and social exclusion. He also argues that the preservation of Scottish and English spaces of the club cannot be read as a form

of mimicry either, as the spaces that had been carved out by the British for their exclusive amusement became a *new* site for identity formation among the *Indian* elites and class struggles among local populations.

In some ways, GLD's choice to use St. Andrews makes sense in light of the royal referencing already mobilized through the designation of the Polo Suites. But, St. Andrews also is a natural fit precisely because of the colonial and political history of golf in India – and the ways in which golf clubs were (and continue) to be spaces that are heavily exclusionary and relegated for the elite. At the same time though, GLD, in this context, are not attempting to duplicate or replicate any of the spaces in St. Andrews in Scotland, and yet the ways in which they selectively reference the history and associations of St. Andrews as the 'home of golf' is reflective of the complex histories of the sport and the nuanced ways in which it has been appropriated throughout the country.

The result here is one where the idea of both golf and St. Andrews are being selectively utilized to reinterpret gated community living in the context of India. Many argue that gated residential complexes – especially ones built around golf courses – emerged as a feature of North American suburbia that have been exported to other places around the world. This may, in part, be true. However, taking seriously the complex history of golf and St. Andrews in India would lead to an analysis that suggests that these are also spaces of hybridity – reflective of colonial pasts, encounters, and transmissions, as well as postcolonial expressions.

The hybridity of these spaces is also apparent in the ways in which GLD use polo and golf side by side in the imagination and production of space. These communities are not just golf, or St. Andrews, or polo, but are instead an amalgamation of all them. Using the three together challenge the assumed meanings and structures of gated communities built exclusively around

golf (such as the ones in North America and beyond). Instead, this shifts focus to the complex colonial histories of these practices as they are mobilized to create new spaces of living. In following Brosius (2010), colonial lifestyles may continue to be in fashion, but perhaps in hybridized forms. This illuminates Bhabha's assertion that hybridity is 'less than one and double' because these communities are not referencing golf or polo or St. Andrews exclusively or holistically. Rather, they are selectively referenced and drawn on all at once – in their past and present expressions – to create new forms of urban living environments, attached with new meanings for consumers. These are undeniably related to colonial legacies, but have mutated into a form that is distinctly Indian in nature.

3.7 Conclusion

Grounded by Ong's (2011b) approach to studying changing urban forms and her concept of hyperbuilding (Ong, 2011a), as well as Bhabha's (1994) concept of hybridity I used the imaginations of space by developers, architects, and consultants in GLD's Golf Gardens as well as promotional materials marketing this gated community to prospective buyers to challenge common analyses of gated residential complexes as examples of the imposition of neoliberal urban development agendas, or as a manifestation of new forms of colonialism. Particularly, I attempted to demonstrate how GLD's Golf Gardens could be interpreted as a particular (state encouraged) solution to urban problems afflicting the area of Gurgaon, as well as reminiscent of broader hyperbuilding and urban real estate megaproject developments unfolding across Asian cities. Additionally, and through analyzing how specific images and understandings of golf, polo, and the St. Andrews brand are mobilized in the imagination of space, I looked to show how this gated development is a hybridized place (Bhabha, 1994) – one shaped by colonial histories, but

reflective of how sporting practices and urban development forms are renewed and remade in localized contexts, while still, at times, drawing on imaginaries of whiteness, royalty, and prestige. In doing so, I also highlighted how ideas associated with sport and leisure are central to, and can act as a driver of, large-scale changes of space outside of the spectacular moments of mega-events such as the Olympics or the World Cup. Taken together, and returning to Ong (2011b) and Roy (2011a), the analysis presented here questioned the ‘origin stories’ of gated developments as originating in North America and then transplanted elsewhere, while also demonstrating how these sorts of developments are undeniably connected to structures and forces beyond its specific boundaries.

4. Exploring strategies for land acquisition: intersections of informality as governance and graduated citizenship in competing claims to space

Before I left my visit with the farmer, he turned to me and shook his head. He said the thing I needed to understand was that honesty didn't matter anymore, whether land gets taken by deceit, out-right lies, or illegal action, it ends up in the developers' hands somehow, someday. He lowered his eyes and asked what the point of fighting it was anyway, the same people always seem to win. (Fieldnotes)

4.1 Introduction

In this study, I investigate strategies employed by GLD to acquire land for their developments – as well as the experiences of dispossession and exclusion by those who had their land acquired. Additionally, I explore resistance to (il)legal land acquisition by GLD – and responses by the state and the court to such protests. Through a focus on strategies and practices of land acquisition, and inspired by Ong (2006), I explore key moments where some spaces and people are selectively included into decisions that are geared towards the facilitation of global capital, while others are deliberately excluded from the benefits of neoliberal decision-making – and how claims to space reproduce notions of graduated citizenship. Additionally, and relatedly, following Roy (2009b) I consider how flexible interpretations of law in this case reflect both the unstable terrain of legal/illegal and legitimate/illegitimate land claims, and that informality, as a structure of power, enables the state to encourage some land uses over others.

This study contributes to literatures on economic liberalization, shifts in desirable forms of citizenship, the production of the 'millennial city' of Gurgaon, and processes of land acquisition. Many scholars have investigated how economic liberalization policies in the 1990s

led to changes in relationships between the state, the city, and various forms of urban citizenship – and especially how these changes have led to legal interventions that have justified the removal of individuals who are not interpreted by political and social elites to align with world class city visions. With the exception of a few studies (see Cowan, 2018), this literature features the experiences of those deemed to be ‘illegally’ occupying land by virtue of inhabiting informal settlements or areas marked as slums. Instead, this study focuses on individuals in agricultural and village land, and those who are able to stake ‘legal’ claim to space through the production of ‘proper’ (in the eyes of the state) land ownership documents.

Additionally, scholars have explored how policy changes in the region of Gurgaon enabled the relatively easy transfer of land from agricultural to commercial/private uses, and how complex relationships between the state and private actors allowed for land development regulations to be relaxed, manipulated, or exploited. This study contributes to this literature by providing an in-depth account of on-the-ground strategies used to compel individuals to sell land, as well as the specific ways in which developers bend and break land laws (and how the state directly facilitates these maneuvers) in the acquisition of development licences.

In what follows, I first introduce Ong’s (2006) theoretical concepts of ‘neoliberalism as exception’, ‘exceptions to neoliberalism’, and ‘graduated citizenship’ in order to open up avenues to explore the highly specific, contingent, and deliberate use of neoliberal practices by the state in the Indian context. In doing so, I highlight the utility of these concepts for the exploration of the shifting relationships of inclusion/exclusion, legitimate/illegitimate, and giving/denying value in various contexts, and how the interplay of these relationships lead to highly fragmented spaces and populations. Next, I explain postcolonial urban studies approaches that are inspired by Dipesh Chakrabarty’s (2000) project of provincializing Europe. Namely, I

outline Ananya Roy's (2009b) concept of urban informality and explain how informality can be used as a tool to explore the power of the state to flexibly and ambiguously determine allocations and uses of space. Following, I provide an overview of literatures that informed this study – specifically, scholarship on economic liberalization and acceptable forms of citizenship, the evolution of the 'millennial city' of Gurgaon, and avenues for (legal) land acquisition. Next, I explain my methods, data collection and analysis. I then outline the findings from the research – particularly, the strategies used to compel individuals to sell land, as well as other means of (il)legal land acquisition.

Based on these findings, I will argue that strategies used to compel individuals to sell are premised on the exploitation of legacies of flexible planning (Gururani, 2013) in the region. At the same time, I too will show how resistance through use of records (i.e. legal land ownership records) was ineffective – and that while resistance might temporarily shift the balance of power and stave off development, in some ways, these protests might contribute to the emboldening of the project of world class city-making. Additionally, an analysis of the even application of laws and regulation illuminates the hinge of exception explained by Ong (2006), as certain individuals are protected and privileged through the use of exception, while others excluded from political protections. Together, I show how informal modes of governance continuously blur the boundaries between what is considered legal and illegal, and legitimate and illegitimate.

4.2 Theoretical Perspective

4.2.1 Neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship

Many researchers utilizing political economic perspectives to examine the city argue that the implementation of neoliberal policies or practices works to fragment cities (and spaces within

them) according to perceived value (Graham & Simon, 2002; Hardt & Negri, 2001; Ong, 2011; Sassen 2001). Others explore how transnational flows of capitalism result in ‘localized neoliberalizations’ and investigate how certain types of neoliberal policies circulate across the globe, mutating in different localities through policy networks (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck, 2015; Peck et al., 2013; Peck & Tickell, 2002). These approaches – while at times making arguments that states make specific interventions – have been critiqued for assuming there are universal processes that drive capitalism, and for reducing spaces in the Global South to variants of a form that originates from the Global North (Robinson & Roy, 2016; Roy, 2016; Sheppard et al., 2013).

Ong (2006), builds on the ideas put forward by political economic scholars of the urban by focusing on issues of neoliberalism, spatial arrangements, global relationships, and citizenship, but offers an important departure point for the study of these relationships in cities in the Global South. Ong (2006) suggests that academic scholarship on the impacts and invocation of neoliberalism in non-Western contexts should focus on the relationship between *neoliberalism as exception*, and *exceptions to neoliberalism*. Neoliberalism as exception, she argues, is the interventionist aspects of the state in non-Western contexts that invoke neoliberal policies and practices where neoliberalism itself is not the typical governing strategy. Neoliberalism as exception becomes introduced in sites and spaces of transformation “where market-driven calculations are being introduced in the management of populations and the administration of special spaces” (Ong, 2006, p.3-4). Exceptions to neoliberalism, on the other hand, are invoked in deliberate political decisions to exclude populations and places from neoliberal policy calculations (such as the preservation of welfare benefits for specific populations or the exclusion of political protections for particular groups). Instead of viewing these two concepts as

mutually exclusive, Ong argues that it is most fruitful to explore the ‘hinge’ between neoliberalism as exception and exceptions to neoliberalism in order to examine the often simultaneous interplay and shifting relationships of inclusion/exclusion, governing/disciplining, and giving/denying value in various contexts – recognizing that in many cases populations that are governed by neoliberal technologies depend on others who are excluded from the benefits of neoliberalism (e.g. migrant or low-skilled workers).

Ong (2006) argues that while certain spaces are selected to facilitate the operations of global capital through the use of exception, space becomes fragmented into various non-contiguous zones that work to promote differential regulation of populations that are deemed to be connected or disconnected to global circuits of capital to varying degrees. Through deliberate political decisions to deploy neoliberal logics for mapping city spaces, some areas are negatively defined (i.e. freed from national laws regarding tax policies and labour rights) and others positively defined (i.e. promote opportunities or benefits for specific types of workers or improvements in social/infrastructural facilities), as a result of interaction with corporate and state actors (Ong, 2006).

Graduated citizenship, according to Ong (2006), is a result of this process. She uses this term to explain how the differentiation and fragmentation of spaces are coordinated with diverse modes of government that administer populations in varied ways, according to their perceived relevance and value in global economies. For example, low-skilled or migrant workers may be subject to disciplinary techniques that are geared towards increasing productivity and creating conditions that are favourable for global manufacturing. The result is that low-skilled or factory workers have less access to civil rights and welfare protections compared to those in other zones

(i.e. science parks or high-tech centres) who are given special treatment and increased access to social spaces and citizen-like privileges (Ong, 2006).

Building on these arguments pertaining to the role of the state in the selective and calculative deployment of neoliberal policies and strategies, Ong (2006) is ultimately focused on the market-driven strategies enacted by the state, their impacts on spatial fragmentation, and how enactments of neoliberal policies reconfigure relationships between the governed/governing, power/knowledge, and sovereignty/territoriality.

4.2.2 *Provincializing Europe and urban informality*

Dipesh Chakrabarty in his book, *Provincializing Europe*, argues that a provincialization of Europe needs to take place through a recognition of the history and place of Europe as being one of many places with differing histories. The goal of a provincialized approach is to demonstrate the narrow, reductive, and limited scope of universal knowledge claims. Importantly, however, he does not advocate for a complete rejection of theoretical tools stemming from European thought, but instead asserts that these academic traditions and concepts are indispensable but also inadequate in the exploration of the experiences of modernity in the Global South. For him, provincializing Europe is the task of exploring how this thought can be “renewed from and for the margins” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p. 16).

Referring back to the Introduction of this dissertation, to do this he makes a distinction between two histories, which he names ‘History 1’ and ‘History 2’. The former is the universal history often associated with capital – a story that underpins narratives of transitions towards a capitalist mode of production (Chakrabarty, 2000). History 2, on the other hand, are histories that do not necessarily “contribute to the reproduction of the logic of capital” (Chakrabarty, 2000, p.

64). However, because of the taken-for-granted nature of History 1, History 2s – the alternative arrangements or narratives that can be related to the history of capital, while also interrupting its logic – become occluded from view. Chakrabarty (2000) argues that History 1 and History 2s are always in constant interaction with one another, with History 1 always attempting to destroy the multiple and alternative possibilities that belong to History 2. The goal of a provincialized approach is to see History 1 as just one history among many, with each being worth of attention (Sheppard et al., 2013). This approach is particularly useful for this study, because it opens possibilities to examine legacies of colonialism and capitalism with alternatives – meaning one can study resistances, responses, and alternative arrangements without foreclosing their relationships with broader macro structural-historical forces and institutions.

Chakrabarty's ideas have been picked up by postcolonial urban studies scholars, many of whom assert a similar provincialization of urban studies must occur in order to transcend the dualisms between political economic and traditional subaltern/postcolonial approaches (Leitner & Sheppard, 2016; Robinson & Roy, 2016; Roy, 2011a, 2016; Sheppard et al., 2013). Particularly, in arguing for the provincialization of urban studies, Ananya Roy (2011a, 2016) suggests that postcolonial approaches to the city that emphasize subaltern agency or seek to promote a plurality of studies that highlight the empirical uniqueness of cities in the Global South are limited in their ability to explain the variety of contemporary urban experiments. One way Roy attempts to provincialize urban studies scholarship is through her conceptualization of urban informality. Urban informality is often seen as the purview of the poor, unpropertied, dispossessed, or the economic activities outside organized labour forces (Bayat, 2007; Benjamin, 2008; Chatterjee, 2004; Gibson-Graham, 2008; Gidwani & Reddy, 2011).

Alternatively, Roy (2009b) argues that informality should be conceptualized as an idiom of urbanization and a logic through which variegated spatial value is produced and managed. Informality, for Roy, is a state of (deliberate) deregulation that allows the ownership, usage, and purposes of land to be flexible and unmappable according to prescribed sets of laws or regulations (Roy, 2009b). With this in mind, she outlines four propositions regarding the characteristics of urban informality that should be attended to in any study of the urban condition in India. First, she posits that informality is not synonymous with poverty, rather, it is just as much the purview of the wealthy urbanites and suburbanites. Informality that privilege the wealthy (i.e. designation of land for shopping malls, private residences and amenities) are expressions of class power that command legitimacy in a way that marks them differently to slums. Second, informality must be understood as a deregulated and not unregulated system. Deregulation highlights that it is a calculated informality that requires deliberate action and planning by the state. Thus, despite being a system of deregulation, it is still possible to conceptualize it as a mode of regulation. Finally, insurgence does not necessarily lead to a just city. Roy warns that it would be dangerous to reduce the tactics and struggles of the urban poor as mere instances of rebellion or mobilization. Just as planning is not seen as the antidote to informality, for Roy (2009) insurgence is not necessarily the antidote to types of exclusion that are often deepened and maintained by informalized practices of the state.

Relatedly, Doshi and Ranganathan (2019), in proposing a framework through which to study issues of corruption, argue for the need to consider how the boundaries between illegality, immorality, and corruption are vague and fluid. As such, they advocate for research that investigates how structures of informality enable flexible territorial governance. Approaching informality in this manner allows for one to unpack how and in what ways uses of urban space

are subject to “substantial discretion, ambiguity, and negotiability... which makes them ripe for highly malleable indictments of corruption” (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019, p.448). In this way, and expanding on Roy (2009), Doshi and Ranganathan (2019) argue that informal modes of governance denote both extra-legal, but also flexible, applications of laws/regulations – especially in urban real estate. As a result, “what is illegal is not always seen nor narrated as immoral” (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019, p. 451). Thus, Doshi and Ranganathan push scholars to pay critical attention to when, how, and in what ways particular actions become politicized as (il)legitimate or (il)legal, and by whom. It is equally important to consider how urban processes that concentrate land and wealth are not always marked as corrupt, but rather are understood as a central feature of capitalist political economy (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019).

The ideas of provincializing Europe and urban studies – especially as theorized through Roy’s concepts of informality – complement the concept of neoliberalism as exception as discussed by Ong (2006) by demonstrating the calculative decisions and exceptions that the state makes, the relationships these decisions have to broader flows of capital, and the impacts these decisions have for those differentially treated through state-led decision-making around (in)appropriate uses of space. Through the use of the two together, avenues are opened for the exploration of the contentious and contingent dynamics of deliberately flexible territorial rule – and the impacts of these modes of (in)formal governance.

4.3 Literature

4.3.1 Economic liberalization and urban spatial shifts in India

From the late 1980s onward, economic structures and policies in India have shifted away from encouraging public investment sources, limiting import and export, and restricting foreign

investment – and moved towards an orientation that focused primarily on reintegration in the world economy and which privileged free market capitalism, corporatization, and privatization (Fernandes, 2006; Pedersen, 2000; Reed, 2002). Such shifts accelerated around 1991, when the Indian economy was severely compromised – and when the state, in response, took loans from the International Monetary Fund. Of course, taking these loans also meant agreeing to the conditions of these loans, that required undergoing strict neoliberal economic reforms (Reed, 2002). These changes contributed greatly to the rapid globalization of India and led the nation to become a focus for international investment and outsourcing (Chopra, 2003).

Many scholars have noted that the neoliberal economic reforms that took place in India in the early 1990s shifted the relationships between the state, the city, and forms of (urban) citizenship. Particularly, studies centering on changes to land development regulations after economic liberalization provide useful illustrations of the intersections of graduated citizenship, urban informality, and broader structural neoliberal policies. Both Bjorkman (2015) and Doshi (2013) discuss how, in efforts to achieve world class city status in Mumbai, the newly elected Shiv Sena party in 1996 (a far right Hindu-nationalist party) pledged to clean up the city through the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme that aimed to remove and resettle 4 million slum dwellers, and attract foreign capital investment for large-scale real estate/infrastructure development. This new policy was created through public-private collaborations between the state, urban land developers, international NGOs, community groups, and financiers (Bjorkman, 2015; Doshi, 2013).

Doshi (2013) uses the changes in land use regulations to demonstrate how these policies impact the experiences of displacement and graduated citizenship. She argues that the interaction between international NGOs and the Shiv Sena Party led to contradictory social inclusions and

exclusions in the Slum Rehabilitation Scheme. Specifically, she demonstrates how the work of an international NGO led to the inclusion of women into resettlement schemes because they were positioned as the ideal beneficiaries due to their knowledge of the home and entrepreneurial abilities to help bring themselves and their families out of poverty. However, she also notes that due to the xenophobic practices of the Shiv Sena party, areas that contained higher proportions of North Indian migrants or Muslim individuals were disproportionately targeted for removal. At the same time, those eligible for resettlement housing were restricted to those that could provide proper proof of residency prior to a certain cut-off date, and those who reside on the ground floor of units (renters and residents on upper floor units would be ineligible). Thus, Doshi's (2013) study demonstrates that experiences of graduated citizenship are determined by factors other than class, and that those excepted from neoliberal policies are also connected to broader transnational development discourses and institutions (Escobar, 1995; Hayhurst, 2011; Li, 2007; Mohanty, 2003).

Bjorkman (2015), on the other hand, examines the relationships between liberalizing economic reforms, urban informality, and the politics of urban infrastructures through an exploration of the chronically unavailable water supply in Mumbai's communities. She argues that the divide between formal and informal are blurry, and as a result do not neatly fall into categories of slum/world class or planned/unplanned neighbourhoods, as water shortage issues seem to transcend class boundaries. She asserts that the marketized incentives for slum rehabilitation projects ultimately wreaked havoc on water structure systems, as there was a significant mismatch between above ground buildings and below ground infrastructure.

In a similar vein, scholars investigating changes in court decisions in millennial Delhi highlight the constant shifts in boundaries of (desirable) citizenship, space, and neoliberal policy

orientations in the context of ‘world class city’ aspirations. Scholars such as Routray (2014) and Bhan (2009) argue that between 1986 and 2000 the court system made a series of rulings that protected the ‘right to life’ for the informal housing inhabitants through guarantees that protected their rights as citizens to shelter, food, and water. Through these rulings, the urban poor were able to use specific documents (i.e. voter registration cards, food ration cards, etc.) to stake claims to the city, foreground their citizenship, enhance political visibility, exercise voting rights, and resist eviction and/or be provided resettlement housing (Routray, 2014). This changed drastically in 2000 when the court ruled that Delhi needed to become the showpiece of the country in an effort to become a world class city in preparation for the hosting of the 2010 Commonwealth Games – a logic that was used to justify and require the cleansing of unsightly slums (Baviskar & Ray, 2011; Bhan, 2009; Rao, 2010; Routray, 2014; Schindler, 2014). As a result, slums were ruled to be large areas of public land inhabited illegally for private use and free of cost (Bhan, 2009; Ghertner, 2015).

Ghertner (2015) describes how this 180-degree shift on behalf of the court represents a shift in urban organization and planning away from a ‘rule by records’ (associated with surveys, statistics, and counting) towards a ‘rule by aesthetics’. By rule by aesthetics, he means the invocation of a new standardized aesthetic code (defined by factors such as cleanliness, organization, and beautified spaces that are cleansed of dirt) that reshaped boundaries between order/disorder, visibility/invisibility, and legitimate/illegitimate that are now used by the state to rationalize interventions into the spaces of the slum (i.e. demolition, eviction, cleansing). At the same time, this redefinition of citizenship in terms of economic productivity required a reconstruction of the poor as criminal, improper citizens as a way to justify evictions and demolitions (Bhan, 2009). It was through invoking exceptions on behalf of the state (as prior to

this, the welfare of slum dwellers had been preserved) that slum demolitions could be framed as in the public interest and as an ethical marker of good governance – rather than as acts of violence (Bhan, 2009; Ghertner, 2015). Furthermore, and as Ghertner (2015) highlights, it is this specific shift to a ‘rule by aesthetics’ that meant that the traditional channels that were available to the urban poor for making claims to space and citizen protection had been foreclosed under new regulatory spatial regimes. That is, legal documents and court litigations were no longer avenues through which the poor could demonstrate ‘proper citizenship’ and acquire rights to the city (Ghertner, 2015).

Relatedly, Shatkin (2017) argues that the context of economic liberalization has (re)shaped the legal frameworks for urban planning and housing rights. For Shatkin (2017), this includes the scope of state power to acquire land for developments that it defines as being in the ‘public interest’, as well as the extent of protections for those staking claims to space through legal and extralegal means. In his words, “the law itself is often contradictory and in many instances both the state- and private-sector-driven evictions violate both its letter and intent” (p. 92). Oftentimes, however, the urban poor have been disproportionately displaced as the law is evoked to deem their presence and occupancy of land as criminal or a threat to the environment (Shatkin, 2017).

4.3.2 Land transformation into the ‘Millennial City’ of Gurgaon

Many scholars have contextualized the rapid urban evolution of Gurgaon through references to the complex relationships between the state and private actors that facilitated land use changes away from agricultural production and toward corporate/residential usage, with the aim of attraction flows of global capital (Chatterji, 2013; Cowan, 2015, 2018; Goldstein, 2016;

Gururani, 2013; Kalyan, 2017; Shatkin, 2017; Srivastava, 2014). For example, after being pushed out of private urban development in Delhi due to the implementation of new planning regulations, prominent urban development corporations turned their attention to Gurgaon to expand their residential and commercial development efforts (Kalyan, 2017; Searle, 2016; Srivastava, 2014). This was for three main reasons: 1) its proximity to the Delhi International airport (Hiro, 2015; Kalyan, 2017); 2) the landscape was considered to be agriculturally unproductive, thus the state more readily allowed land usage to shift away from agricultural development towards other uses (Chatterji, 2013; Cowan, 2018; Gururani, 2013), and; 3) the city was governed by a municipal council (not corporation like other larger urban environments), which meant that there were significantly fewer layers of municipal bureaucracy for developers to navigate (Gururani, 2013).

As Cowan (2018) and Gururani (2013) argue, the ‘Gurgaon Model’ of private-led development that many assert was seemingly invented after economic liberalization in the 1990s was given a jumpstart due to shifts in policy objectives from the 1960s-1980s. Particularly, and as Gururani (2013) argues, in the 1960s the Indian government launched a new agricultural policy called the ‘Green Revolution’. Under the Green Revolution, while the state of Haryana was targeted as one of five states to produce high yield crops, the city of Gurgaon was deemed unfit for agricultural development because it was cut off from water supplies, had poor drainage, and limited possibility for effective irrigation (Gururani, 2013). Instead, and as the state was focused on the nearby city of Faridabad for agricultural investment, Gurgaon remained excepted from land use policies that targeted the preservation of land for agricultural uses, and land use change was relatively easy and facilitated by the state government. With the focus of the state elsewhere, the DLF (a prominent property developer that sparked private development in

Gurgaon) was able to negotiate with state officials, manipulate regional maps, and convince the state to make tracts of land available for private development (Gururani, 2013; Hiro, 2015; Kalyan, 2017; Srivastava, 2014). This was made especially possible because the city was controlled by a municipal council, which meant that development decisions were made by a chief minister (who had sole discretionary power to authorize development licences) located in the capital city of Chandigarh, 275km away from Gurgaon (Cowan, 2015; Gururani, 2013; Hiro, 2015). This arrangement lasted decades, and due to having significantly less bureaucratic hoops to maneuver, the DLF was able to assemble 3500 acres of urbanizable land in Gurgaon through direct negotiations with landholders or the state – the most in the country at that time (Kalyan, 2017). Thus, during this period, the groundwork for the ‘Gurgaon Model’ of private development was established.

As India liberalized its economy in 1991 and began embracing global capital flows, Gurgaon quickly became aligned with new ideas of modernity pushed by the state. As Dupont (2011), and Cowan (2015) highlight, this is partly because as the economic borders of India were reoriented towards integration with the global economy, the federal branches of government decentralized state sovereignty to local nodes of government – thus empowering cities to shift city organization to meet the imperatives of global capital (Cowan, 2015; Dupont, 2011).

For example, following economic liberalization, a group established by the Department of Economic Affairs in 1994 used projections of population and economic growth in the country to legitimize shifts in government policy towards both commercialization and privatization of infrastructure provision (Searle, 2016). The logic behind these policies was that the projected growth required infrastructure, but that infrastructure also required growth – and that both would require private and foreign funding (Searle, 2016). It is in this context that Searle argues that an

international real estate market in India emerged. This facilitated a new federal Housing and Habitat policy that mandated that the government foster an environment for the growth of the housing industry, rather than taking on the risk of building the facilities through the state directly (Searle, 2016). Not long following, the federal government officially legalized foreign direct investment in township construction and further liberalized the policy in 2005 by stipulating that foreign direct investment in real estate development could proceed without prior approval from the government or the Reserve Bank of India (Chatterji, 2013; Searle, 2016). Coinciding with this was the 2005 Special Economic Zone policy, which helped to make large tracts of land available for real estate and corporate development projects by providing various incentives to developers and industry. The state of Haryana also had a new Information Technology policy at the time, reflecting and cementing the shift away from a heavy focus on agriculture towards global finance. This policy pledged preferential land allotments for urban development projects targeting the IT sector (whether through call centres or other outsourcing facilities) and further relaxed already flexible land use conversion procedures (Chatterji, 2013). As Kalyan (2017) highlights, between 1982 and 2005, government officials making land use decisions about Gurgaon from Chandigarh approved the transfer of 7400 acres of land for private development. However, in the nine years between 2005 and 2014 (after new policy directives following economic liberalization), the state government approved the transfer of an *additional* 9400 acres of land. Put another way, as Cowan (2018) argues, from 1989-2012, the Gurgaon urbanizable area increased by close to 300% – from 9900 acres to 37,000 acres, with the majority of that development coming from private development efforts.

In investigations of the evolution of the ‘millennial’ city of Gurgaon, scholars have used different theoretical perspectives and concepts to explore the implications of the rapid

development of the city. For example, Cowan (2015) utilizes Ong's (2006) theorization of neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship to argue that 'exception' emerged as a form of governance in Gurgaon whereby various populations are governed differently – with the results being fragmented, yet hierarchical citizenships in the city (where spaces and people connected finance and IT development are privileged alongside the exclusion of 'others'). Particularly, he argues that the production of space in 'new' or 'global' Gurgaon is a characteristic of the usage of neoliberalism as exception as much of the elite settlements/developments of the city are exempted from planning regulations in order to facilitate flows of global capital into the city (Cowan, 2018). At the same time, however, this led to the production of fragmented spaces in the city, where the logics of exception were utilized to inscribe different meanings or values into sharply separated, but simultaneously dependent spaces – where privileged classes depend and rely on cheap, heavily disciplined/controlled labour, of migrant or dispossessed villagers (Cowan, 2018).

Similarly, Chatterji (2013) and Kalyan (2017) argue that the landscape of Gurgaon is deeply fragmented because project phasing by private developers tend to follow the logics of land they assembled rather than the planned strategies drawn up by state agencies. Kalyan, situating his work in Chakrabarty's project of provincialization, challenges explanations that would claim Gurgaon is an example of an 'incomplete transition' to modernity by instead arguing that there are two different paces at which urban development takes place. He uses the mismatch between the speed of private development compared to the much slower public infrastructure provision to provide an explanation for the production of Gurgaon into a city of disconnected islands since private and public entities remain central players in and around spatial

development in Gurgaon. This, he asserts points to a co-existing form of modernity that must be understood on its own terms.

Gururani (2013, p.137), on the other hand, argues that the “chaotic and fragmented state of Gurgaon [is] not a reminder of a lingering Third World lethargy or poor planning,” but instead what she calls ‘flexible planning’. By this she means a ‘different sort of planning’ that acts as a cultural logic, allowing for flexibility, exceptions/exemptions, and the redrawing/manipulation of plans. By exploring flexible planning as a mode of state power and governance, Gururani’s (2013) arguments are not dissimilar to Roy’s discussion of urban informality, and her assertions about the necessity to investigate the ways in which informality can be understood as a deregulated (not unregulated) system, and a feature of power that allows the state flexibility in making land available for some uses over others.

4.3.3 Avenues for (legal) land acquisition in Gurgaon

Many scholars have discussed laws of land acquisition in Gurgaon – and how these laws have been subject to manipulation over time and space to facilitate private acquisition and development (Chakravorty, 2013; Debroy & Bhandari, 2009; Gururani, 2013; Shatkin, 2017; Weinstein et al., 2014). Of particular importance is the 1894 Land Acquisition Act, the 1963 Punjab Scheduled Roads and Controlled Areas Restriction of Unregulated Development Act, the 1972 Haryana Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, and the 1975 Development and Regulation of Urban Area Act.

As Debroy and Bhandari (2009) highlight, the core of land acquisition laws largely remains rooted in the colonial legislation of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. Colonization, as Chakravorty (2013) notes, was driven almost entirely by the desire to profit off of land revenues

in Haryana, and as the colonial state began converting agricultural land to other uses for infrastructure or industry, the colonial state established a monopsony: a situation where there are many sellers and one buyer, and the buyer – in this case the state – can set the price. As such, the Act states that whenever land in any locality is needed (or needed potentially in the future) for any public purpose, the government can demand to acquire such land and provide compensation (Chakravorty, 2013; Debroy & Bhandari, 2009). This meant that the state had the power to determine what constituted a public purpose, but also, more importantly, this laid the groundwork for elements of land acquisition that lasted over a century. Possibilities for objections were built into the Act, but they remained contentious, and became even more so when an amendment to the Act was passed in 1984 which allowed land to be acquired not just for public provisions, but also for private companies (Debroy & Bhandari, 2009). Any acquired land, under the amendment, can be handed over to private developers for a variety of purposes – or, through contracts, to allow private developers to buy agricultural land for other uses deemed loosely in the public good (such as elite housing developments or corporate parks in the case of Gurgaon) (Debroy & Bhandari, 2009; Weinstein, Sami, & Shatkin, 2014). In Gurgaon specifically, the Haryana Urban Development Authority (HUDA) – the state organization tasked with the implementation of masterplans and large infrastructure provisions – has directly utilized the Land Acquisition Act to acquire land, and has quickly turned it over to private developers while providing little oversight over development plans (Kalyan, 2017).

Outside of the federal Land Acquisition Act, scholars have investigated land laws that are particular to the state of Haryana. Gururani (2013), for example, provides a compelling discussion around the implications of the 1963 Punjab Scheduled Roads Act. She explains that this act was designed (but largely failed) to prevent haphazard and substandard development in

the controlled areas – areas that included an 8km radius around the centre of Gurgaon. While land in the controlled areas were to be developed specifically by the HUDA, the boundaries of these controlled areas were subject to significant manipulation over time by a variety of private developers with the blessing from state administrators (Gururani, 2013). This manipulation was made possible because the ability to invoke exception was built into the act through a clause that outlined the ‘power of relaxation’ (Gururani, 2013). The ‘power of relaxation’ allowed the government to loosen any condition on development in controlled areas if it was deemed in public interest or to subvert any designated plan if considered necessary, in effect beginning practices of regulated improvisation of planning in the region (Gururani, 2013). Through the invocation of this clause, private developers were able to begin assembling tracts of land for development in this context (Gururani, 2013).

Relatedly, the 1972 Haryana Ceiling on Land Holdings Act was enacted to limit the amount of land a private individual/entity can hold or acquire in order to prevent the concentration of urban land in the hands of a few companies/individuals and to promote a more equitable distribution of land. Up until 2011, the land ceiling limit was restricted to a maximum of 21.8 hectares or 53.87 acres of land (The Haryana Ceiling on Land Holdings Act, 1972). Intersecting with this act was the 1976 Urban Land Ceiling Regulation Act, which was enacted to bring about distribution of land in urban agglomerations for the common good and to limit the purchase of large land banks by corporate entities (Weinstein et al., 2014). However, and as many have highlighted, these laws were largely ineffective, as despite these regulations, many exemptions were granted to property owners, non-existent corporations, and private developers, ultimately leading to large portions of agricultural land being converted and developed for other uses (Acharya, 1987; Cowan, 2015; Debroy & Bhandari, 2009; Gururani, 2013; Hiro, 2015).

This was possible, in part, because of uses of the Land Acquisition Act (where land was subsequently transferred to private entities for development), and the fact that Gurgaon only had a municipal council which allowed private developers to twist legal hurdles through direct tactics of negotiation with the state official charged with granting licences for development (Hiro, 2015). There are continued violations of the 1972 Act, however, which are made clear in recent investigations of private developers setting up small subsidiary companies which then acquire land under the ceiling limits, and then transferring the power of attorney to the larger parent company for development. A recent court ruling noted that companies do this with direct intent to violate land ceiling laws, and that this is possible because the 1972 Act is implemented by the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management, which is a completely separate entity to the Town and Country Planning Department (the body responsible for issuing development licences) (*M/s Aaliyah Real Estates Pvt.Ltd. and others v. State of Haryana & Ors.*, 2011).

Finally, the 1975 Haryana Development and Regulation of Urban Area Act also had profound influence on the development landscape of Gurgaon. Despite the purpose to regulate and prevent ill-planned and disorganized development in the state of Haryana, exception was built into the act as any owner desiring to convert their land into a colony (private residential or commercial venture) could do so with an application to the state for approval and through the payment of a prescribed fee and land conversion charge to the Haryana Urban Development Fund (Cowan, 2015; Gururani, 2013; Hiro, 2015). Ultimately, this introduced a system of payments that facilitated permissions to modify city master plans and allow further entry of private developers into the region (Gururani, 2013). This also allowed private developers to directly negotiate and purchase land from landowners within controlled areas (Cowan, 2015). Particularly influential in this context was Bhajan Lal, who was Chief Minister of Haryana three

times between 1979-1996. He directly facilitated the approval of licences for development for private entities, leading to 85% of the urbanizable land within the limits of Gurgaon being developed by the private sector. As Hiro (2015) argues, with the assistance of Bhajan Lal's government (through direct bribes and back office deals), the DLF and other private developers were able to "[twist] the law in every possible way" and receive "licences for more than 4,150 acres in Gurgaon" (Hiro, 2015, p.30). These developers were able to do so with help from the government in deliberately "shredding the rules laid out in the 1975 Act and by neglecting to verify the companies' claimed ownership of land, which they often started buying *after* getting the licences" (Hiro, 2015, p. 30).

4.3.4 Gaps and next steps

This study is designed to build on and extend the above literatures in a few key ways. For example, scholarship on land use changes and avenues for land acquisition in Gurgaon has focused on the implications of broad policy shifts on land allocation. This study contributes to this literature by exploring the specific strategies employed by developers to compel individual land owners to sell their property, as well as the specific means used by development corporations manoeuvre land development regulations.

Additionally, scholarship on the impacts of economic liberalization on desirable forms of citizenship have centred on the processes and experiences of eviction by slum or informal settlement dwellers who are deemed to be illegally squatting on public land. However, little is known about the experiences of those who 'legally' own agricultural or village land in Gurgaon (for an exception see Cowan, 2018). The study that forms the basis of this chapter is an attempt to fill this gap by focusing on the experiences of dispossession by agricultural land owners, and

how the state intervenes into these spaces to make land available for luxury developments – while also using this case to explore the malleable boundaries between what is considered legal and illegal, and legitimate and illegitimate in the creation of gated community development.

4.4 Methods and Analysis

This study draws on a range of qualitative methods, including interviews, observations, and qualitative document analysis. Interviews were conducted with farmers and villagers who had their land acquired by GLD or hired land aggregators (n=8), a property broker in the region (n=1), a consultant working with GLD on their developments (n=1), and an aggregator employed by GLD to acquire village/farm land (n=1). The goals of the interviews were to gain an understanding of strategies used by developers and their hired land aggregators to compel individuals to part with their land, as well as to explore experiences of having land acquired to make way for GLD's developments.

Interviews were supplemented with a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) (see Chapter Two for a more detailed discussion of this approach) of court proceedings and rulings related to land acquisition by GLD or their subsidiaries, police reports filed related to (il)legal land transfer/occupancy by GLD, archival land ownership records, federal and state land laws and regulations, and information published on the Ministry of Corporate Affairs website detailing registered corporations and their directors (enabling me to trace connections between GLD and their subsidiaries).

For this study, the use of QDA was informed by contextual cultural studies and archival anthropology. The goal of cultural studies in research has been to understand the experiences of people and cultural texts and representations, within the broader context of political, social, and

economic structures (Hall, 1980; S. King, 2005). Millington and Wilson (2013) argue that QDA – when used with a cultural studies-oriented sensibility – is especially appropriate for those that are interested in examining the processes through which particular meanings and representations (in documents) come to be privileged and taken-for-granted. This is especially pertinent when analyzing court rulings regarding the (il)legal acquisition of land and issuing of land development licences, as this approach is helpful to unearth the assumptions (and practices) that enable land to be allocated for some uses over others.

As also discussed in Chapter Two, I draw on Stoler's (2002, 2010) methodological approach to archival anthropology. In this particular case, I looked to read documents collected (i.e. land ownership documents, court proceedings and rulings, land licencing applications, etc.) 'along their grain'. This means to pay close attention to their regularities, logics, and consistencies of (mis)information or omission (Stoler, 2002). In this specific study, I used this approach, inspired by Stoler (2002), to explore documents related to land law and court rulings in order to unpack the slippery distinctions between legitimate/illegitimate claims to space – and to question how and when certain acts are called into question as legal or illegal, and by whom.

4.5 Findings

In what follows, I describe a variety of strategies used by GLD to acquire land. My findings presented below are separated into three different themes: high level strategies to facilitate land acquisition; uses of deception, manipulation, bribery, and gaining/exploiting trust to garner land sales 'on the ground'; and (il)legal land acquisition through force (and resistance to such practices). The discussion of high-level strategies centres on broad tactics used to evade legal regulations that restrict large-scale land acquisitions.

Included here is a focus on the ways GLD (or their hired land aggregators) compel and negotiate with individual landowners to sell their land. I also describe an example of land being taken by force, resistance to such approaches through appeals to the court system, and responses by the court to such resistance. While the three themes presented in the findings are distinct, they should also be read in a way that considers how each of these strategies are intimately connected to each other. That is, they were all used in tandem in the pursuit of acquiring land to build a large-scale luxury development.

4.5.1 High level strategies to facilitate land acquisition

While many strategies and tactics are used by development companies to assemble land to launch a variety of urban products, there was one major high-level strategy that seemed to be of utmost importance – setting up a number of subsidiary companies. Through tracking of information published by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs – the administrative body of the federal government tasked with regulating various factions of public and private corporations – there appears to be at least 119 privately held subsidiaries connected to GLD’s publicly traded parent company. While it is impossible to know exactly how many subsidiaries exist, the exact number of subsidiary companies does not matter. What is important are the two reasons for which they exist.

First, large development companies like GLD looking to develop land in Gurgaon tend to create large number of subsidiaries in order to navigate around land acquisition and development regulations in the state. Because many developers are in the business of attaining and assembling large tracts of land for projects that often required more acreage than the limits (the Golf Gardens is promoted as a 75 acre development), they would set up subsidiaries to assemble and hold

smaller pieces of land connected to each other in order to circumvent the limits. These subsidiaries would often either transfer land where possible to GLD's parent company, or transfer power of attorney over the land to GLD through collaborator agreements or other means to facilitate the approval of land development licences. Indeed, the possibility of having at least 119 subsidiaries is plausible as GLD is reported to have a landbank of over 2200 acres throughout Gurgaon for a variety of commercial and residential developments (Press Trust of India, 2018).

While one major purpose of subsidiary companies is to navigate grey areas around land purchase, transfer, development, and ownership laws in the state, these subsidiaries are also used as a smokescreen when approaching landholders to sell. Specifically, subsidiaries – especially ones with names that are unrelated to the parent company – are used by developers/land aggregators to hide the fact that small parcels of land close to each other (i.e. neighbouring villages) will end up in the hands of a large development firm. As Vijay, a property dealer in Gurgaon, emphasized:

Developers recognize that it is important to ensure that the farmers or villagers do not know the land is going to one developer. They create shells or subsidiaries that have completely different names that are unaffiliated with the parent company. In part, this is because if the villagers are aware the land is going to one developer, they might refuse to sell, or demand larger sums of money.

Setting up small subsidiaries, in this case, mitigates against the possibilities of farmers banding together or holding out for more lucrative offers. This point was also made by a land aggregator who was hired to assemble land for a variety of GLD's projects. While refusing to give me the specific names of some of the subsidiaries he used, he did say that he represented a multitude of subsidiaries for GLD and used these companies to "secure land deals that would go back to GLD

in the end for their big projects.” This strategy, he said, “helped in getting farmers to sell to small companies and helped getting GLD or other developers get big land plots.”

4.5.2 Strategies on the ground to facilitate land transfer/purchase: deception, manipulation, gaining trust, and bribes

GLD and their hired land aggregators utilized a variety of other ‘on the ground’ strategies to convince villagers or farmers to sell their land. These included deception and manipulation (especially regarding claims of the possibilities of state takeovers of land), building relationships with farmers/villagers and then exploiting that trust, and using bribes to take advantage of ruptures within familial/community relationships.

As Arjun (a consultant for GLD) and Vijay (a property broker in the region) told me, part of what made GLD especially astute in assembling tracts of land was that, unlike other developers in the region (propertied and monied), their founders and owners, two brothers, were originally village boys themselves, who came from a family of wheat traders. As Vijay explained:

they [the brothers] had initially got into the business by purchasing land for other large companies for a commission. It was their background as village members that helped to gain trust of those they were targeting for land sales. Their experience purchasing land on behalf of others, and their knowledge of village life and practices helped them to develop strategies to manipulate farmers to sell their land

Most other respondents emphasized that one major strategy to facilitate land acquisition was to approach farmers or villagers with the news that new masterplans had been drawn for the city of Gurgaon and the land they were sitting on had been re-zoned. Under re-zoning, the agricultural or village land that these individuals occupied was slated to become either commercial or residential sites under future development planning for the city.

Particularly, the land aggregator I met explained that he was friends with the brothers and came from the same village. He claimed they hired him specifically to help buy village/agricultural land because of his specific background. He bragged that he was able to acquire over 500 acres of land for a variety of developers, including GLD. As he said:

Land aggregator: I was successful in convincing farmers to sell land in one or two days

DW: what makes you so successful?

Land aggregator: They all knew me and trusted me. I am a village guy like them.

Because he had built trust with the farmers, he told me that his first strategy was to approach the villagers with the claim that because of new masterplans for the city (whether true or not), the government would inevitably come to acquire their land either way under the Land Acquisition Act, and that if they sold now to this private developer they would get a much better deal than they would from the government. In doing so, he claimed that the private sector was not at the forefront of facilitating land takeover for private development but was there to offer a more lucrative solution to those who would become disenfranchised regardless. While it was true that the villagers and farmers might be able to secure more money from selling to private corporations directly, this was still a tactic of deception because it was not always true that land in the region had been rezoned under new state masterplans.

This strategy was emphasized by villagers I met who had sold their land to GLD or their subsidiaries. Many told me that they were repeatedly told that their land would be taken by the government, and while they did not know if this was the case for sure, the flexible and rapid development throughout Gurgaon at this time made this claim seem entirely plausible. In some cases individuals told me they were skeptical of the assertions made about impending land acquisition, but as they watched their neighbours sell their land under this pretence to GLD or

their hired land aggregators, the possibility of this happening became more believable to them, so they too decided to sell their land. As one farmer told me in particular:

When the masterplan came in 2005, the brothers came here and said the land would be acquired through the government and they will give us a cheaper rate...this was not the correct thing... but they took the entire village in his confidence [through this tactic]...but we gave our lands out of fear.

While this was the first strategy used by GLD or their land aggregators, it was not always successful. As Vijay told me:

In some cases, small patches of land might be owned by multiple members of a family... In order for a sale to be valid, all members on that plot of land must agree to the sale... they would spend time doing background work on family histories and find ways to exploit weaknesses in family relationships to persuade families to sell.

This point was emphasized by a farmer who had his land acquired. As he explained:

He used different ways....He called my son and told [him] that we will give you this much money, just get us a deal with your land....for one lakh or two lakh rupees. So, for the greed money, sons made deals with their fathers for cash...they used to fight with their mother and father saying why aren't you selling this...they fought and beat their parents and forced them to sell their property.

As the farmer notes, the developers would approach particular members of a family and bribe them with cash, inevitably creating interfamilial conflict in the process of generating the sale.

In other cases, the developers would spend time with village members or famers, building trust, and then exploit these relationships by using these individuals to help convince their neighbours or friends to sell their land as well. As a farmer explains:

Both of them [the brothers] used to come and sit with me for two-three hours... have tea. They used to say we want this person's land, one after the other, and we will give you this or that. They used to call me at night, 'today we want this person's land, tomorrow that person's land'... I cracked a deal for a few and they gave me money... and now that he has got the land, he doesn't even take my call. When he had work with me, he used to call me, and now he has nothing to do with me.

Reflecting on his experience, he goes on to say:

Basically, you can say [the brothers are] a mastermind. How to deal with people and how to crack a deal. Doesn't matter which way it comes...this is how he bought land. Like by duping and tricking people. He has done everything through deception.

Thus, those interviewed felt that GLD and their land aggregators used various tactics of deceit, manipulation, looking for weak spots in family relationships, and using bribes to play people against each other in order to coerce individuals to sell their land.

4.5.3 (Il)legal acquisition: resistance and taking land by force

In some cases, if purchasing land through the above strategies did not work, GLD used other tactics to manipulate and exploit informalized state governance structures. To highlight this strategy, I will focus on the story of one particular village farmer who got caught up in, and eventually lost battles with GLD and the state over (il)legal land acquisition. In this section, I focus on his story in order to go into depth on the ambiguities between legal and illegal, the role of the state and court systems in facilitating land acquisition and development, and the relationships between developers and state urban planners.

I met Dev, a farmer with a small landholding in Gurgaon, through conversations with other farmers and villagers who had their land acquired by GLD and their subsidiaries between 2004-2008. He explained to me that he is the sole owner of a small parcel of land that measures $\frac{1}{4}$ of an acre in Badshapur Village. To demonstrate his ownership, he produced a *Aks-Shajra*, a detailed village map that is used for legal land ownership and administrative purposes that showed the *tatima*, divisions of land plots, dating back to 1962. This particular plot of land was owned by his family and transferred from family members eventually to him. The image below is a copy of the *Aks-Shajra* that highlights the division of land in this particular area. The areas highlighted in green are the plots of land that Dev owns – 15/1/1 and 15/1/2 (the plots outlined

and shaded in the image below). This document was verified by the Department of Revenue and Disaster Management in 2017.

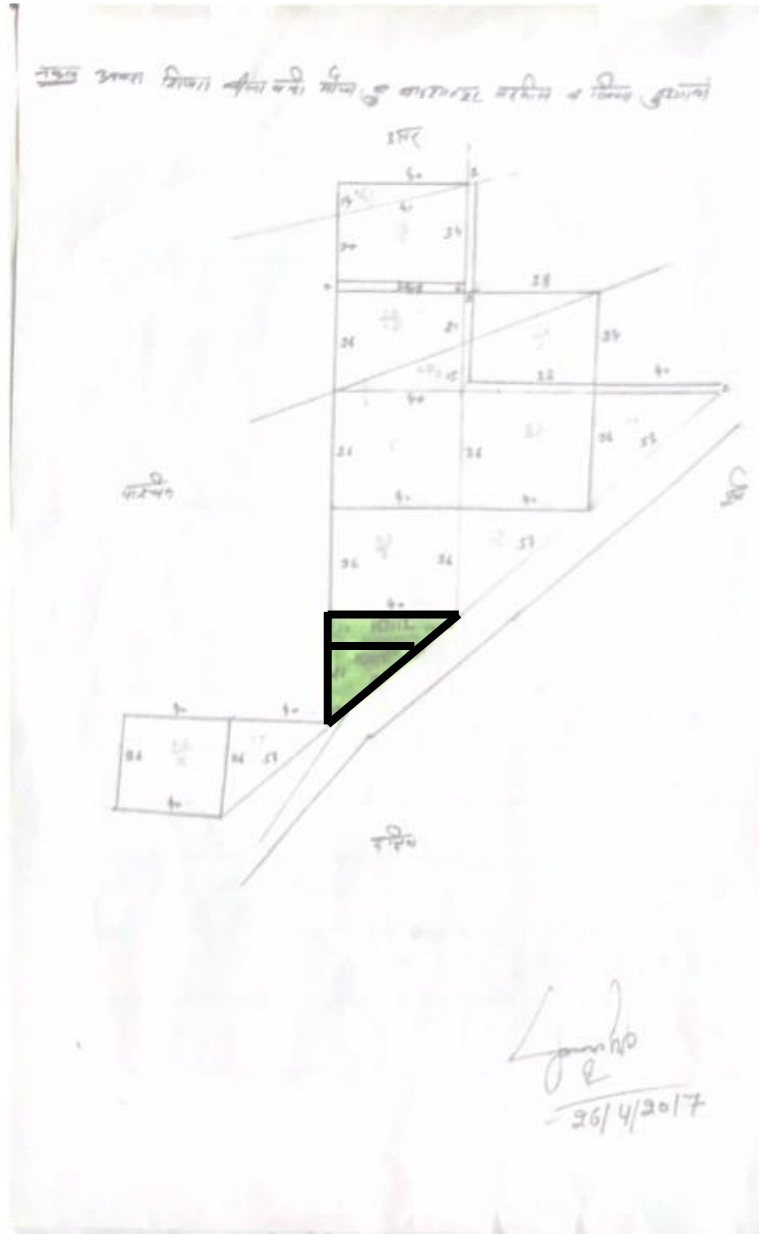


Figure 4: Aks-Shajra Highlighting Legal Division of Land

However, in 2006, unbeknownst to him, Gurgaon Builders, a subsidiary of GLD, entered a legal agreement with another resident of the village who owned land surrounding Dev's plot. In this legal agreement regarding the transfer of the power of attorney over control of the land, Gurgaon Builders claims this individual is the "sole and absolute owner and in lawful peaceful possession of the land and every part thereof... [including] 15/1/1, 15/1/2". Additionally, through this agreement, this other individual:

Agreed to give Power of Attorney in favour of the Collaborator [Gurgaon Builders]...and agreed for the Company...to take possession of the Said Land. To hand over possession of the Said Land to the Collaborator Company...to prepare plans and make applications for obtaining of change of land use, of the Said Land, licences, permits, permissions and approvals for zoning, construction, development, sale..."

Effectively, through this document, Gurgaon Builders claimed the legitimate sale and transfer of land from this other individual to their company for the purposes of changing the land use and developing it in the future. However, and as Dev explained to me, he did not sell his land. Yet his land was fraudulently included in this agreement when that other individual was not the landowner and thus could not transfer title to Gurgaon Builders. With this transfer of land agreement, Gurgaon Builders approached the Department of Town and Country Planning (DTP) in search of a licence to develop the land. In their application, they included a map of their purchased land (including Dev's, which he never sold), which mislabels Dev's land as their own. The image, below, is a copy of the 'official' map that Gurgaon Builders submitted to the DTP. Gurgaon Builders claims to have purchased or transferred all of the land on this map. However, as is illustrated below, the triangle of land that is shaded in black (and circled) is actually Dev's, which was never purchased. But, as the image shows, it was subsumed into the land around it that was presumably purchased legitimately.



Figure 5: Map Submitted by Gurgaon Builders to Acquire License

Despite the errors in this map, that misattributes land ownership, the DTP approved the land purchase map and issued a licence for development on this land in 2008. As Dev argues:

[This is] a fraud... I did not give him my land through sale, or an agreement, relating to nothing... he tampered with it... [Gurgaon Builders] showed my land [was his] and was successful in getting a licence in his own name...

It was not until early 2011, as Gurgaon Builders began taking over the other land plots, that Dev learned that his land was included in the license for development. In response, he submitted a First Information Report (FIR) – a report filed with police, and which sets processes of criminal justice in motion – to begin the process of investigation and eventual litigation over the ownership of his land. In the FIR, submitted on January 25, 2011, it was documented that the

“accused persons have got no right, title, and interest in the land in question. The ownership & possession of the complainant is intact since more than 50 years and the accused persons have no right to interfere in the peaceful possession of the complainant”. The FIR goes on to assert that:

The accused... are known land grabbers in the area and are habitual criminals involved in making forgery, manipulation in the revenue records of land in the area and in preparation of forged and fictitious and fraudulent documents to obtain commercial and residential licenses from the government as per their convenience.

Particularly, it alleges that:

it has now been transpired that the accused... in collusion with revenue officials fraudulently included land in their licence by producing forged, fictitious *Aks-Shajra* by making manipulation... showing its incorrect location... without the knowledge of the complainant with the motive to obtain licence to raise construction per their convenience.

After filing the FIR, the High Court of Punjab and Haryana issue a temporary stay on development while the case was to be investigated and either settled or tried. Importantly, Dev names both Gurgaon Builders as well as the District Town Planner of the DTP in his case. While the case is ongoing, Dev explains that he was approached by individuals from GLD as well as the DTP to drop the case in exchange for a large sum of money. As he describes it:

The whole deal was on sale... they even tried to make a deal with me. He [GLD] sent me an offer of Rs 15-20 crores. I said I am not going to spare you any cost... even the [District Town Planner] sent me an offer and had me called there.

Dev refused the potential settlement outside of the court, refusing a handsome sum of money in exchange for dropping the case and any complaints against GLD and the DTP office. However, Dev's case continued to be postponed and adjourned. Frustrated by ongoing delays, Dev submitted another case to the High Court of Punjab and Haryana, pleading for both an intervention for the continued adjournments and postponements of hearings, to issue a stay on development, and to nullify the licences that enable the development of Dev's land. When the

case was heard, it was then dismissed. The judge justified the dismissal for two reasons. First, the Judge reasoned that “the petitioners failed to file objections under section 5-A of the [Land Acquisition] Act” (*Dev Dutt and others v. State of Haryana and another*, 2011). Second, the judge dismissed the case on the basis of not interfering with the ongoing civil lawsuit (that keeps being postponed), especially because the State of Haryana is listed as a party in the lawsuit. It is important to note here that Section 5-A of the Land Acquisition Act specifically allows for an individual who had their land acquired to object to the acquisition – but that this objection should be submitted within 30 days of the public notice. Referring back to the initial land licence application and Dev’s first FIR report upon learning of the issuance of the licence discussed above, it would have been impossible for him to know his land was acquired as his land was attributed to another individual from the start. His lack of awareness would have prevented him from submitting his opposition within the allotted time frame.

Despite this dismissal, his initial petition was still awaiting a final hearing. In this time, Dev found his land occupied by security guards that were employed by GLD. Frustrated, Dev sought to lay bricks demarcating the boundaries of his land and the land had been acquired by GLD and its subsidiaries. The security guard told Dev that the owners of GLD gave instructions to prohibit the erection of any structure on the land. When Dev refused to vacate the land, the security guard called the owners of GLD (the brothers) to come and deal with the situation. As the FIR report filed by Dev on April 7, 2012 reads:

[The brothers] arrived shortly in two vehicles with 6-7 other body guards carrying lathis (long batons) and weapons. Both the owners while stepping out of vehicles instructed bodyguards to beat us. All the bodyguards started beating us with lathis and danda (batons and sticks). My right hand, shoulder, left wrist got severely injured. My brother got injuries on the face and hands. Finally guards captured us. Both the owners...took out their revolvers and threatened us to run if we want to live. They asked us to get lost and never show face on this land or they will kill us.

In response, Dev asserts that the brothers filed a competing FIR against him. As he explains:

Even he filed a false case against us. So, the police saw both parties have filed a case, then the DCP [superintendent] quashed both cases. It was done by the police.

He insinuates the reason this particular FIR was quashed was due to bribes paid by the brothers to the superintendent of the police department – who has power to determine which cases get filed and scrutinized. As Dev continues:

He has links with the top brass. He gives money and gets anything done... DCP, commissioner, all are his aides and he used to provide them handsome money.

Regardless, between 2011-2013, the courts had issued an interim stay on development. This changed on July 22, 2013 when, after a court hearing, the stay was lifted. In the judgement reasoning, it was argued that:

having heard learned counsel of the parties, we are of the considered view that none of the contentions raised by learned counsel for the petitioners need be gone into by this Court for the reason that earlier writ petition filed by the petitioners on the same issue was dismissed by this Court... (*Munesh Kumar and Ors v. State of Haryana and Ors.*, 2013)

In short, the dismissal of the stay on development was justified on the basis of the previous ruling – the ruling that stated that the court should not interfere with another ongoing case, and dismissed the case on the basis of Dev not submitting an objection under 5-A of the Land Acquisition Act. Ultimately, the petition was dismissed, the licences for development were reinstated, and Dev no longer had avenues to challenge the takeover or occupation of his land.

Importantly, however, from the start, one of Dev's main contentions was that the developers were able to get these licenses in the first place through collusion with state officials. In this way, he argued that there was a willing and/or deliberate re-drawing of maps on behalf of state planners that enabled land to be transferred to those with the goal of building residential or

commercial developments. A key part of Dev's story is that although he was able to prove that he always had clean title on the land, it ultimately did not matter, as the cases were still dismissed. Exasperated, Dev lamented that if "there is a CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] inquiry against this very licence, it will reveal all the deeds". Because the CBI's mandate is to investigate major crimes across the country, particularly within the areas of anti-corruption, economic crimes, and special crimes, Dev meant that if the CBI inquired into the granting of the development licences, issues of corruption and collusion with the state would be brought to light.

While Dev made that comment to me in December of 2017, on January 23, 2019 the CBI filed a FIR report investigating "criminal conspiracy, cheating and criminal misconduct by public servants" between the years of 2007-2012. The accused listed in the case included the then Chief Minister of the State of Haryana and Town and Country Planning Department, the then Chief Administrator of HUDA and the Director of the Town and Country Planning Department, as well as 15 private real estate development companies – one of which is a subsidiary of GLD. The case focuses on land acquisition for 1417.07 acres of land and the issuing of development licences across 9 sectors of Gurgaon, including the sector that contains Dev's land and which GLD's developments are built. Of particular interest, in the case, it is noted that the developers (including GLD's subsidiary):

...dishonestly and fraudulently entered into a criminal conspiracy with Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda, the then Chief Minister of Haryana and Minister in-charge of Directorate of Town and Country Planning, Haryana and Shri Trilok Chand Gupta, IAS, the then Chief Administrator, HUDA and subsequently posted as Director, Urban Estate and Director, Town and Country Planning, Haryana... with intent to cheat related land owners, public at large and the state of Haryana/HUDA...compelled landowners to sell their land to mentioned colonizers at lower price...and fraudulently and dishonestly obtained Letter of Intents/licences on the notified land and caused loss to respective owners... and corresponding wrongful gain to themselves.

The FIR goes on to argue that:

...some of the General Power of Attorneys were registered...by mentioning fake local addresses of the landowners... and obtained Letter of Intent/Licence from Government of Haryana... in the names of the said land owners...[and] the above said companies submitted incomplete applications for grant of licence. The same was processed, despite having several deficiencies and the LOI/Licenses were granted...the discrepancies/deficiencies in the applications...are related to the title of the land, defective layout....

The important takeaway here is that the FIR report filed by the CBI has a clear relationship to Dev's case. Particularly, the FIR asserts that there was deliberate collusion between state officials and private developers (including at least one company that is a subsidiary of GLD) in the acquisition of land in Gurgaon. Moreover, the claims in this case mirror the claims made by Dev in that the CBI proclaims that the Department of Town and Country Planning and HUDA knowingly issued fraudulent development licenses (despite incomplete applications, errors in the applications related to ownership of land, and deliberate manipulations of land ownership maps).

4.6 Discussion

4.6.1 Coercion and resistance in land acquisition

My findings revealed key ways in which developers coerce land owners to part with their land, as well as the possibilities (and pitfalls) of resisting through navigations of the court system. Specifically, my findings revealed three distinct yet interlinked strategies that GLD and their hired land aggregators utilized to convince and coerce individuals to sell. These were: claiming inevitable land acquisition by the state to exert pressure, establishing subsidiaries, and building and exploiting trust within village/farmer communities.

The strategy most emphasized by those interviewed in this study was claiming that city masterplans had been redrawn and that the state would eventually come to acquire land by force. As both the land aggregator as well as those who had their land acquired explained, whether this

was accurate or not, using this narrative served to pressure individuals to sell. The success of this strategy could be reflective of the farmers and villagers recognizing what Gururani (2013) has termed ‘flexible planning’ in the region. As Gururani (2013) notes, beginning in the 1960s, and exacerbated in the 1990s, masterplans in the region were subject to significant redrawing, rezoning, and manipulations by both state and private actors. It is reasonable to suggest that those sitting on agricultural and village land observed the rapid urban development – especially the transfer of over 37,000 acres of land from agricultural to private uses over a 20 year period as the city sprawled to the south and west (Chatterji, 2013; Cowan, 2018; Kalyan, 2017) – and recognized the possibility that their land could also be reallocated for other uses.

Additionally, if in fact the claims land aggregators made about rezoning and shifts in prescribed land uses were accurate, the possibility of forced land acquisition by the state through the Land Acquisition Act likely assisted in coercing individuals to sell their land. As Debroy and Bhandari (2009), Chakravorty (2013), and Kalyan (2017) have highlighted, the majority of land acquisition took place at this time through use of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894, with state empowered to (forcefully) acquire land through the use of this act (even if it was then passed on to corporations for private-led development). This act, as Chakravorty (2013) emphasizes, enables the establishment of a monopsony. As has been argued elsewhere, a key implication of the use of this act for those with their land acquired, is that the state often undervalues land and thus provides below market compensation (if compensation at all). Additionally, and more importantly, it enables the state to *compel* individuals to sell even if it is not in their best interest (Chakravorty, 2013). In this way, this strategy, used by developers and land aggregators, successfully profits off those who fear forced acquisition by the state – especially as these processes have been in place for decades. As a result, and as indicated by the frustrations of

those who had sold their land under these pretences, they were still coerced into the sale as it seemed as though it was the only avenue for them to make the most of what would likely be a bad situation.

Furthermore, it is possible that this strategy was even more effective when complemented with the other tactics used by GLD and their land aggregators – namely, using subsidiary companies and building and exploiting trust within the community. While scholars such as Hiro (2015) and Gururani (2013) have highlighted that large developers set up multiple subsidiary companies in order to navigate land ceiling laws (a point that will be elaborated on further in the next section), my findings revealed that subsidiary companies served an alternative purpose as well. Particularly, and as suggested by Vijay and the land aggregator, utilizing subsidiaries was an important way in which developers could pressure land holders to sell *quickly*, as individuals were more likely to sell to small development firms than large corporations.

The strategy of using subsidiaries intersects with the strategy of establishing relationships – and then exploiting these relationships – with members in the community in order to generate land sales. As my findings highlighted, GLD's owners grew up in a village in Gurgaon, which positioned them to have a more intimate understanding of ways to get all landholders to agree to a purchase. Additionally, they made sure to hire individuals from similar villages as those targeted for acquisition, as these individuals would already have relationships with landowners, or be able to establish rapport with them to exploit them later. It appears as though these strategies of building trust were used in tandem with the strategy of generating fear over government-directed land acquisition, and when used together, make land purchases quicker and all the more effective. This is reflective of Searle's (2016) assertions that land acquisitions come from a variety of tactics that range from coercion and manipulation to the use of violence to

force the arm of local landowners. While Searle (2016) does not go into detail on these practices, the findings presented here highlight some of the *specific* ways in which this unfolds ‘on the ground’, and how the brothers are especially well positioned to build and exploit relationships of trust (because of their village backgrounds, or hiring others with similar life histories).

The findings also spoke to the possibilities and outcomes of resisting land acquisition through the court system. Dev, in particular, attempted to resist forced land acquisition through appealing through the legal system. Despite proving clean land title ownership, the stay on development was ultimately lifted. This is reflective of findings of others who have highlighted that using specific documents (i.e. voter registration, food rations, land tenure) in court appeals to stake claims to space in the city by the urban poor have been foreclosed under new regulatory spatial regimes (Bhan, 2009; Ghertner, 2015; Routray, 2014; Schindler, 2014). In this way, Dev, like the informal settlement inhabitants in Ghertner’s (2015) study, could no longer use particular records in order to maintain the occupancy of his land.

At the same time, Dev, despite sitting on only a ¼ acre of land, was able to temporarily halt a large-scale luxury development while his case was waiting to be heard by the court. This stay shifted the balance of power, at least momentarily, away from GLD. As Roy (2011b) notes, world class city ambitions have been protested, delayed, and in some cases, blocked all together – ultimately placing the world class city at a standstill. She argues against romanticizing these moments of (successful) resistance, however, as these protests can also serve to strengthen (not erode) hegemonic notions of world class-ness. In Roy’s (2011b) words, “the gap – between urban plan and blockaded reality – does not sabotage homegrown neoliberalism. Rather, it emboldens it, strengthening the call issued by the new Indian urban middle class as well as the elite Global Indian for a world-class city” (Roy, 2011b, p. 276). Roy, in this case, is referring to

how the building large-scale mega projects in the peripheries of Kolkata – developments meant to serve the ‘Global Indian’ and the urban dreams of the new Indian middle class – have halted to a stand-still because of failed electrical and water connections, as well as protests blocking the erection of power utility towers on privately owned land. Roy’s argument is that the ‘world class city’ is impossible to implement and grinds to a halt, illustrating crucial gaps in the world-class-city-making machine. At the same time, these stalled projects and ghost towns, for Roy (2011b), becomes the site for new dreams of urban-industrial development and economic prosperity – a site where with “just the right dose of authoritarian power and free-market rule, the good city is being built and lived” (pg. 276). That is, these ‘failed’ or ‘delayed’ projects provides opportunities to find alternative ways to ‘make them happen’.

While the context of this study is dramatically different from that of Roy’s, I believe there is an argument to be made about how Dev’s challenges, and others like it, also work to strengthen the workings of world-class city making. That is, while Dev’s protest was able to stave off development, in looking to realize urban development goals that increasingly orient space in Gurgaon towards the flow of global capital, the state found a way to enable this development to take place. Dev’s challenge presented a new opportunity to ‘seal a crack’ that allowed for this resistant act in the first place. The result, however, is that despite this protest, the ongoing projects of private-led urban development that characterize the ‘millennial city’ of Gurgaon goes on and are emboldened.

4.6.2 Graduated citizenship and informality: the blurry boundaries between bending and breaking laws

My findings revealed that the boundaries between legal and illegal land acquisition and development in this specific context are both blurry and malleable, especially because laws and

regulations are often bent or broken in the facilitation of making land available for particular uses over others. Specifically, the interviews and documents that I analyzed reveal that regulations and land acquisition and development laws are subject to flexible interpretations, and that these interpretations – as enacted by the state – are generally used to benefit developers at the expense of villagers. These uneven and inconsistent interpretations reveal key ways in which space and populations within Gurgaon are differentially treated and managed by the state and the court system, and how some entities are privileged and protected while others – despite claims to legal land ownership – are ultimately excluded. As Ong (2006) argues, it is most important to investigate the ‘hinge of exception’ (i.e. how some spaces/people are selectively included into decisions that are geared towards the facilitation of global capital, while others are deliberately excluded from the benefits of neoliberal decision-making). Put another way, there is a need (also) to consider how and in what ways these exceptions interact to produce deeply fragmented spaces and graduated citizens. As will be discussed below, the findings of how developers manipulate legal loopholes (i.e. through subsidiaries) and how the state/court intervene into (il)legal land ownership (i.e. Dev’s protest through legal action), demonstrate key moments in which the hinge of exception operates. Moreover, the flexible interpretations of law highlight how informality is a mode of governance and logic through which variegated spatial value is produced and managed by the state (Roy, 2009b).

For example, GLD’s establishment of multiple subsidiaries illustrates one way in which developers work around legal loopholes established by the state. While land holding regulations stipulate that a private entity cannot hold more than 53.87 acres of land, the Golf Gardens spans over 75 acres. Because this land is not situated in a Special Economic Zone, nor was it acquired by the state through zoning changes, a key way GLD was able to assemble a tract of land of this

size was through utilizing subsidiaries. Following Hiro (2015) and Gururani (2013), this highlights how land ceiling regulations continue to be ineffective and manipulated by private corporations with the help of the state. This practice, while not surprising nor illegal, is instead a legitimate act, and is a mechanism whereby the purposes and uses of land are not fixed or mapped as prescribed by regulations (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019). This illustrates how particular spaces within Gurgaon are subject to the usage of neoliberalism as exception (Ong, 2006), as developments that target certain populations (in this case the upper-class residents of the Golf Gardens) are privileged and exempted from regulations that might restrict their development. In this way, this logic facilitates the assembly of land for large scale private development, and carves space within Gurgaon through the use of law and its exceptions or exemptions (Cowan, 2018; Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019; Shatkin, 2017).

The bending and maneuvering around these land ceiling regulations is facilitated by dynamics of informality in state governance structures. Specifically, in this context, different state agencies oversee different elements of land ownership and development. The Department of Revenue and Disaster Management is responsible for overseeing compliance to land ceiling limits, whereas the Department of Town and Country Planning issues development licences. The distinction between these two entities enables the state (especially the Department of Town and Country Planning) to continually turn a blind eye to abuses of land ceiling regulations by claiming that this is beyond their remit. This demonstrates that private developers, through exploiting informal modes of government and governance, are able to continue to twist the laws with direct and indirect assistance from state agencies (Hiro, 2015). Following Roy (2009), this form of informality is not an unregulated system (as that would imply the absence of the state), but rather a deregulated system – a calculated form of informality enabled by state mechanisms –

making it possible for state flexibility when prescribing development of land for certain purposes over others. The segregation of these two state bodies highlights a means through which private developers have been able to manipulate parastatal vehicles to fast track access to building permits (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019; Ranganathan, 2015).

My findings also revealed the fuzzy distinctions between legal/illegal and bent/broken laws by the means through which GLD was able to secure a development license in the first place. Particularly, and as evidenced in Dev's story, GLD was able to get a *legitimate* license for development based on the creation of *fraudulent* and *manipulated* land ownership maps. Significantly, these forged and inaccurate maps (where land ownership was misattributed, and land boundaries were redrawn) were verified as accurate by the Department of Town and Country Planning. Echoing Gururani (2013), this represents a manifestation of flexible planning whereby "exemptions are routinely made, plans redrawn... and brute force executed" (p. 122). GLD's development, like many others that are geared towards the elite (Ghertner, 2015; Gururani, 2013) is an illegal settlement – a settlement "boldly secured through class power, political allegiances...so powerful they are not questioned, challenged or demolished as some slums in Delhi are" (Gururani, 2013, p. 122). GLD's developments and others like it (high-end shopping malls, corporate parks) are instead expressions of class power that command legitimacy and protections in ways that mark them differently to slums (Roy, 2009b).

The obvious violations of law that took place in this case speak to Doshi & Ranganathan's (2017, 2019) arguments about needing to rethink discussions of corruption beyond specific instances of bribery or nepotism. While some of the findings in this study point to possibilities of bribery (i.e. Dev's claims around bribery, and the new court case insinuating collusion between the state and developers), what is apparent is the more insidious ways in

which corruption operates through the transversing of tenuous and unstable boundaries of illegality and immorality (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019). As Dev's treatment makes clear, corruption discourses can be inconspicuously absent, and what is illegal is not always designated as such (Doshi & Ranganathan, 2019). Similar to Doshi and Ranganathan's, (2017) findings, this study also illustrates the hypocrisy of land grabs. That is, even though Dev was able to produce records and maps to demonstrate his *legal* occupation and ownership of land, it ultimately was irrelevant as the *illegality* of the posh development proceeded towards development. This emphasizes Roy's (2009) claim that insurgence does not necessarily lead to justice, as exclusion is often deepened by informalized practices of the state. Although, the recent corruption investigation launched in 2019 might call this into question and points to opportunities for social justice, there is no way to predict the outcome. This inquiry does, however, point to fissures that might exist that could enable collective mobilizing that could lead to social justice around illegal (or immoral) land acquisition in the region.

The murky and inconsistent boundaries between what is deemed legal/illegal becomes more salient when one considers the court rulings on Dev's case. On both occasions, when Dev's case was heard, both judges dismissed his plea to revoke the development licenses on the basis of fraud, justifying this decision due to his failure to submit an objection to land acquisition within the 30 days stipulated in the Land Acquisition Act. Interestingly, here, the court's decision upholds the law in that it was true that Dev did not file an objection within the allocated timeframe, but, at the same time the decision *does not consider* other ways in which the law had been broken. This is an example of what Comaroff and Comaroff (2006) term 'lawfare'. By lawfare they mean the use of laws/regulations to impose order upon subordination through forms of violence rendered legible, legal, and legitimate – and the use of legal instruments, and forms

of violence inherent in the law, to “commit acts of political coercion, even erasure....” (p.30). In this case, this represents the ways illegal development interventions that benefit elite classes become legalized through acts of law. That is, in order to enable GLD’s development to continue and to ensure their license for development was valid, the court needed to find a way to ‘legalize’ the development through making Dev and his claims to space ‘illegal’.

In some ways this finding is similar to those who have investigated changes in notions around desirable citizenship and urban space in millennial Delhi. Particularly, as scholars such as Ghertner (2015) and Bhan (2009) have highlighted, as the National Capital Region looked to realize ‘world class city’ aspirations, large-scale slum demolition was justified through (re)construction of the urban poor as criminal and improper citizens that illegally inhabited public land. What is different here, however, is that Dev and other farmers in the area did not live in informal settlements or in urban arrangements that are often deemed ‘illegal’. Regardless, his ultimate eviction is reminiscent of the ways in which citizenship is increasingly defined in terms of specific forms of economic productivity connected to those who work in technology or finance industries (Bhan, 2009). Additionally, and following Doshi and Ranganathan (2019), this points to ‘informal territoriality’ as developers such as GLD are able to lay claim to land through a variety of informal and formal practices while being protected from legal punishment, where the poor continue to be policed and disciplined through legal action.

The workings of the court in this manner highlights Ong’s (2006) notion of graduated citizenship. As Ong (2006) argues, the differentiation and fragmentation of space is interlinked with the uneven governance of different populations according to their perceived relevance and value to the facilitation of capital accumulation. In this case, the flexible and inconsistent administration of laws is evidence of how certain populations (i.e. the developers and the future

residents of upper-class communities) are protected and privileged through the use of exception, where others (i.e. Dev and other agricultural landowners) are excluded and exempted from political protections. Following Cowan (2015), exception here can be seen as a technique of rule and governance, where the state utilizes “informal governmental logics to flexibly inscribe value to particular citizenship within a fragmented space” (p. 63). While Cowan (2018) emphasizes that the result is one where elite spaces rely heavily on the labour of those excepted from the benefits of neoliberalism, these findings highlight specific instances in which the state facilitates the physical removal of those from spaces deemed unconnected to the production of capital. To be clear, this is not to say that this is a unique experience, or ‘exceptional’, but rather the flexible interpretation of laws illustrates how the invoking of exception is differentially used, experienced, and made through competing claims to space.

Additionally, these findings provide an example of a moment where we can clearly see the operation of the ‘hinge of exception’ that Ong (2006) argues is so important to investigate. Particularly, the uneven application of law in this case is evidence of the continuously shifting relationships between disciplining/governing and giving/denying value – and how/when doors of inclusion/exclusion open or shut, and for whom.

The finding of the recently launched CBI inquiry into the fraudulent issuing of land development licenses by the state also points to the continuously unstable terrain between what is considered legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate. As Doshi and Ranganathan (2019) assert, it is important to pay close attention to how and when different acts become interrogated as deviant or corrupt, and by whom. While at this moment it is impossible to predict the outcome of the inquiry and the impending case, questions remain about why these practices have suddenly

been called into question. It is possible that the timing of this filing is related to the federal election that took place.

4.7 Conclusion

In this study, I investigated strategies used by GLD to acquire land for their developments, as well as the experiences of dispossession/exclusion by those who had their land acquired. Additionally, through Dev's story, I explored resistance to (il)legal land acquisition – and the responses by the court to such protests. Grounded by Ong's (2006) theorizations of neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship in conjunction with provincialized approaches to urban studies anchored by Roy's (2009) concept of urban informality, I explored how (in)formal modes of governance differentially manage and discipline people and places through inconsistent applications of law. I demonstrated that strategies used by GLD to acquire land based on claims of inevitable land acquisition were particularly compelling due to ongoing flexible planning (Gururani, 2013) in the region. Additionally, I highlighted how resistance to land acquisition through the use of records was ineffective, in the end, in this case, despite the ways in which this form of protest temporarily shifted power and staved off development. At the same time, forms of resistance such as Dev's might also serve to perpetuate world class city making projects, as the state and the court needed a way to deem these developments 'legal' in order to enable them to continue. Finally, I illustrated that flexible and uneven interpretations and applications of laws benefits some through the use of exception at the expense of others, as well as the murky boundaries between legal/illegal claims to space. Ultimately, and following Doshi and Ranganathan (2019), the newly launched FIR report that calls land development licencing practices by the state into question highlights the need for ongoing research into the continuously

shifting boundaries between what is considered corrupt, immoral, and illegal as these distinctions are always in flux.

5. Aiming for the ‘green’: (post)colonial and aesthetic politics in the design of a purified, gated environment

It seemed fitting that we left the Sales Centre in a golf cart. No one was allowed to walk from the sales area to the condo buildings. Perhaps this was because of the heat, or because of the ongoing construction, but it also seemed as though they wanted individuals to ride in golf carts throughout the Estate in order to feel as though they were getting a ‘golf experience’ and ‘golf living’. On the drive to the building we pass a putting green course. It was clear that much time had been taken in manicuring and creating the putting greens, and that they were deliberately placed on the way from the sales centre to the towers. We were dropped off in the lobby of one of the buildings that was more or less complete. We go up the elevator and then enter a unit that had floor to ceiling windows in almost every room. It was nearly 4500 square feet and in most rooms we have a clear view of the Golf Gardens. The golf greens are right below, visible from the dining/living space, the master bedroom, and two of the other bedrooms in the unit. Walking through it it was clear what the designers wanted us to see – the Estate itself, and the golf greens, and that was pretty much it. (Fieldnotes)

5.1 Introduction

In this study, I investigate the architectural and design decisions made by architects and executives of GLD in the development of the GLD Golf Gardens. The goals of this study are twofold. The first, is to explore how ideas of sport and leisure are central to and drive the development of pristine urban environments (outside mega events). The second, and linked to the first, is to explore the relationships between colonial practices of the domination and

production of exclusive and tamed nature for leisure and contemporary politics of urban cleansing.

While there are many studies that investigate how perceptions of the new Indian middle classes desires for cleansed and beautified environments justify state and private-led developments that evict or exclude the ‘unsightly’ urban poor (Baviskar, 2003; Fernandes, 2006; Ghertner, 2010), there is a lack of research that explores how ideas of sport/leisure are central to and drive the production of pristine urban environments (outside of mega events). This is surprising as many gated-residential developments and other urban development projects feature a (re)turn to urban nature that features sport and other nature-based leisure activities (i.e. golf courses or parks).

Additionally, and as many scholars remind us, sport was deeply entangled with the British Empire – used as a point through which to dominate and ‘civilize’ local populations (e.g. Carrington, 2015; Malcolm, 2012; Mangan, 1998; Mills & Dimeo, 2003). With the exception of a few studies (Bale, 1994; Dimeo, 2005; Malcolm, 2012), little research has investigated the relationships between colonial practices of domination and the production of exclusive and tamed ‘nature’ for leisure (such as cricket or golf). This too is surprising considering the long histories of postcolonial analyses of the interconnections between Empire building and the domination, management, and aesthetic representations of colonial environments. And yet, despite the links between colonial practices and the production of nature, sport-related developments do not often receive critical attention precisely because of sport’s associations with playfulness and leisure – associations that have allowed sport/leisure to remain a powerful vehicle for reinforcing and reproducing socio-spatial relations and inequities.

This study will address these gaps by utilizing a combination of Plumwood's (1993) ecofeminist critiques of the interrelationship between the 'purification' of nature and other modes of othering/domination (i.e. colonialism, racism, sexism), and Rancière's (2004) theoretical conceptualization of the politics of aesthetics. I use these two theoretical perspectives together in order to open space to take seriously the politics of the architectural decisions in the design of a golf-focused gated community, and the particular aesthetic uses of golf to produce a purified urban environment – and to situate this analyses in colonial imaginations of civilized landscapes (and populations), and contemporary politics of urban beautification.

In what follows, I first introduce Plumwood's ecofeminist critique of nature/culture dualisms and her concepts of backgrounding and hyperseparation to open avenues to explore how the positioning of nature to be 'tamed', 'tempered', and subject to improvement is inextricably linked to other axes of domination or exclusion. I then explain Rancière's theory of the politics of aesthetics and his concept of the 'distribution of the sensible' in order to connect Plumwood's critique of colonial practices of domination to the politics of aesthetic representation and community making. Next, I provide an overview of literatures that informed this study – namely scholarship on the colonial production of nature/the environment, aesthetic politics of the new Indian middle class and approaches to urban nature, and colonial histories of sport and the production of pristine natures. Following, I explain my methodological approach, and my techniques for data collection, and analysis. I then outline the findings from the research – particularly the (in)visibilities produced through deliberate architectural and design decisions.

Based on these findings, I will argue that the architectural decisions observed in this study are political and (re)produce the 'distribution of the sensible' through delimiting what can be seen, who can be seen, and who has the power to see. At the same time, I will show how those

who are rendered mere background create and sustain the ‘common’ – which is to say, I will show how those who work in and around the Golf Gardens contribute to the making of this space, and the ways in which different are able (or unable) to stake claim to this community. In addition, I highlight how the particular mobilization of aesthetic ideals of golfing landscapes are mobilized to produce beautified, purified, cleansed, and *empty* environment that is cordoned off for the enjoyment of a privileged few.

5.2 Theoretical Approach

In her ecofeminist critique of Western and colonial notions of the mastery of nature, Val Plumwood (1993) argues that there is a need for a theoretical approach that attends to the ways in which human domination is intimately linked to the domination of nature. In particular, she demonstrates the ways in which modernity has been predicated on the mastery of nature – and how this mastery is inseparable from other modes of domination/exclusion. Nature, as a category for Plumwood, is a field through which non-humans as well as groups of humans who are cast to be ‘of nature’ are dominated through processes of colonialism, racism, and sexism. To be defined as nature also means to be seen as passive, ‘the environment’, or invisible background against which the achievements of ‘reason’, typically characterised as male, white, western, and expert, take place (Plumwood, 1993). Plumwood deliberately invokes the term ‘dualism’ to refer to the “results from a certain kind of denied dependency on a subordinated other” (p.41). She outlines dualisms such as nature/culture, reason/nature, master/slave, masculine/feminine, self/other in order to demonstrate the ways in which separation is made between things considered to be of ‘reason’ and things considered to be of ‘nature’, and to highlight how the domination of environment is inseparable from other forms of oppression. She is also careful to emphasize that dualisms are “more than a relation of dichotomy, difference, or non-identity and

more than a simple hierarchical relationship” (p.47). This is because hierarchies have the possibility of being contingent, malleable, and changing. However, inferiorized groups contribute to the perpetuation of dominant social values: colonization thus creates the colonizer as much as it does the colonized (Plumwood, 1993).

One way that Plumwood outlines ways in which nature/culture dualisms become naturalised in culture is through processes of backgrounding. By shifting focus and attention to practices and spaces that dominant groups occupy, the powerful are able to deny the importance of marginalized groups’ contribution to their reality. For example, by insisting on hierarchies of activities where certain things are privileged and focused on over others, the other (and the areas in which the other occupy) become “not worth noticing” (p.48). She uses both the patriarchal organization of society, and the historical relationships between master and slave to demonstrate the workings of backgrounding. In a society dominated by patriarchy, women’s existence, perspective, and experience continue to be background to the male-dominated foreground; and yet, this foreground depends heavily on the existence of the background (Plumwood, 1993). Similarly, in relations of slavery, while the enslaved are in many ways deemed to be inessential (compared to the essentialness of the master), the master requires the slave in order to define the boundaries of identity (Plumwood, 1993). In other words, the other becomes the background to the master’s foreground and “the master’s view is set up as universal” (p.48). In this way, as Plumwood asserts, the periphery makes, creates, and recreates the privileged centre.

Practices of backgrounding intersect with processes of radical exclusion and hyperseparation. Plumwood argues that in order to create hierarchical separation between groups, dominant groups work to magnify and over-emphasize differences between people (e.g. based on race, gender, religion) in order to achieve separation between themselves and others. In

the process of defining and delimiting boundaries of exclusion, these differences are constructed to be both natural and related to nature, thus justifying different fates for different groups (such as slavery, for example). Importantly, through creating stark boundaries based on differentiation, there is a denial of continuity between groups as dominant/subordinate groups are treated as being from entirely different worlds with little to nothing in common (Plumwood, 1993).

Issues of aesthetics are implicit in Plumwood's theoretical approach to integrating analyses of the domination of nature and other axes of oppression. That is, some of the dualisms (i.e. culture/nature, master/slave, male/female, civilized/primitive) that Plumwood highlights are grounded by ideas of how people, places, or environments should look, and it is precisely these ideas that are central to the making of boundaries of inclusion/exclusion, superiority/inferiority, dominance/subordination. Although assumptions about the cleanliness, productivity, and the health of idealized environments justify the taming, pruning, and management of nature and people deemed to be 'of nature' (i.e. 'dirty' people and spaces needing to be 'ordered' and cleansed) are pointed to by Plumwood, she does not directly theorize the role of the visual in the creation and maintenance of the dualisms that she discusses.

It is here where Plumwood's work can be effectively supplemented by the writing of Jacques Rancière (2004) – who provides an insightful theorization of the politics of aesthetics that is useful for unpacking the ways in which aesthetics operate in ways that police, define, and confine the production of communities. Departing from interpretations of aesthetics as embedded in reason or judgement, Rancière theorizes aesthetics as inseparable from broader forms of politics. He argues that art and aesthetic representations must be understood through the ways in which they are involved in politics regardless of the “guiding intentions, artists' social modes of integration or the manner in which artistic forms reflect social structures or movements” (p.41).

For Rancière, aesthetics is inherently political, an ongoing site of struggle over representation, and plays an active role in what is visible or invisible, and sayable or unsayable, in a particular context.

Rancière defines aesthetics through the concept of the *distribution of the sensible*. He explains the distribution of the sensible to be “the system of divisions and boundaries that define, among other things, what is visible and audible within a particular aesthetic-political regime” (p.1). In Rancière’s formulation, “the sensible” is what defines ever changing and shifting boundaries as what can be seen, what is considered to be ‘in common’ to a community, and the specific ways in which individuals are able (or unable) to stake claim to these spaces or representations:

The apportionment of parts and positions is based on a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity that determines the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation and the way various individuals have a part in this distribution. (p.12)

Having a particular ‘occupation’ (or social status) thereby determines the ability or inability of an individual to take charge of what is common to the community. Thus, aesthetics acts as a system that contributes to the limits of “what presents itself to sense experience” (p.13), what is seen and under what conditions, what is presented and interpreted as legitimate forms of speech and what becomes relegated to the background as mere noise. Ultimately, what is at stake is who exactly is included and able to participate based on their social status and perceived legitimacy.

Rancière’s politics of aesthetics has been applied to studying urban spatial changes in India. For example, in his study on world class city making in Delhi, Asher Ghertner (2015) utilizes Rancière’s concept of the distribution of the sensible to explore shifts in urban governance away from a rule by records to what he calls a rule by aesthetics. By rule by aesthetics, he means the invocation of a new standardized aesthetic code that reshaped

boundaries between order/disorder, visibility/invisibility, and legitimate/illegitimate that is now used by the state to rationalize interventions into the spaces of the slum (i.e. demolition, eviction, cleansing). Ghertner (2015) invokes Rancière to explore the complex and contradictory ways in which codes of appearance are simultaneously imposed externally and also appropriated internally by individuals. He utilizes the idea of the distribution of the sensible to make sense of how ideas of aesthetics are deployed by those in power (i.e. the state, the justice system, political elites, etc.) to partition off space through urban beautification projects and concomitant slum demolition, but also the ways in which aesthetic sensibilities (i.e. how a city should look and the people it should include) are taken up by those who “have no part” (i.e. urban poor and slum dwellers) (p.16). He argues the distribution of the sensible shapes what the disenfranchised and excluded see and say, even if they disagree (i.e. acknowledging that their settlement is disorderly and should be eliminated, despite opposing eviction).

For example, Ghertner (2015) analyzes how slum dwellers slated for demolition and eviction appropriate dominant aesthetic codes and language through a recognition that the settlements they live in have no part in the world-class city visions of Delhi. He highlighted, for instance, how individuals in a slum slated for demolition recognized there was no place for them in the improved city and characterized their own settlement as filthy and in need of removal. In doing so, he underscores that these appropriations should not be read as signs of resignation, but instead as experiments by those with ‘no part’ to both take part and have a part in the world class city – that is, to gain recognition and participate in the common and the distribution of the sensible.

I take up Rancière’s theorizing of aesthetics in a way that is reminiscent to Ghertner (2015) in that I am interested in the ways in which aesthetics delimits the organization of space

around highly specific visions of who and what should be seen and included. However, my point of focus differs slightly, as I aim to explore how architectural and design decisions directly contribute to the distribution of the sensible. I also plan to utilize Rancière while maintaining a particular sensitivity to Plumwood's (1993) observations about nature/culture dualisms and histories/legacies of colonialism. Using these two perspectives in conjunction with each other provides an opportunity to explore the architectural and aesthetic choices made in the design of the GLD Golf Gardens community, while also paying attention to the specific meanings of sport and leisure in the creation of space. More specifically, these two perspectives allows for attention to be focused on the production of particular natures to create 'proper' and disciplined environments, while also connecting these decisions to contemporary politics of exclusion.

5.3 Literature

5.3.1 (Post)colonial productions of nature

Many scholars have commented on the relationship between colonial productions of pristine nature, representations of colonial landscapes and improvement narratives, and the domination of colonial environments and populations. For example, Gregory (2001) argues that the colonial approaches to nature and the environment were spatialized. Particularly, Gregory (2001) highlights that 'modern cultures' (such as the colonial metropole of Britain) constructed themselves as removed from nature so completely that they are no longer at its mercy. This is in contrast to 'premodern' cultures, who were regarded as still deeply connected to nature and limited by the "caprice of their local ecologies" (Gregory, 2001, p. 88). In the context of colonialism, nature of the metropole was positioned as temperate, moderate, constant and without excess, in direct contrast to 'other' natures which were wild, harsh, empty, or barren

(Gregory, 2001). Through the construction of the differences of natures in these ways, the nature of the tropics became associated with overabundance, decay, decomposition, and disease. The result was that these understandings of the nature of the subcontinent became projected on local populations that were pathologized in a similar manner to tropical nature by the “racialized and sexualized discourses of environmental determinism” (Gregory, 2001, p. 100). Reflecting on environmental determinism and eurocentrism, Blaut (1993, 1999) argues that Eurocentric histories still stand on the legs of discourses of environment and culture through the arguments that the temperate environment of Northern Europe is a determinant of colonial influence and economic growth. He asserts that this happens in two ways; either through the construction of the superior qualities of European environments to explain the rise of the dominance of Europe, or through the portrayal of nasty environments outside of Europe to base understandings of the underdevelopment of regions in environmental explanations. The latter is particularly utilized to perpetuate ideas surrounding the false notion that the effects of hot and humid climates adversely impact the human mind (the sun boils the brain, thus the African body needed control by those in temperate climates) and body (the African body was adept to labouring in tropical, humid conditions, serving as a convenient justification for plantation slavery), together linking tropic regions as sites of disease and death (Blaut, 1993).

Colonial understandings of the environment, nature, and culture of India had a profound impact on the relationships between the British Empire and representations of landscape, city planning, and population management in India. Anker (2009), for example, highlights how the language of ecology and imperialism was deeply enmeshed as the British colonial government desperately needed tools for understanding environmental history and relations between people and nature in order to develop policies for the management of the environment and social control

of local populations. In this context, the discipline of ecology expanded beyond the study of plants/nature to include humans and their environments, with debates framed around assumptions of nature's economy as fixed (used to perpetuate ecological and racialized segregation) or nature's economy as malleable (used to perpetuate imperialist imperatives to re-order society, nature, and knowledge) (Anker, 2009). What is important, Anker (2009) argues, is that these debates led to important approaches about how to understand humans in their environment, which then used to justify imperial policies that looked to dominate and control local populations (i.e. to facilitate the management of natural resources and to enable social control of 'native' populations).

Similarly, Drayton (2000) and Arnold (2006) argue that botany and ideologies of improvement were intimately linked with the British Imperial project. Drayton (2000) traces links between Christian agrarian approaches to gardens in the 16th century, 'rationality' of enlightenment thinking, and the use of botany through the British Empire, to argue that there is an intimate relationship between botanical knowledge and the domination nature (i.e. improving it, classifying it) and economic development (i.e. agricultural productivity or commodity development such as rubber).

Relatedly, through focusing on the influence of the disciplines of ecology and botany, Arnold (2006) brings to the forefront issues of the representation of landscapes in India. He highlights how the imagination and production of nature by travellers, colonial subjects, and amateur botanists were central to the colonial understandings of the land that Britain dominated. It is through the proliferation of travel writing that vivid descriptions of flora, fauna, farming, and landscape shaped the acquisition and understandings of land in India by the British – and their efforts to transform or improve these landscapes (Arnold, 2006). Importantly, Arnold makes a

point to emphasize the role of aesthetics in the representations of Indian land as an object of fear, desire, utility, or romance. The aesthetic basis of comparisons of the landscapes of India to those of Europe led to appreciations of Indian nature that were coupled with transforming the landscape from overgrown and unsightly jungle to one that was beautified, similar to European environments, and geared towards profit generation (Arnold, 2006).

Scholars such as Guha (1993), Chakrabarty (2002), Legg (2007), and McFarlane (2008) emphasize how colonial understandings of nature and landscape permeated into ideas of city making and the management of populations in urban centres. Particularly, Legg (2007) highlights how the building of New Delhi from 1911 to the 1930s embodied the rationality of imperialism in its aesthetics (refined, functional, beautified), science (a healthy, ordered, and clean landscape), and politics (hierarchical and authoritarian under colonial rule). As the capital of the country was being moved from Calcutta to New Delhi, one can see in different sources how the walled city of Old Delhi was being portrayed by the colonial state as congested, a health risk, and a threat to the appearance of the capital region (Legg, 2007) – while the native populations within it were described through survey reports as polluting, diseased, and transgressive. With survey reports continually highlighting rapidly rising rates of tuberculosis, meningitis, and other illnesses in Old Delhi, colonial administration focus turned to the containment, segregation, and partitioning off of Old Delhi from the developing areas of New Delhi (Legg, 2007; Sharan, 2006). The result was the investment in the construction of New Delhi – designed to be a landscape characterized by open space, cleanliness, greenery for recreation, and room for expansion (Legg, 2007). In a similar vein Guha (1993), McFarlane (2008), and Sharan (2006) argue that the threat of disease was constantly in the forefront of the imagination of the elites who viewed poor areas of cities as a continued public and

environmental nuisance. While efforts were made by the colonial government in India to rid the sources of bad smells, increase circulation of air and water, and to reduce illness, the result was the production of little islands of ‘purity’ that were meant to protect elite groups from the dangers that were perceived to be carried by the poor (Guha, 1993). Indeed, in the colonial imagination, there were connections drawn between order, public health, and city development – as ongoing references to pollution were often framed by the state and powerful elite in terms of excesses of nature based on class, racial, and aesthetic differences (Chakrabarty, 2002; Sharan, 2006).

Importantly, however, Chakrabarty (2002), Sharan (2006) and Prakash (1999), highlight how these colonial imaginaries that tied ideas of landscape to health, poverty and aesthetics permeated postcolonial approaches to management of space after formal decolonization. Chakrabarty (2002) particularly argues that both colonialists and nationalists were repelled by what they saw as characteristics of open spaces in Indian cities: dirt and disorder. While the ideology of the nationalist movements was distinctly different than the British Raj, in the move to convert India from a colonial to modern state, Indian nationalists also perceived the spaces of the urban poor and informal settlements as needing to be cleaned, ordered, regulated, and disciplined (Chakrabarty, 2002).

5.3.2 The new Indian middle class, aesthetics, and approaches to (urban) nature

Many scholars have commented on the shifting relationship between city building, urban redevelopment, middle class desires (and perceptions of these desires), and approaches to urban nature. For example, Wachsmuth and Angelo (2018) assert that approaches to urban nature and sustainability in the creation of new master-planned urban development projects can be

interpreted through distinctions between green and gray urban nature. Green urban nature, they argue, is the “return of nature to the city in its most verdant form”, characterized by urban policy strategies that “leverage self-evidently natural nature, from green walls, bioswales, and urban agriculture up to large-scale landscaping initiatives such as soft coastlines and new parks” (Wachsmuth & Angelo, 2018, p.1039-1043). Gray nature, on the other hand, is marked by development strategies that focus on leveraging the “inherent sustainability of urban space through density and efficiency...and smart city construction” (Wachsmuth & Angelo, 2018, p. 1043). Importantly, while highlighting the interconnectedness of these approaches to urban nature and sustainability, they make these two distinctions in order to think through the distinctly aesthetic representations that green and gray urban natures take on in a variety of settings. That is, while the two might aesthetically be opposed, they support each other in the imaginations of the green and sustainable city (Wachsmuth & Angelo, 2018). It is the presence of greenery and nature that are seen to be sustainable (because if it looks green, it is green), and this is used to reinforce ideas of a dense and connected urban core as a sustainable environment (Wachsmuth & Angelo, 2018). Similarly, Gandy (2006) has reflected on the rise of the urbanization of nature, emphasizing that the new metropolitan sensibility towards featuring various forms of greenery reflects not just new approaches to the management of urban spaces (such as sanitation and housing), but also different interactions with nature as a source of leisure. In this way, while urban design is focused increasingly on beautification through the use of nature (i.e. gardens, fountains, parks), it also sees the utilization urban nature aesthetics as a means to change landscapes in ways that will delimit uses of space and thus increase spatial order (Gandy, 2006).

Gandy (2006) also emphasizes, however, that while these beautification projects create legacies of fragmented urban landscapes, they also link landscape design and city planning to the

aesthetic aspirations of middle-class populations. In the context of India, scholars have noted that the neoliberal economic reforms that took place in India in the early 1990s shifted the relationships between the state, the city, approaches to urban nature, and forms of (desirable, urban) citizenship (Baviskar, 2011; P. S. Bose, 2013; Fernandes, 2006; Ghertner, 2015; Mawdsley, 2004; McFarlane, 2008; Rademacher & Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). In particular, these scholars have investigated the ways in which neoliberal economic reforms led to the evolution of the ‘new Indian middle class’ – a relatively small, but powerful group that is thought to define boundaries between themselves and others through the portrayal of cosmopolitan tastes in cuisine, clothing, physical practices, and city spaces (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2004, 2011; Mathur, 2010; Munshi, 2001). Some scholars, for example, have explored how new Indian middle class groups use resident welfare associations to launch public interest litigations (court filings in the name of the public good) to drive urban development interventions that ‘cleanse’ the streets of the urban poor (Baviskar, 2003, 2011; Bhan, 2009; Fernandes, 2004; Ghertner, 2010; Schindler, 2014). Others have examined how private developers work to cater to, as well as create these desires, through the promotion of residential projects that are presented as beautified, exclusive, and segregated from the chaotic urban environments (Brosius, 2010; Searle, 2013). In any case, this group has quickly become the image of the ‘modern Indian nation’, transforming this population into a primary site for the of political, cultural, and ideological products, while also privileging this group and their interests in urban redevelopment strategies (Ellis, 2012; Fernandes, 2006; Mathur, 2010; Schindler, 2014).

As Rademacher and Sivaramakrishnan (2013) observe, the emergence of urban middle classes and their associated desires is deeply implicated in shifts in urban spatial layouts, new ecologies of urban life, and changes in ideas of the place/role of urban nature. While cities such

as Delhi are often characterized by polluted air, unsafe water, overcrowded and informal housing, and consumer waste, urban nature is avidly promoted and shows up in the forms of gated communities and city parks (Rademacher & Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). Fernandes (2004, 2006), situates this highly selective investment and placement of urban nature in Indian cities at the intersections of the push of governments to appease the expectations of middle-class citizens, attract service industries, and host mega events (such as the Commonwealth Games in Delhi in 2010). The results of this are practices and processes that privilege spatial purification, beautification, and urban cleansing that are increasingly less tolerant of ‘disruptions’ caused by the unsightliness of the urban poor (Fernandes, 2004). As Fernandes (2004) puts it, there is a ‘politics of forgetting’, where the needs of the urban poor for clean water, adequate housing, and access to health services become ignored as the needs and desires of the new middle class become privileged in urban development projects.

Relatedly, Baviskar (2003, 2011) uses the term ‘bourgeois environmentalism’ to describe the ways in which middle and upper-class concerns around aesthetics, leisure, safety and health have emerged as an organizing force for urban space in Delhi. Particularly, she argues that bourgeois desires for a clean and green urban environment in Delhi has combined with flows of capital and neoliberal decision-making by the state to deny the poor the right to the environment. In this context, the urban poor are framed as encroachers, dirty, and polluting – therefore becoming the target for a range of environmental problems (P. S. Bose, 2013). In a similar vein, Ghertner (2010), uses the term ‘green evictions’ to describe how the environment, as a category, operates as a set of aesthetic dispositions instead of a calculated measure of environmental health, sustainability, or ecological welfare. He argues that green aesthetics arose as a governmental fix to the unsightly problem of slums and allowed the government to overcome

various bureaucratic obstacles to the realization of its world class city ambitions by labelling the spaces within them as polluting, dirty, and contributors to ongoing environmental degradation. This is despite evidence that suggests these populations are not contributing to rising levels of urban pollution (Ghertner, 2010). These framings justify the growing impetus to purify urban spaces and cleanse the streets through violent dispossession or regulation, and to focus infrastructure development and urban renewal projects around the development of ‘good natures’ (i.e. manicured parks, and gated enclaves) that are protected from the ‘bad natures’ of the poor (Mawdsley, 2004; McFarlane, 2008).

In this context, Brosius (2010) argues that real estate developers market gated communities to the new interests of the middle classes, emphasizing in their promotional materials the segregated spaces of leisure and greenery. Particularly, drawing on an analysis of advertisements of gated community developments, Brosius highlights that these developments heavily emphasize manicured parks and the serenity of nature. The nature of the gated community is positioned in a utopic sense, a semi-rural but heavily manicured and purified escape from the chaos, noise, and pollution of the urban core – and yet there is an implicit understanding that ‘real’ nature (i.e. the wild and unpredictable) lies just outside (Brosius, 2010).

5.3.3 Sport, colonialism, modernity, and the production of pristine natures

Many have highlighted the deep relationship between the British Imperial project and the diffusion of sport in colonial contexts (Appadurai, 1996; Carrington, 2015; Cashman, 1998; Malcolm, 2012; Mangan, 1998). Various iterations of sport, including cricket, football, wrestling, and others, were interpreted by Victorians to be ideal vehicles for instilling desirable attributes of masculinity such as discipline, seriousness, health, and fortitude (Malcolm, 2001;

Mangan, 1998). Because sport was believed to promote initiative and self-reliance at the same time as obedience, it became a useful instrument of the colonial project and a tool to ‘civilize’ and control local populations (Malcolm, 2001; Mangan, 1998; Mills & Dimeo, 2003).

In the context of India, while many sports and leisure activities were brought to India from those involved in the British East India Company, in most cases, local populations were excluded from these forms of sport involvement. This changed in 1835 when the British Raj introduced a policy of Anglicization, where the English-educated Indian elite were to be trained in English tastes, manners, and customs in order to assist in colonial bureaucracy and become models for other Indian citizens (Appadurai, 1996; M. Bose, 2006; Cashman, 1998). While there was no formal policy in place to utilize sport as a means to support the Raj, sport gradually became part of the British civilizing process (Cashman, 1998). Many British officials, including college teachers, businessmen, military personnel, and bureaucrats in government agencies, were enthusiastic missionaries for the introduction of cricket and other sporting cultures to the Indian population that were targeted under this Anglicization policy (Appadurai, 1996; Cashman, 1998; Mills & Dimeo, 2003). Importantly, and as many remind us, sport was not just merely imposed and passively taken up by colonized groups, it was appropriated, resisted, and reinvented in unintended ways in a variety of contexts (Appadurai, 1996; M. Bose, 2006; Carrington & McDonald, 2001; Fletcher, 2011).

At the same time, sport was an important site for what is often a simultaneous domination of nature and protection of the ‘natural’ environments for privileged groups in colonial contexts. As Malcolm (2001) argues, the development of sporting and leisure environments served as a means for various members of the colonial project to recreate a sense of ‘Englishness’ in strange lands. Particularly, ideas of a rural British countryside with pristine and manicured nature

unspoilt by the chaotic and populated city permeated the production of sport fields. In the context of cricket, Bale (1994) highlights, “the landscape of cricket, elicited from writers, painters, and others...permit[s] the construction of a simple model of the English cricket landscape ensemble” (p. 155). Similarly, Arlott and Cardus (1969) explain the classical view of cricket is one set up against a backdrop of luscious trees and a peaceful (read: empty and serene) landscape, that is distinct from a busy and bustling urban world. This cultural imagery of English cricket can be interpreted as an expression and extension of English tastes around the aesthetics of landscape (Waldman and Weedon, forthcoming).

Of course, domination is at play here too, as the production of this landscape, while intended to invoke ideas of nature unspoilt – requires careful manipulation, purification, and dominance of the environment (Bale, 1994). However, and despite the desire to duplicate and recreate a nostalgic version of English cricket landscape throughout the Empire, the task was all but impossible as environments throughout parts of the Empire could not easily adopt the English aesthetic form as the “meadows [were] not precisely as English meadows, [there are] no long summer evenings, [and] their society has never known the agricultural background based on a village community” (Millburn, 1966, p.38).

There are important similarities to the export and appropriation of golf. Golf is a sport predicated both on social exclusion and on careful manipulation of the environment. In India, the Royal Calcutta Golf Club was established in 1829 (making it the second oldest outside of Scotland) by British military and servicemen involved in the East India Company. With land acquired in a suburb of Calcutta that was home to the city’s European settlers, the club remained exclusive to the British elite (with no Indian members allowed until 1946, after formal decolonization) (Dimeo, 2005). While Bale (1994) and Millington and Wilson (2016) are clear to

note that the first forms of golf courses developed in Scotland look almost nothing like the ones in present form, they also highlight that the sport has used, transformed, and colonized a variety of landforms and landscapes. Even early courses in Scotland, the United States, and elsewhere worked to manipulate the natural environment, with the advent of the lawn mower in 1830 having a profound impact on the nature and imagery of carefully maintained greens (Bale, 1994). As Bale argues, as the demand for golf spread from Scotland to England and beyond, there was the implant of the sport into environments that were drastically different to the traditional coastal links of Scotland. In the 1890s, new golfing landscapes were required that necessitated the ‘improvement’ of the traditional form (Bale, 1994). It was, however, as golf moved to the United States that the form of the landscape shifted drastically to one where the environment becomes carefully constructed and reconstructed in attempts to smooth, eliminate, or mitigate against various irregularities of nature (Adams, 1987). The manicured and controlled greens of golf courses are now prototypical of the American lawn, with greens surrounded by gardens to delimit the boundaries of play, but also to provide aesthetically pleasing views to spectators and participants (Clay, 1987; Raitz, 1987).

Millington and Wilson (2016) argue that it is ideas of modernity/modernization that have greatly influenced the form and imagination of golf as one marked by pristine, purified, and tamed greenery. For example, they describe how the broadcast of the Masters Tournament has led to the birth of ‘Augusta National Syndrome’. In this context, Augusta National Golf Course has emerged as the standard for golf course design achievement, with its impeccably green golf course aesthetics and pruned flowerbeds lining the course – all possible because of intense chemical treatments and environmental management. The idea here is that the widespread dissemination of images of the Augusta National course through televised coverage of the

Masters beginning in the 1950s (and televised in colour in the 1960s) led to a desire among golf participants to experience golf courses that mirror the aesthetic beauty of Augusta National. In turn, many golf developers attempted to produce such environments using the modern tools (e.g., chemicals) that were at their disposal (Millington & Wilson, 2016).

Elsewhere, M. C. J. Stoddart (2012) discusses how the production of the ‘mountainous sublime’ – snow-capped peaks, groomed and clear-cut trails desired heavily by skiers – is essential to the ski industry. This too, of course, requires the production of an imagery of pristine and ‘untouched’ nature through a variety of socio-technological actors, not least of which include snow machines, groomers, ski lifts, signage, magazines – all mobilized to sustain the appearance of the ‘true nature’ of skiing. Note here that both of the examples, of golf and skiing, require the clearing, maintenance, taming, development, and disciplining of varied environments to produce the image of the experience of being ‘out in nature’.

5.3.4 Gaps and next steps

This paper draws on and extends the above literature in a few key ways. First, scholarship on the entanglements of the colonial project and approaches to the domination and taming of ‘foreign’ nature speaks to the ways that bodies and populations in colonies were deemed to be ‘of nature’ and dominated in a similar manner. Literature on the new Indian middle class and contemporary approaches to urban nature discusses the desires of middle-class populations for environments that look green and clean, and how these desires shape state-led practices that justify urban cleansing policies. However, scholars in both of these fields do not unpack the ways in which sport and leisure are intimately related to the production of pristine, tamed, and

purified environments – and how these histories and legacies colonialism influence contemporary manipulations of urban space.

At the same time, scholars who have investigated how sport/leisure practices are tied to colonial domination have privileged analyses that unpack how physical cultural practices disciplined the bodies of local populations – but rarely attended (see Bale, 1994 for a notable exception) to the relevance of environment-related topics and their relationship to discourses and practices of modernization. Other scholars that have investigated the production of rarefied environments for the participation of sport have spent little or no time connecting the development of these spaces to histories of colonialism or urban development projects. The study that forms the basis of this chapter is an attempt to fill these gaps in the literature, by focusing specifically on the architectural and design decisions of a golf-focused gated community development – and using this case to take seriously the politics of the aesthetics of golf through connections to colonial imaginations of landscapes and contemporary urban politics of exclusion.

5.4 Methodology

The research conducted for this study is guided by Michael Burawoy's, (2000) notion of a 'global ethnography'. For this particular study, Burawoy's global ethnography is useful for exploration of the development of gated residential communities because this methodology provides a way to explore how the global is produced in the local through a chain of "(dis)connections and [through the] dissemination of ideologies" (2001, p. 156) – and how global forces and connections have a different look when viewed from different parts of the chain. This is in line with Rancière, who emphasizes that the politics of aesthetics limits what can be seen and said – and who can be seen or heard, depending on their positionality or

occupation. This too fits with Plumwood's assertions around nature/culture dualisms and the ways in which backgrounding and hyperseparation create dualisms between the dominators/dominated that are inextricably linked to the production of particular environments. Because Burawoy (2001) is attuned to how "global forces are the manufacture of powerful connections or disconnection" (p.150), I use this methodology to explore how meanings associated with the aesthetics of golf are embedded in architectural decisions in the design of the GLD Golf Gardens, the implications of these decisions, and how these meanings are connected to legacies of colonialism.

5.4.1 Methods and analysis

I draw on multiple methods in conducting this global ethnography, including observations, field visits to the GLD Golf Gardens, formal and informal interviews, and qualitative document analysis. For this study, the data featured are from interviews and documents provided by architects involved in designing the GLD Golf Gardens, interviews with executives of GLD, interviews with city town planners, and field visits to and observations of the Golf Gardens.

My observations centred on the organizational decisions in the layout/allocation of place (and how architectural features were used to assist in the layout of the community), how the spaces were produced, the aesthetic choices used in the community, and the role of sport/leisure in the imaginations of place.

Interviews were conducted with the architects of the global firm (n=3) (with an office in Gurgaon for this project and others) hired to design the GLD Golf Gardens, executives from GLD (n=6), engineers overseeing the development of the Golf Gardens (n=2) and state planners

who oversee development processes and practices in Gurgaon (n=2). The goals of the interviews were to get a sense of the architectural decisions that were made, the aesthetic sensibilities that underpinned the development of the GLD Golf Gardens, and the usage of particular ideas of sport/leisure as a guide for the design of the community.

Observations and interviews were supplemented with a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) of promotional materials, architectural renderings, and floorplans of the GLD Golf Gardens. A more thorough discussion of QDA is provided in Chapter Two. For this study, following Millington and Wilson (2013), QDA was used to examine the processes through which particular meanings and representations come to be taken-for-granted. This is particularly pertinent when analyzing architectural renderings of space, as this approach is helpful to unearth and question the assumptions that drive the design, aesthetics, and layout of communities such as this one.

Additionally, and as highlighted in Chapter 2, I was inspired by Stoler's (2002, 2010) approach to archival anthropology. I used Stoler's approach to read 'along the grain' to take seriously how documents and images produced by the architecture firm and GLD (re)inscribe particular understandings of the aesthetics of space, the environment, and visibility/invisibility.

I combined and connected the data from the sources outlined above through processes of 'articulation' (Slack, 1996). I looked to articulate my data (the interviews, observations, document analysis) as a way of making sense of how this sport/leisure residential complex was imagined, designed, and produced – and how this space is connected to forces and flows beyond its specific boundaries. In this way, my use of articulation was inspired by Hall (1980), particularly his assertion that articulation is necessary to better understand how "different racial and ethnic groups were inserted historically, and the relations which have tended to erode and

transform, or to preserve these distinctions through time – not simply as residues and trances of previous modes, but as active structuring principles of the present organization of society” (p. 339). The goal here was to situate the aesthetic choices in the design of the community and the place and role of meanings associated with sport/leisure in the creation of space into historical relations of colonialism and contemporary politics of urban development.

5.5 Findings

5.5.1 Visibility from the inside out: an (aesthetic representation) of golf on view from all angles

Deliberate design and architectural decisions were made to ensure that the visual focus in the community was on golf. This was done in three key and interrelated ways: the layout of the broader community; the placement and design of the buildings relative to the golfing spaces; and the layout of the apartment units in the floorplans. Perhaps unsurprisingly, with the name ‘Golf Gardens’, the GLD community was designed in a manner whereby the golf greens were in the centre – while residential buildings surrounded the picturesque golfing spaces. The Golf Gardens was divided into two phases – with holes 1 and 9 enclosed by residential buildings, and holes 2 through 8 also enclosed by residential buildings. To provide visual and physical continuity between the two phases of the development, the architects designed a large, multistory archway between both spaces.



Figure 6: Architect Image of Golf Gardens

Laying out the community in this way ensured that golf was the primary visual feature throughout the community. As Ansh, an executive in GLD, emphasized: “golf continues to be the big story. It’s what ties the whole project together.” Similarly, Leena, lead architect from the global firm overseeing the project, highlights that it is the continuous visibility of golf that was of utmost importance in the design of the community:

L: The whole thing as it’s called, the Golf Gardens, so the whole thing revolves around golf

DW: and being able to see and experience it?

L: And experience its beauty from your own living space. You’re looking onto the golf course. So, you’re literally seeing whatever is happening out there

DW: And that is thought to be what is most appealing?

L: Right. Right, the whole concept was designed that way, so it’s been sold by that name, Golf Gardens. It’s centralized by the strong feeling that there’s golf right there.

A central feature of the promotional messaging for the Golf Gardens community revolved around every unit being provided with “the panoramic vistas of the beautiful golf greens” (promotional materials). Taking note of the architectural renderings of the masterplan, to deliver

on this promise and to ensure that the visual focus remains on golf, the high rise towers are designed to be quite narrow. As Leena emphasizes:

You have golf facing balconies designed so that there is golf from every apartment... so that's how it was designed.. with lots of balconies to look onto the green spaces...the person interacts more with the green, giving them a brilliant golf view.

Ajay, an executive of the architecture firm leading the project, explained this particular design choice after learning from what he interprets to be a mistake by the DLF golf community in Gurgaon. The DLF community is one of the most exclusive in Gurgaon, with an invite to purchase only, built around an 18 hole regulation size golf course. And yet, some units in this other development do not face golf and many only have one room facing the golf course:

The DLF... they have one bedroom that looks into the golf course, and they have three bedrooms that look back onto the street... and there's a highway or a train track going along it. It's very expensive... and aspirational people want to move there... we didn't want to do that

As Ajay highlights above, GLD wanted to differentiate themselves from the competition posed by the DLF community, and one important way to do so was to design the buildings so that every flat, no matter where it is located, would have golf-facing views. This is in stark contrast to a more conventional model where cube-like designs of buildings would necessitate having a mixture of units that face inward and outward. Thus, through design, the visual field for residents in each building could remain focused on golf.

Not only did the masterplan of the community and the building structure aid in making golf a central visual feature in the Golf Gardens, but the floorplans ensured that golf remained in focus as much as possible.

Floor Plan

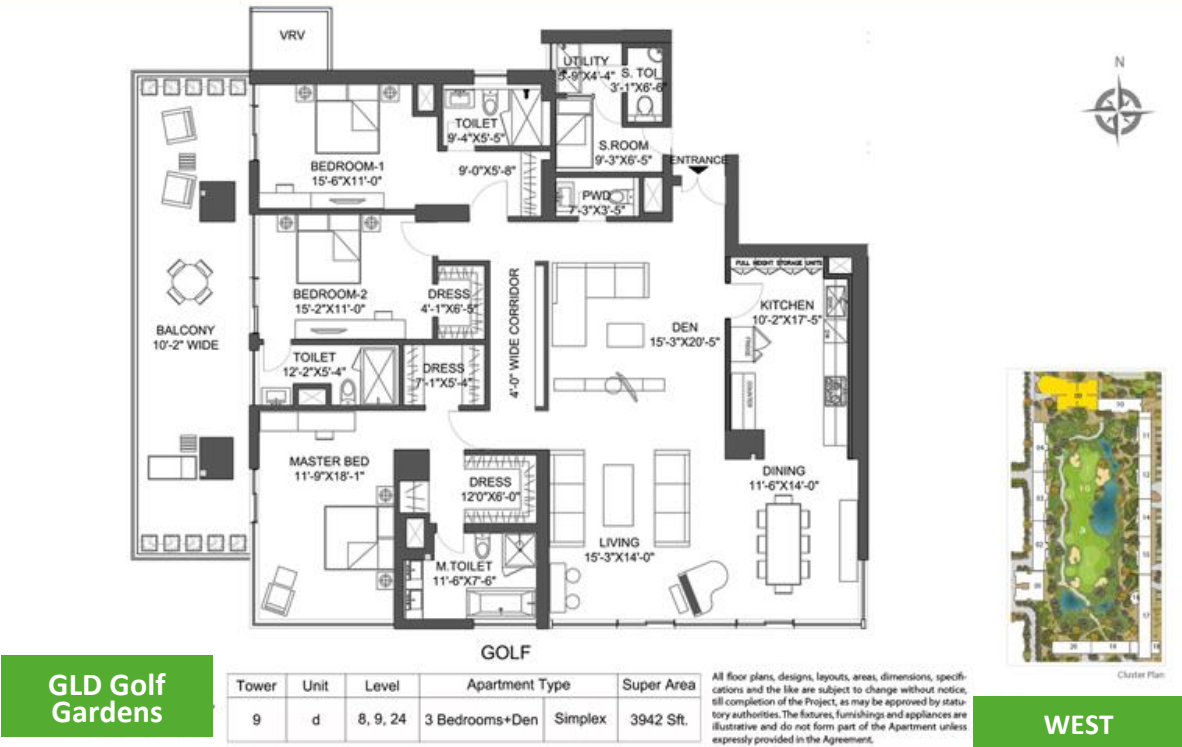


Figure 7: Floor Plan Sample 1

Floor Plan

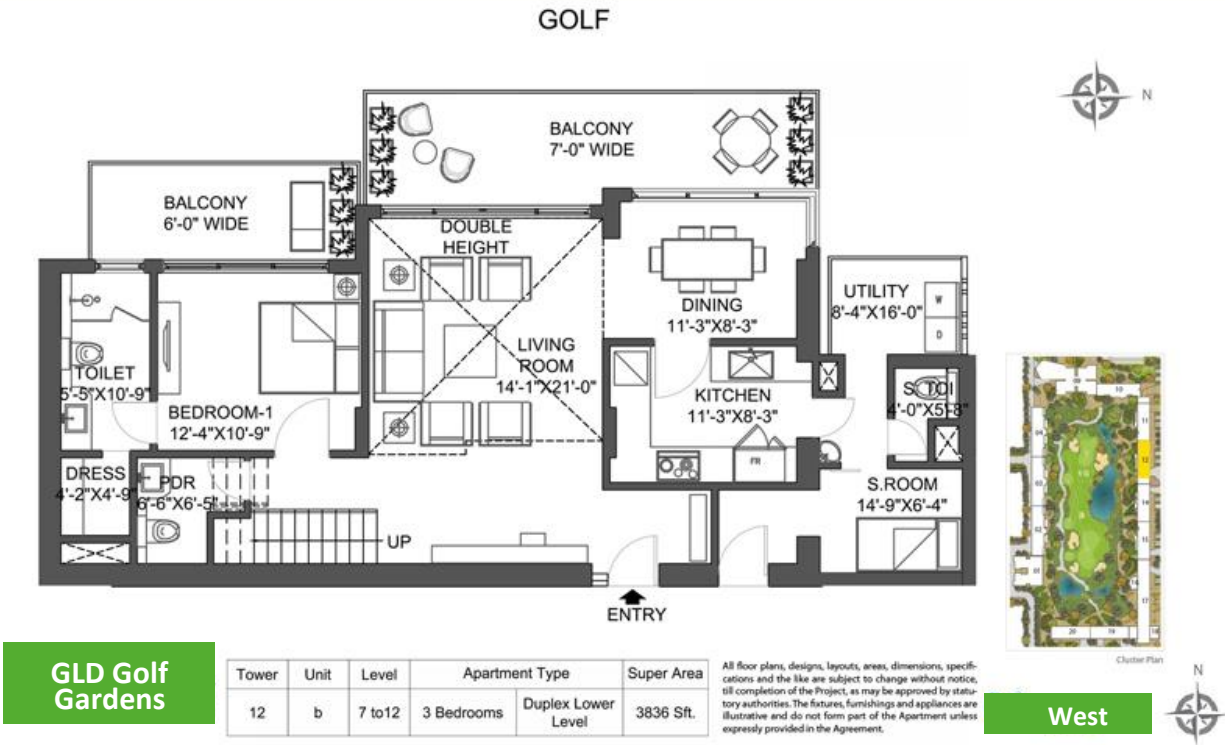


Figure 8: Floor Plan Sample 2

Floor Plan

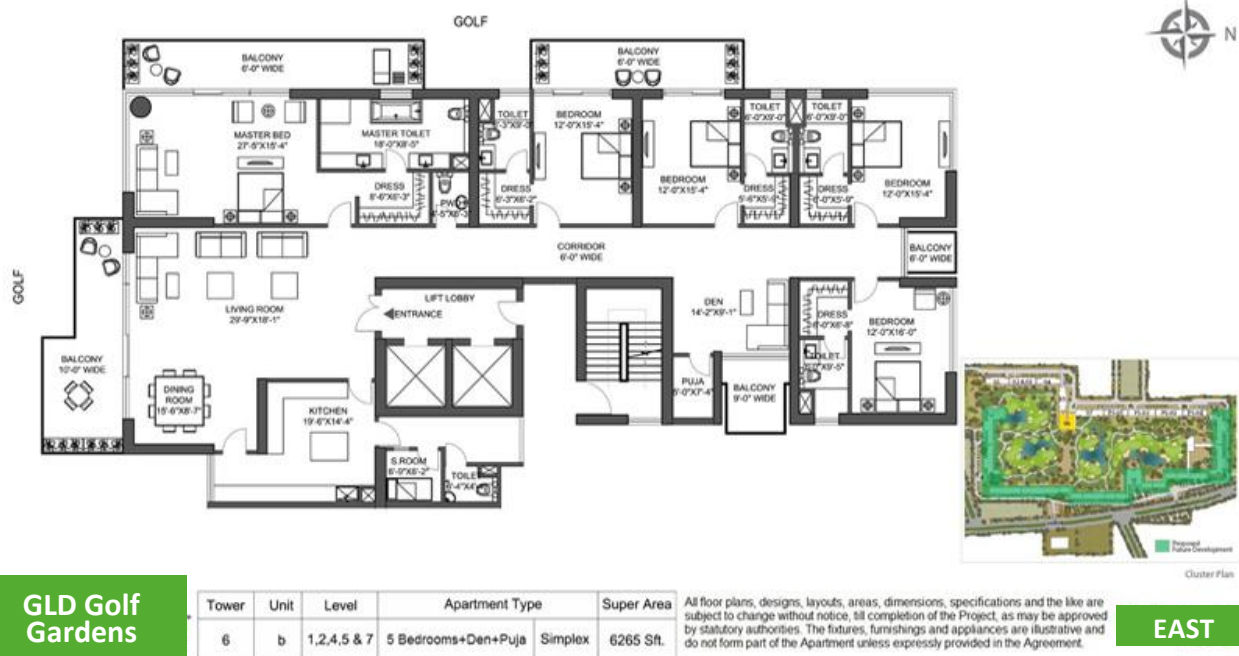


Figure 9: Floor Plan Sample 3

In the sample floorplans above, the majority of rooms in each flat face the golf greens. In image one, both the living/dining spaces and the master bedroom are golf facing. The two other bedrooms connect to a balcony on the side of building that would be facing Fairway East, and thus would have views of the rest of the development and the other 7 holes of the golf course. The only rooms that do not directly face golf are the den, the servant's room, and the kitchen (which would mostly be used by servants and not the owners of the suites). Similarly, in images two and three, rooms that are not golf facing are the servant's quarters and the kitchen. These floorplan layouts are similar in each of the units, regardless in size or where they are located within the Golf Gardens. In this way, golf is meant to always be visible, no matter which room or which building a resident might be in.

While the Golf Gardens was designed to make and keep golf in the view of residents, questions remain about what is it about golf that is visible. Interestingly, through conversations with executives in GLD and architects involved with designing and executing the project, it was clear that GLD was more preoccupied with featuring the aesthetics of golf rather than a golf course in a more conventional sense. These motivations stemmed in part from a recognition that the golf course was not likely to be used by many who live within the gates. As Ansh explains:

I would say from GLD's point of view, the golf course is primarily designed as an aesthetic component to the product. That is the thing. It lends the ability to use the golf course as a chip and putt. That has been one of the basic ingredients in terms of how we perceive the project... So, if there are 1000 people living in a community which is overlooking a golf course or is part of a golf community, not more than 15% will use it... so it just lends a lot of aesthetic value to the community.

Elaborating further, Ansh emphasized that it was assumed that most residents desired the symbolic value associated with the scenery and view of a golfscape. This assumption led GLD to place the towers as close as possible to the golf course, requiring the course to be shortened significantly:

Very rarely would you see a high-density community coming up next to a golf course. Or even if they do come up then they will be at least some distance [away] or they would be overlooking the course... So, for example, you would have lake view residences, mountain view residences, golf view residences, but very rarely would you have residences which are *part* of the golf course. So that has been one of the biggest differentiators for us, but I would also say parallel a challenge for us... So, one of the biggest things which I understood from most of these guys was that if you have a driving range or if you have a golf course where people can end up driving, those are the courses which cannot be built around high rises. You need to have a safe distance, a buffer zone. So that is the reason why our golf course is a chip and putt.

Above, Ansh underscores that the goal of GLD was to give residents the ability to view the aesthetics of the golf course from as close as possible. A key part of realizing that goal included

reducing the length of the course in order to bring the residential buildings in closer proximity to the fairways and greens and also to reduce the risk of damage to the infrastructure.

An important point to mention here is that the ratio of the height of the buildings compared to the open space of the golf holes is staggering. In Phase 1 alone, one tower reaches 43 stories high, the next 37, another two reach 29, 8 different towers are 15 stories, and 4 towers are 6 stories. The photographs below highlight the lack of clear distinction between the edges of the rough and the start of the towers:



Figure 10: Photograph of Proximity of Greenery to Building



Figure 11: Photograph of Proximity of Greenery to Building from Grass Level

As the images show, the holes are entirely enclosed, and towers loom directly overhead with overhanging balconies so that residents can enjoy the aesthetic beauty of the golf course (from literally right on top) without having to participate themselves.

While the length of the course itself was shortened significantly, the architects and golf course designers decided to use regulation size tees and greens in the construction of the golf holes because they mark (aesthetically) a golfing environment. As Ajay explains

We don't need to use anything more than that, and visually it will look great because it will have a green which will be a regulation size green and a regulation size tee. But, it will be short par 3s. Par 3s always look attractive because you don't see a basic grassland...So, this was very dense with the number of tees and lakes and so it kind of clicked because it looked good from above.

To Ajay, while golf is often most associated with large expanses of land that are composed of fairways, pristine tees and greens, rough, and beautified water features, the least visually appealing component is the fairway. As a result, in order to increase the aesthetic appeal of the Golf Gardens, GLD and the architects chose to remove the fairways as much as possible and condense the most visually beautiful elements that provide stark visual contrast (i.e. the water features, greens, and bunkers) into a compressed area. Reflecting on how GLD assumed the space would not be widely used, the impetus for this was because ‘it looked good from above’. In this sense, the goal was to give individuals who are residing in the Golf Gardens the ability to see the entire hole of golf – to have them be on top of the course from the comfort of their own apartment, and not have to leave their unit in order to feel as though they are experiencing the golf environment. In some ways, this is reminiscent of Veblen’s (1899) classic arguments on the role of conspicuous consumption/leisure in the performance of class-based distinctions. The decision makers at GLD appear to be inspired by such thinking, but in this case there might not need to be conspicuous consumption (through use), but perhaps just conspicuous access (the leisure facilities just need to be present).

The aesthetic appeal of the golf course is predicated on the manicured and pristine landscapes that define its boundaries. As Ansh notes, the maintained landscapes of golf are what appear to drive potential consumers to golf community living:

Most of the people live in the golf community because of the beauty of the golf and because the landscape will be much more well maintained in comparison to the landscape if it was in a normal community. It lends a lot of aesthetic value, that is the advantage.

The sense that golf landscapes demand a particular level of continuous maintenance, pruning, and management is highlighted by Ajay as well:

You see, I mean, visually, a golf course looks nice by virtue of the fact that it's green and it's doctored all around it and there's a lake next to it. So that defines visually what a golf course is.

While it is the 'art' of manicured and managed spaces of golf that is intended to be visible at all times, there was a disconnect between the apparent desire to: (a) facilitate having access to these spaces (at least for some); (b) promote the visibility of these spaces, and; (c) the desire to build and fill a high-density housing community consisting of high rise condominiums. In fact, the interest in golf-related aesthetics alongside the drive to create large buildings meant that some seemingly unusual decisions had to be made to satisfy both. An excellent example of this is that GLD had to resort to using artificial turf for Phase 1 (holes 1 and 9) of the golfing landscape – a decision that would seem to both highlight the arbitrariness of what counts as beautiful and pristine nature-scapes, for developers and it would seem for consumers. As Ajay explains:

A: When we walked on it, we didn't realize it, when you put buildings all around you, you [block] the sunlight out. So, it happened much later, and [we realized] we might have to use artificial grass, you know, on the course because you play golf through the winter in India, right? Winter is the best time to play golf [but] because of our latitude, the sunlight comes... low angled from the south. And we had a tall tower on the southern end of the project. It cast a huge shadow on the courtyard.

D: Do you think that will affect sales of the property?

A: No, you look from above, you cannot tell.

As noted then, due to the large and imposing shadows created by the high-rise towers in the Golf Gardens Phase 1, GLD would not be able to sustain grass on the golfing spaces because there would not be enough sunlight to support growth and maintenance of the greens. In my interactions with Ajay, where I first learned that the holes would be synthetic turf, I was admittedly surprised that this was a decision that had been made – and that it was a decision that was made after the building designs and heights were finalized. Ajay's response to my question

about whether the use of turf would impact sales is also telling. The belief is that it would not impact sales because the golf course would not be used, and because from the view of the apartments one would not be able to tell that the grass was fake. Importantly, using synthetic grass would mean that that section of the course would be green at all times and the appearance of being carefully manicured and pruned would be maintained.

In this case, it was the visual that was crucial – and the vantage point that was most important to decision-makers was the point that exists in units that tower over the golf holes, multiple stories up. And yet, it is important to note, that although holes 1 and 9 (in Phase 1 of the Golf Gardens) are both primarily synthetic turf, GLD made the decision to keep traditional sod and grass for the other 7 holes. This, as executives from GLD explained to me, was because obstructed sunlight was not an issue and the grass could be sustained and kept green. Still, and while golf is intended to be the primary visual focus running through the community, what designers were most concerned with was an abstract representation of an idea of golf – a position that is embodied in decisions to create a highly compressed golf course, comprised of artificial turf, and designed around an aesthetically pleasing (but not necessarily useable) space.

5.5.2 Invisibilities from the inside out: anything and anyone 'other' to golf hidden from view

As golf was to be the primary feature of the community, the majority of the open space within the Golf Gardens was reserved for the development of golf holes. It is worth noting in this context that development regulations in the state of Haryana stipulate that no more than 55% of the plot of land for a residential development can be allocated to property for sale; the rest must be comprised of open/green space, roads, or other infrastructure. When I met with a Senior Town Planner of the Municipal Corporation of Gurgaon (MCG) he estimated that about 80% of all

parks and green spaces are located within private gated residential complexes throughout Gurgaon.

However, there is also a regulation in Gurgaon that is meant to ensure that open spaces – regardless of ‘public’ spaces in the city or those within gated residential complexes – must be available for use for all individuals. I was curious as to how these seemingly contradictory pieces of information were negotiated in practice. For this reason, I asked the Senior Town Planner about how the MCG ensures that these spaces are available to everyone to use, especially when most have gates that control access to internal environments. He responded by saying that they cannot stop different gated communities from denying access to private spaces within the gates, however, they do mandate that all spaces within the gates be available for all residents to use for any purpose. He was quick to clarify that this meant that open spaces within a gated community could not be reserved for one use over another, which is to say, that they had to be available at all times for anyone who wishes to use them. This posed a potential problem for GLD, as the vast majority of open space within the community was relegated almost exclusively for golf. As Ajay explains:

Nowhere does it say that you can deny anyone the use of the open space... The open space is meant for the use of the residents.... So, the way they’ve done it here is they’ve said that everyone who has bought a place, they co-own this golf course and they’re members and they can play. But can you say that a child can run up to the course and pick up a ball? No way... so the kids have no open place to kick a ball and stuff or play cricket. That’s what people want to do here, a lot of them.... When the resident welfare associations get formed – and they tend to be quite powerful – some will, you know, sooner or later, someone is going to challenge this... it will go up in the courts immediately and it just takes one judge to say that open spaces in the middle of things cannot be used for any one purpose, they should be for a more general purpose. Some such judgement will come. It will throw a bad end for us... it’s golf, it’s out of bounds. You can walk around it.

Going further, Ajay explains the architectural design decisions that took place in order to avoid potential litigation:

What we've done in GLD is very unique. We've lifted all the buildings up on stilts, so the total ground area has increased two-fold...what we've lost in the golf course, we gave them in stilts... plus we used the roofs of some of the buildings to put jogging tracks. The open space, green space is even more than you would have had originally.

The result is that GLD elevated all of the buildings in order to double 'open ground' area in order to avoid future lawsuits over the use of space.

While undoubtedly an impressive architectural problem-solving manoeuvre, there are important implications for what is then visible and invisible by way of design. Under the stilts of the buildings are seating areas, walking paths, and outdoor exercise equipment – and on top of the buildings are jogging tracks. It is these spaces that Ajay implies are likely to be used by a larger proportion of residents, yet they will be hidden from view by way of design. Similarly, taking note of the community masterplan images below, GLD placed other community facilities, including kids' parks and sports facilities, on the outside of the buildings – closer to the gates and walls that define the boundaries between inside and outside the Golf Gardens. These too are hidden from the view of the residents whose rooms in their units face the golf course.



Figure 12: Masterplan of West Development



Figure 13: Masterplan of Golf Gardens



Figure 14 :Masterplan of Golf Gardens

Should the golf course be used by individuals, the ‘other’ spaces are also hidden from the perspective of the golfing greens. Particularly, and as demonstrated in the photograph below, the golf course deliberately uses the architecture of golf (i.e. bunkers and greens) to hide spaces of movement and other use from the view of golf participants.



Figure 15: Photograph of Use of Golf Architecture to Hide Other Spaces



Figure 16: Photograph of Use of Golf Architecture to Hide Other Spaces

Relatedly, bodies of service are rendered largely invisible through architectural design. In particular, and as mentioned previously, constructing the buildings so that they are tall, narrow, and surround golf spaces in the centre allows the designers to ensure as many rooms as possible faced inside the community. The rooms that face the backside of the property are almost exclusively spaces (i.e. the kitchen, servant's quarters) that would be used and occupied by service staff that the residents would employ – the maids, cooks, and drivers. There is thus a hierarchy in the privilege of what becomes seen and exactly whom has the privilege to see what.

Taken together, the community is designed such that it is extremely inward looking. Perhaps more importantly, by way of design, there is an ability for residents of the community to ignore the reality of the Gurgaon that exists outside the gates. That is, the severe lack of public

infrastructure, ongoing issues of flooding, informal settlements of migrant workers, and waste dumped on stretches of land between gates – are all largely out of view or in the distance.

5.5.3 (In)visibilities from the outside in: the occlusion of dirt, disorder, and labour

A World of Exclusivity!

It has often been said that the first impression is the last impression. That's why it is essential to give those who live here and who visit the residents to know at the very glance that this is a different world. People who have made this their abode are in a different league. These are people with fine achievements and finer tastes... In simple words, it's grandeur at its best. Because it's not just an entrance to a building, it's a gateway to a world less-ordinary.

(Golf Gardens Promotional material)

In building a gated community, boundaries are often clearly marked between the privileged inside to those on the outside through the use of gates, security checkpoints and walls. With the Golf Gardens, this was no different. In the early visits I made to the Golf Gardens, I often entered through the back entrance – an unassuming gate where workers, sales staff, and prospective buyers would enter and exit the property. This was the checkpoint of choice as the 'official' gate that was to be used when development was complete was not going to be operational until families began taking possession of their units.

One time, I accompanied one of the architects for a site visit and on this trip. He made a point of taking me in through what would become the entrance gates for all residents and visitors:

The gate itself was overwhelming. Striking. It was unnecessarily tall, wide, considering that only one car per side could enter or exit. There was signage in front of you and a tower to the right, both branded with GLD icons, making it impossible for you to forget where you were going. It was clear that this gate there was to tell you that you had 'arrived somewhere', that you were 'someplace' of importance. The gate itself, was not enough though. Once we went through (no one was yet manning the booths), there was a long boulevard that was lined on both sides with palm trees. It felt as though it was designed to mimic a red-carpet entrance. It served no infrastructural purpose, it was purely aesthetic, to make the

drive into the Estate long, perhaps to build anticipation. There was a large wall with a water feature, and a large golf ball before you turned the corner to the buildings. There was something about the scale of it all – as if the size of the walls, the size of the boulevard, the size of the trees, the size of the golf ball, all taken together indicated distinction. If you were inside this place you were transplanted somewhere else, a place different to the rest of the city. (Field notes).



Figure 17: Photograph of Golf Garden Gates



Figure 18: Photograph of Golf Gardens Entrance from Above

The imposing nature of the entrance gate, and the high walls that surround the community are meant to delimit the boundaries of what is inside and outside, as well as what one from the outside might be able to see. Indeed, the gates and walls, as well as the buildings, work to hide the pristine, green golfing centre from view.

Interestingly, however, there were also careful aesthetic and architectural decisions employed to ensure that service staff and spaces of dirt are also rendered largely invisible. In almost all residential developments there are what are called ‘utility balconies’. These balconies are often used for laundry, washing, and hanging clothing to dry, and are sites for storage. These balconies are also connected to the servants’ quarters (a term used by developers and residents to describe the spaces where maids or other service staff employed by families full time reside).

Unsurprisingly, the architects and GLD designers placed these utility balconies facing the backside of the property. What is unique, however, is that the architects decided to conceal these balconies with a façade with the sole purpose of making these spaces appear uniform and ‘clean’.

As Leena explains:

So, you have driveways which are on the backside, opposite the view which a person would enjoy from his bedroom or living space. So, what a person enjoys is the golf greens... on the other side you have your driver and utility area. Every household has a utility area which is placed right at the backside, and it is concealed...you don’t see it visibly. There is a balcony, but we have a panel which is running and camouflages it.

Ajay further elaborates on this point:

We have a seam on the wall on the outside, so you don’t see anything. It’s all disguised. Nothing that gives it away... so that’s the typology we’re talking about which makes it different... we just don’t want you to look out to the utility balconies



Figure 19: Photograph of Concrete Paneling Hiding Service Balconies

The goal through using this concrete panelling, as Leena and Ajay emphasize, and as the image above shows, was to hide spaces of dirt or labour from the view of those on the outside of the community, or those re-entering their place of residence.

5.5.4 (In)visibilities from the ground up: a hierarchy of views

The workings of visibility/invisibility do not just play out on a horizontal axis, but also a vertical one. In particular, if one resides in a unit closer to the ground level of the building, the closer one is to the golf greens. Because of the proximity of the buildings to the greens as well as the height of the towers, you would only be able to see the buildings across from you or the golf greens directly below. As mentioned earlier, the shortest of the towers is 6 stories and the tallest is 47 stories. The shorter towers all face towers that are over double the height, thus limiting possibilities to see what lies beyond the gates of the Golf Gardens. While there might be prestige associated with living in penthouse suites or units higher up, the important point here is that residents in these lower level units would be *unable* to see the realities outside the gates because of their physical positioning within the community.



Figure 20: Photograph Illustrating View from Lower Units

However, if one were to live on the upper floors of the taller towers (units often associated with penthouse suites), there would be views that would extend to the outside, beyond the walls of the GLD Golf Gardens.



Figure 21: Photograph Illustrating View from Upper Units



Figure 22: Photograph Illustrating View from Upper Units

While the goal of the design of the Golf Gardens is to encourage residents to always see the golf course, there is still a hierarchy in terms of view. Put another way, residing in one of the units near the top floors of the tallest towers would give one the opportunity to look down on the Golf Gardens itself, as well as the broader ‘outside’ of Gurgaon.

More specifically, this hierarchy is at work both within the community, and between the community and the outside. For example, there are three private clubs within the Golf Gardens: one for use of the residents of any of the general and unbranded Golf Gardens Buildings (16 towers), one only for the residents of the Polo Suites condos (4 towers in the Golf Gardens), and one only for the residents of the St. Andrews Tower (the tallest tower in the community). The club for use of the residents of any building outside of the Polo Suites and the St. Andrews Tower is at ground level; however, the clubs for the Polo Suites and the St. Andrews Tower are both located at the penthouse level. This is on the 15th story for the Polo Suites and the 47th for the St. Andrews Tower. Thus, those who live in more exclusive and more expensive residences are able to have access to a space where they can look ‘down’ on the rest of the community (even if they do not live in a unit near the top of the tallest buildings in the complex). Thus, this provides another avenue for residents to differentiate themselves, and assert their privilege and power compared to other residents (as well as those excluded from the Golf Gardens).

Additionally, and for those with units on the upper levels of the taller towers in the community, there are views of the Gurgaon that exists outside the gates. Importantly, though, while the ‘undesirable’ outside may be in view, it still remains in the periphery. This is because the physical distance from the spaces below erases the details of what takes place on the ground. In other words, the spaces and bodies that are considered to be dirty, decaying, flooding, and informal similarly become invisible through the separation offered by height.

5.6 Discussion

My findings revealed that deliberate architectural and design decisions were made to ensure that the residents' view would be funneled towards the golfing centre, that spaces and bodies deemed 'other' to golf were rendered invisible through architectural design features, there was a 'hierarchy of views' depending on one's position within the community, and that there were particular aesthetic associations with the environment of golf that were of central importance in the development of the GLD Golf Gardens. In this section, I first discuss the political implications of these architectural decisions – particularly the ways in which architecture/design is used to (re)produce the distribution of the sensible (Rancière, 2004), how the creation of the community is predicated on practices of hyperseparation and backgrounding (Plumwood, 1993), and how architectural choices to delimit visibility/invisibility is reflective of broader spatial politics in Indian cities. Next, I discuss the particular importance of the aesthetics of golf (disciplined, tamed, manicured, and exclusive) in the design of the community – focusing especially on the relationship of golf to other modes of colonial domination of nature, and how the production of empty and unused leisure-based spaces is related to urban beautification projects that look to cordon off and protect the environment for the privileged few.

5.6.1 The (aesthetic) politics of the architecture

Rancière, in his discussion of the politics of aesthetics, discusses art in its visual, literary and performative terms. Although architecture does not figure in as a form of art into his theorizations of aesthetics, my findings illustrate that architectural and design decisions, and the subsequent architectural and spatial configurations, are also political. That is to say, these

configurations are akin to other forms of art as they (re)produce the ‘distribution of the sensible’ – what is visible and in common within a political-aesthetic regime.

Specifically, the deliberate and intentional architectural decisions to enclose the golf course with high rise towers, to make each tower narrow in order to ensure each unit is inward (not outward) facing, and to create floorplans such that the majority of rooms in each apartment have unobstructed golf views, worked to limit the boundaries of what was see-able. In doing so, the disciplined and pristine aesthetic environment of golf becomes the ‘common’, in Rancière’s terms, within the residential complex while that which is marked ‘other’ to golf – spaces of unpredictable use or sweat (children’s parks, sports facilities, jogging tracks), spaces of undesirable or dirty labour (service balconies), and the Gurgaon outside – become placed outside the view of the Golf Gardens residents.

Interestingly, and as Rancière highlights, one’s social and economic position determines to what extent one can take part in what is considered to be in common for a given community. In this case, there is a clear distinction based on positionality between those who were included, and are thus able to have a part in the common, and those who are excluded. Particularly, those with the purchasing power to buy flats within the Golf Gardens are the ones who have the privilege of being able to view the golfing centre. Moreover, the floorplan design decisions rendered the view of service staff within the apartments to that which is on the outside. In this way, one’s position in this community filters who and what is seen, but also *what* a particular individual has the privilege to see.

Importantly, and as Plumwood reminds us, the ways in which these architectural decisions create certain visibilities/invisibilities are inseparable from other modes of domination and exclusion. Plumwood argues that excluded or inferiorized groups contribute to the

perpetuation of domination social values – in this case, ‘the sensible’. In other words, it is not simply about how the politics of aesthetics create boundaries between who is considered to be of ‘the common’, in Rancière’s terms, and who is not, but also about how those who are excluded create the common as well. In this way, through the design and architectural decisions made by GLD and the architects, Plumwood’s ideas of backgrounding and hyperseparation become clear. Architecturally, a hierarchy of activities is established where the golfing space is privileged, other spaces of use are secondary, and spaces of labour or dirt are inferiorized further.

By shifting focus to golf, that which is other to golf, and the spaces in which the other occupy – both within the community through service spaces, and the outside completely excluded by way of the gates – are simply “not worth noticing” (Plumwood, 1993, p. 48), becoming background to the foreground of a pristine, clean, and green golf-focused centre. Moreover, the value, focus, and the ‘common’ of golf established by creating a community so inward looking is just as much created by positioning it in opposition to everything golf is not – the chaos of Gurgaon outside the gates characterized by other large gated community projects, lack of infrastructure, informal settlements, garbage piles, flooding, and more. However, while this view is set up as universal for those who have purchased units in the Golf Gardens, this view is created, sustained, and maintained by those who are not included. It is the migrant workers in informal settlements on the outside of the gates who execute the construction for the Golf Gardens, the maids that keep the houses clean, and the service staff that maintain the greenery and nature of ‘the common’. This is also reflective of Zylinska’s (2004), drawing on Butler’s (1993), arguments about how the ‘constitutive outside’ make and sustain the desired and privileged inside – the bodies that are seen to matter. That is, in order to maintain the dominant centre, there are necessary exclusions that protect the centre to “distinguish it from what does not

‘properly’ belong to it” (Zylinska, 2004, p. 526). In some ways, the aesthetic regimes can be interpreted as a form of ‘ocular authoritarianism’ (Silk & Andrews, 2008, p. 406) that renders distinct boundaries between those that do and do not belong by making more visible the desired residents of the community. In sum, and in Plumwood’s words, the periphery makes the centre.

Relatedly, the creation of this aesthetic-political regime by way of backgrounding is also made possible through modes of hyperseparation. The concentric layout of the community – where as one moves from the outside inwards, one gets closer to the purified centre of golf – ensures this. It is the gates and the security personnel that police entry and exit that mark the most obvious distinction between the privileged inside and the excluded ‘other’. The Golf Gardens, in this way, is its own purified and separated bubble, distinct from the Gurgaon that exists on the outside looking in. Moreover, the ways in which the service balconies and spaces of labour are concealed by concrete panelling marks a more insidious hyperseparation as the excluded other becomes hidden from the outside and the inside. In some ways this is reflective of Park and Burgess’ (1925) classic concentric zone model of the city, where they argue that as cities grow, spaces of deterioration become concentrated in the city centre, as spaces of prosperity move out to the peripheries. Except here, the Golf Gardens is designed in a different concentric way – the spaces of purity are located in the centre, and as one moves outward, one gets closure areas marked as chaotic, dirty, and undesirable.

The hyperseparation between included and excluded also works vertically. As highlighted in the findings, even though the view of those within the community is funnelled towards golf at the expense of everything else, there are places in which one might be able to look down on the entire Golf Gardens and outwards to the surroundings of Gurgaon from above. While being elevated makes it possible to see the outside, there remains a hyperseparation as the

details of the realities below and outside become erased by distance. That is, while one might have the privilege to look down and outward, the ability to avoid the ‘other’ (the flooding on the streets, the life-worlds of informal settlements, the dirt from ongoing construction, and waste deposits scattered in open spaces) on the outside remains possible through a stark physical separation between those above and those below.

Like Asher Ghertner (2015), I also use Rancière theorizations of aesthetics to understand the meanings and potential implications of the ways in which aesthetics as a form of governance are used to mark boundaries of inclusion/exclusion and in community making. Ghertner (2015), however, uses Rancière’s concept of the distribution of the sensible in order to investigate how, in the process of trying to realize world class city aspiration for Delhi, those in power employ aesthetic codes of appearance of how the city should look and are strategic about whom is included in this vision of the city.

In the application of Rancière’s ideas of the distribution of the sensible, Ghertner explores how those who are excluded from world class city making in Delhi appropriate these dominant aesthetic codes and language (i.e. recognize themselves that places in which they live play no part in a world class Delhi). My application of Rancière, while inspired by Ghertner, also differs as I sought to explore how architecture design specifically (re)produces aesthetic-political regimes that limit what exactly can be seen, who can be seen, and who does the seeing in the process of creating a community of sense. Moreover, combining Rancière’s approach to the theorization of aesthetics and politics along with Plumwood’s ideas of backgrounding and hyperseparation illustrates not only what is occluded from view by way of design, but also the how those that are excluded, and on the periphery, create the sensible and the common.

The deliberate use of architecture to delimit the visible/invisible and included/excluded is a microcosm of broader spatial politics in Indian cities. As other scholars have argued, a drive to create world class cities has shifted definitions over proper and desirable citizenship and has justified city development projects that privilege middle and upper class groups, while excluding or evicting ‘others’ that do not align with the so-called world class city aesthetic (Bhan, 2009; Ellis, 2012; Ghertner, 2015; Routray, 2014; Schindler, 2014). The desire to create a world class city intersects with the desire to produce purified and clean spaces that are clear from the nuisance of the sights, smells, sounds, and chaos of the urban core (Baviskar, 2011; Fernandes, 2004; Ghertner, 2015). The Golf Gardens, similar to the development of other gated communities, are reflective of the increased development of new and distinctive forms of suburban cultural and social communities focused on ‘upmarket clubs’ where there are clear boundaries between those who can be(long) in these spaces who can cannot (Falzon, 2004; Fernandes, 2006).

Fernandes (2004) rightly argues that there is a ‘politics of forgetting’, where the needs of the poor are ignored in favour of the desires of the middle classes for beautified environments. This is reflected in the ways in which the planning regulations of Gurgaon mandate that green/leisure space be available for use for all for any activity. The state cannot intervene into the internal spaces of the gated communities and make these leisure spaces available for use for those who are not residents. This is, however, an example of a willful forgetting of the urban poor in planning access to leisure, nature, and the environment, because state planner highlighted that the overwhelming majority of green spaces are confined to exclusive gated communities like the GLD Golf Gardens.

Moreover, and more importantly, in the process of forgetting, there is an increase in urban cleansing practices that increasingly police space on aesthetic grounds, and the urban poor become removed or pushed to the peripheries (Baviskar, 2003; Fernandes, 2004; Ghertner, 2010, 2015). The ways in which architecture police the aesthetics of the Golf Gardens is similar to other residential developments that are marked by aesthetic homogeneity – a homogeneity that masks hyperpolarized developments that privilege the wealthy while also naturalizing class distinctions (Falzon, 2004; Pow, 2009; Raposo, 2006; J Shen & Wu, 2012; Srivastava, 2014; Waldman & Weedon, 2019).

In this way, while there are clear politics of forgetting, my findings also suggest that there is a simultaneous *politics of erasure* through architecture and design decisions that render those that are forgotten also *invisible*. That said, however, while there are clear boundaries drawn between the privileged, purified, and beautified centre and the chaos, pollution, and dirt on the outside (Brosius, 2010), these spaces remain permeable. That is, the spaces and homes within the Golf Gardens are maintained and sustained by those who are hidden through the architecture and design. It is possible, in this way, to read this, in Appadurai's (2000) terms, as the desire to keep the other “close at hand as servants but far away as humans”.

5.6.2 *Politics of golf: aesthetics, purified nature, and disciplined space*

There are important connections to be made between Rancière's discussion of the politics of aesthetics, colonial productions of nature, and the aesthetic ideas associated with golf and leisure in the design of the Golf Gardens. In short, the fact that this community was built around golf (and not a park or other space of leisure) is important and requires attention. As highlighted in the preceding section, the architectural design decisions filter views towards golf, thereby

making golf central to the idea of the ‘sensible’ and the ‘common’ in the GLD Golf Gardens. As a result of this, questions remain about what is revealed if golf is approached as a form of art and aesthetics, in a Rancièrian sense. Like architecture, physical cultural practices of sport and leisure do not figure in to Rancièr’s theoretical analysis of aesthetics and politics, but there are clear aesthetic markers and assumptions about golf that underpin the design of this community.

First, the aesthetic usage of golf in the design of the GLD Golf Gardens is inseparable from the historical and contemporary politics of environmental and spatial purification. As scholars such as Arnold (2006), Drayton (2000), and Anker (2009) highlight, aesthetic representations of land, nature, and the environment shaped the apprehension of land in India by the British, efforts to transform and improve the landscape, and desires to tame or discipline nature into new and different forms. The acquisition of land for the creation of sporting or leisure environments – golf clubs, cricket pitches, tennis courts, and otherwise – was deeply related to colonial projects that established exclusive and beautified environments for use by British colonial subjects, or recreate familiar landscapes from ‘home’ (Bale, 1994; Dimeo, 2005; Malcolm, 2001). The case of the Golf Gardens demonstrates how sport and leisure continue to be part of and drive practices and processes of spatial and environmental segregation. This is in part due to postcolonial city making imaginaries that too sought to produce beautified and healthy urban environments through practices of urban cleansing (Chakrabarty, 2002), as well as recent drives to appeal to middle class aesthetic aspirations for environments that make use of urban nature as a mode of beautification and social control (Gandy, 2006). The Golf Gardens, like other contemporary urban development projects, are reflective of the (re)turn to urban nature in the form of gated communities or protected parks that mark a differentiation from the overcrowded, dirty, chaotic, and polluted urban core (Rademacher & Sivaramakrishnan, 2013).

It was, however, a particular golf *aesthetic* – disciplined, tamed, manicured, and doctored – that was centrally important to the GLD executives and architects. This was reflected in the decisions to shorten the course but keep regulation size tees and greens, to place buildings claustrophobically close to the golf spaces, to use artificial turf in areas (justified because it would look good from above), and to allocate the majority of open space within in the community to golfing greens. And yet, despite knowing that the golfing centre would go unused, there was an emphasis on the need to ensure that spaces looked appropriately ‘golf like’ – mowed greens, bunkers, water features and more. This reflects the desires of spectators (and participants) of golf to have consistent, manicured, and predictable golfing landscapes that mitigate against irregularities of nature (Adams, 1987; John Bale, 1994), just as much as the pressures of golf space developers to (re)produce typologies of golf that are prototypical of the ‘American Lawn’ and Augusta National Golf Course (Clay, 1987; Millington & Wilson, 2017).

Importantly, golf was approached as an art form and was reduced to its aesthetics in creating a community. In thinking about how the aesthetic is political, in Rancière’s terms, there are implications of the focus on the visual and physical imagery of golfing spaces. For example, golf is utilized by GLD to produce a purified, beautified, and cleansed experience of the environment and nature. The creation of golf environments in many cases requires the bulldozing and clearing of land, import of foreign flora/fauna/grass/turf, continuous pruning and mowing, and ongoing pest and weed control through the use of chemical treatment or environmental management (Millington & Wilson, 2016b). All of this is done as a way to provide a golf participant the ability to be out in ‘nature’ – enjoying the ‘natural’ environment in a safe, predictable and disciplined way. This is similar to the production of skiing environments, or the ‘mountainous sublime’, where the natural environment is managed to produce an imagery of

nature ‘untouched’ for the consumption of individuals (Stoddart, 2012). In both cases, part of the appeal is to be able to experience the expanses of uncluttered nature. Of course, as Bale (1994) and Stoddart (2012) remind us, the production of the imagery of nature in these manners are nothing more than fallacies, especially due to the technical, scientific, and social labour required to sustain such landscapes. Such is the same in this case for the GLD Golf Gardens, which is made glaringly apparent through the use of green (artificial and ‘natural’) turf, highly crafted bunkers, and water features – all requiring ongoing management and maintenance – because it would sustain the ideal image of how a golf environment *should* look.

A key part of the appeal of golf, along with other nature-based leisure activities such as skiing, is the ability to have solo or small group experiences in ‘empty’ nature – nature that has been tamed and prepared for enjoyment, and nature that has been segregated to offer an escape from other urban experiences. Historically, and as highlighted earlier, such was the same in the production of golf environments for personnel of Imperial Britain that provided a means to experience leisure and nature unintruded by ‘native’ populations confined to the outside (Dimeo, 2005). A typical full-sized golf course covers 150 acres (GCSAA, 2019), and if used to its full capacity would have 72 individuals spread out through the landscape (with additional caddies and maintenance crew). In this context, the Golf Gardens will house up to 4,000 residents (and at least half as many service staff), and the 9-hole golf course (which comprises the majority of open space in the community), if used its full capacity, will have 36 people occupying different holes at a given time. With the towers looming above, the space will thus, always look green, clean, manicured, and, most importantly, largely empty. This is ensured not just because it is assumed that it will not be widely used, but also because of the nature of the space itself. A golf course can only be used for golf and golf alone. The use of nature to discipline and delimit the

use of space to a singular, predictable activity was reflected most clearly through Ajay's fear of potential litigation over the inability for anyone in the community to use the space for any activity they choose. Even when used, the space will only be used in a limited, predictable and disciplined way. That is, the 'codes' of the game of golf are heavily policed along the lines of dress and deportment. One must abide by a specific dress code (i.e. collared shirts), and behave in a reserved, quiet, and respectful manner. This is different to a park, for example, which can be used in intended and unintended ways, with individuals in a wide array of attire, laughing, singing, yelling, playing, partying, or, at times can be used in acts of deviance or criminality. Golf limits and forces particular uses in ways that a park cannot.

The politics of creating a beautified, pristine, manicured, yet largely empty golf environment is related to what Baviskar (2003, 2011) calls the bourgeois environmentalism projects of the middle classes. While Baviskar (2003), Bose (2013), and Ghertner (2010) use this term to describe the ways in which the urban poor are marked as unsightly, dirty, and polluting, to justify evictions in order to create purified environments that exclude their presence, there are important connections to be made here. Particularly, the choice to use golf – and emphasize the aesthetics of golf – reflect the pursuit of the ordering of nature for the wealthy and preservation of this space for those who properly 'belong' (Baviskar, 2011). Land was acquired, dominated, and an idyllic green environment was produced and then cordoned off for the privileged few. Not only is this about being able to limit access to a pristine and clean environment, but also about protecting the privilege to *view* empty, beautiful nature. In other words, the segregation of the environment in this manner provides the ability for those included to be able to see unobstructed, beautiful, and clean nature – in the context of the National Capital Region, which is continually framed by its pollution, dirt, chaos, and overcrowding. The environment, in this case is framed as

no longer a ‘wilderness’, but tamed and improved through immaculate greens, flower beds, and pruned trees (Baviskar, 2011), and the emphasis remains on the serenity, exclusivity, and purity of nature, distinct from the wild and unpredictable ‘real’ nature outside the gates (Brosius, 2010).

5.6 Conclusion

In this study, I explored the architectural and design decisions made by the GLD executives and the architects executing GLD’s visions for a community – and the implications of these decisions. Grounded by Rancière’s theorizations of the politics of aesthetics in conjunction with Plumwood’s concepts of backgrounding and hyperseparation, I demonstrate how architecture (re)produces and normalizes a specific sense of aesthetics – an aesthetic sensibility that is also predicated on and created by the exclusion of those who do not belong. I demonstrated how architectural decisions to heavily emphasize the importance of golf by concentrically laying out the community with a golf course in the centre, building narrow buildings so each unit faces the golf course, creating floorplans so almost every room has unobstructed golf views, while also using architecture to hide other spaces of use, dirt/labour, or the Gurgaon outside the gates – worked to create a ‘distribution of the sensible’ where architecture delimited the field of view, who and what is seen, and what an individual (depending on their position) can or cannot see. At the same time, the aesthetic emphasis on a purified, beautified, tamed, green, and empty environment that characterizes the production of golf highlights that sport is not innocuous. Like architecture, this study demonstrates that the aesthetics of golf is also political – deeply connected to and inseparable from legacies of colonial environmental and spatial purification, exclusion, as well contemporary aesthetic-political

regimes that justify spatial segregation, cleansing, and the protection of beautiful environments away from urban poor.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the (dis)connections between urban development, ideas associated with sport/leisure in the making of community, and the politics of colonial legacies and postcolonial expressions of space, through the investigation of a sport and leisure focused gated community in Gurgaon, India. The goal of this research is to better understand the practices and politics around the development of this environment, and how the boundaries of this space are constructed and negotiated, and how this community emerged as a result of interactions between structures, relationships, and histories outside of its specific confines. In other words, and inspired by Ong (2011b), I chart how a development such as this could be heterogeneously particular to this specific context and yet simultaneously global. With this in mind, this dissertation is guided and influenced by Ong's (2006) theorizations of globalization and neoliberalism in the Global South, and their implications on global relationships, urban spatial changes, and the relationships between states and their citizens, as well as postcolonial approaches to studying the urban inspired by Chakrabarty's (2000) assertions about the need to provincialize Europe. In using these approaches together, I move discussions of gated communities beyond explanations that see these developments as markers as localized examples of neoliberalization (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Peck, 2015) at work, or new forms of urban colonialism unfolding in and around cities. This dissertation demonstrates that GLD's Golf Gardens is reflective of the careful and selective invocation of exception by the state, deeply connected to colonial histories and legacies, and situated in contemporary politics of urban development and the production of purified/beautified spaces.

6.1 Contributions and Significance

6.1.1 *Sport and urban (re)development*

There are a number of studies that examine how sport/leisure is implicated in large-scale spatial changes in the preparation for and execution of mega-events, or in the broader redevelopment of urban areas around stadia development for professional sports teams (Andrews, Batts, & Silk, 2014; Kennelly, 2015; Raco & Tunney, 2010; Raco, 2012; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Manley, 2012; Sze, 2009). Moreover, this research often privileges analyses that examine how sport/leisure are tied to flows of global capitalism, and catalyze processes of neoliberalization already underway in cities (Andrews, Batts, & Silk, 2014; Raco & Tunney, 2010; Raco, 2012; Silk, 2004; Silk & Andrews, 2006; Silk & Manley, 2012; Sze, 2009). The limited research that has investigated the role of sport/leisure in urban land transformation in India similarly focuses on the changes resulting from the hosting of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, and/or centres on the fitness industry (Andrews et al., 2014; Baviskar, 2011).

The research presented here contributes to this body of work in two key ways. First, this dissertation, through focusing on the building of a sport-focused gated community, highlights how sport/leisure are utilized in the creation of space outside of mega events or other spectacular temporary moments. Second, through the use of a postcolonial theoretical perspective and related concepts, I demonstrate analytical possibilities that move beyond theorizing these spaces in terms of political economic explanations and discussions. This does not, however, mean rejecting or ignoring broader global relationships and related neoliberal practices and policies. What it does mean is the need to link histories and legacies of colonialism and capitalism in ways that approached difference as fundamental to processes of urbanization – while also paying close attention to issues of space and power (Roy, 2016).

For example, in Chapter Three, I highlight how ideas of sport/leisure – namely golf, polo, and the St. Andrews brand – are central to the imagination of space and community within the Golf Gardens. Particularly, and through analyzing the specific choices to use golf and polo, as well as the selective referencing to colonial/royal pasts of these particular practices/institutions, I argue that these spaces were hybrid (Bhabha, 1994). That is, reading the place and role of sport in the imagination of space illustrated how gated residential developments such as these are not forms of urban mimicry or new forms of colonialism – instead, they reflect how urban forms, as well as ideologies associated with sport, have been taken up, remade, and reinterpreted in light of local contexts.

Relatedly, scholars who have investigated the relationships between sport and the colonial project have privileged analyses that unpack how physical cultural practices operate to discipline the bodies of local populations, but have rarely discussed how the production of sporting landscapes throughout the Empire are also deeply related to the production of pristine, tamed, and purified environments. On the other hand, scholars that have investigated the production of rarefied environments for the participation of sport have spent little time connecting the development of these spaces to histories of colonialism or urban development projects. My findings indicated that the development of gated communities around golf are inseparable from colonial practices of the domination of nature/bodies, as well as contemporary politics of spatial segregation and purification. For example, in Chapter Five, I highlighted how the specific aesthetics of golf are deeply political and inseparable from histories of colonial environmental and spatial purification, exclusion, as well as contemporary aesthetic-political regimes that justify spatial segregation, cleansing, and the production of exclusive environments. My use of Plumwood's (1993) concepts of backgrounding and hyperseparation alongside

Rancière's (2004) theory of the politics of aesthetics was an attempt to uniquely demonstrate these links. Similarly, in Chapter Three, my findings indicated that golf and polo were deliberately chosen by GLD because of their historical/nostalgic legacies associated with royalty and (colonial) exclusivity. These choices were also explained based on the assumption that the new Indian middle class desire access to environments that are both segregated and portray an image of cosmopolitanism and global connectivity.

6.1.2 Economic liberalization, urban politics, and shifting relations between the state and its populations

This dissertation extends academic discussions on economic liberalization, urban politics, and shifting relationships between the state and varying populations. Many scholars have investigated how economic liberalization policies in the 1990s led to changes in relationships between the state, the city, and various forms of urban citizenship – and especially how these changes have led to legal interventions that have justified the removal of individuals who are not interpreted by political and social elites as aligning with world class city visions (Bhan, 2009; Doshi, 2013; Ghertner, 2015; Routray, 2014; Schindler, 2014; Shatkin, 2017). In this context, scholars have often centered analyses on those deemed to be ‘illegally’ occupying land by virtue of inhabiting informal settlements or areas marked as slums. Additionally, and focused on the context of Gurgaon, researchers have examined how policy changes in the region enabled the relatively easy transfer of land from agricultural to commercial/private uses, and how complex relationships between the state and private actors allowed for land development regulations to be relaxed, manipulated, or exploited (Chatterji, 2013; Cowan, 2015; Gururani, 2013; Kalyan, 2017; Searle, 2016)

The findings in Chapter Four of my dissertation contribute to this literature by utilizing Ong's (2006) theorization of neoliberalism as exception and her concept of graduated citizenship, alongside Roy's (2009) concept of urban informality, to demonstrate how (in)formal modes of governance differentially manage people and places according to their perceived value/productivity through flexible invocation of law. This chapter provided an in-depth account of the specific strategies used by GLD to compel individuals to sell land, as well as the particular ways in which developers bend land development regulations that appear to be open to ambiguous interpretation. Particularly, and as especially noted through Dev's unsuccessful attempt to challenge illegal acquisition of his land, I pointed to specific moments when the 'hinge of exception' (Ong, 2006) operates – demonstrating how and when doors of inclusion/exclusion open or shut, and for whom, as well as how the boundaries between legal/illegal are blurry and unstable.

Relatedly, scholars have noted that the neoliberal economic reforms that took place in India in the early 1990s have shifted the relationships between the state, the city, and approaches to urban nature (Baviskar, 2011; Bose, 2006; Fernandes, 2006; Ghertner, 2015; Mawdsley, 2004; McFarlane, 2008; Rademacher & Sivaramakrishnan, 2013). Researchers in this context have argued that framings of the urban poor as dirty, polluting, and contaminated justify the growing impetus to purify urban spaces, and to focus infrastructure development and urban renewal projects around the development of 'good natures' (i.e. manicured parks, and gated enclaves) that are protected from the 'bad natures' of the poor (Baviskar, 2003, 2011; Ghertner, 2010; (Mawdsley, 2006; McFarlane, 2008).

The findings in Chapter Five particularly contribute to these discussions by highlighting how architecture is deliberately used to render those who do not belong to the purified

environment of the Golf Gardens not just forgotten (Fernandes, 2004), but also *invisible* – intentionally hidden from view by way of design and architectural features. Particularly, using Rancière’s (2004) theory of the politics of aesthetics, I unpacked how the architectural decisions observed here reproduce the ‘distribution of the sensible’ through delimiting what can be seen, who can be seen, and who has the power to see. Moreover, in demonstrating the ways in which the community was designed to be inward-facing, looking towards a golf course that is intended to be empty, I argued that this was not just about being able to *access* a pristine and clean environment, but also about protecting the privilege to *view* empty, beautiful nature. The central importance of the aesthetics of golf in the design of the community reflect the pursuit of the ordering of nature for the wealthy and preservation of this space for those who properly ‘belong’ (Baviskar, 2011).

6.1.3 Gated community developments in India

The findings presented in this dissertation also contribute to literature on gated community development in India. Literature on gated communities have tended to examine the ways in which these urban forms are exemplars of neoliberal urban development and both products and drivers of neoliberal practices and policies (Brosius, 2010; Fernandes, 2006; McGuirk & Dowling, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Pow, 2009; Jie Shen & Wu, 2012; Silk & Manley, 2017). Others, when investigating the proliferation of gated developments around the globe, have explored how these developments represent new forms of urban colonial activity, as the architectural design, and iconography of these spaces mimic features of places in the Global North (i.e. Paris, England, North America). This dissertation was in part a response to the call from Sigler and Wachsmuth (2016) to consider more fully how gated communities are sites

where local and transnational practices intersect to create new geographies of wealth and privilege, while also following Roy's (2011a) assertions about the need to trouble narratives that reproduce ideas of borrowed urbanisms stemming from elsewhere.

The findings in Chapter Three reveal that GLD's Golf Gardens is reminiscent of urban real estate megaprojects unfolding in other Asian cities (Shatkin, 2017), and that conceiving the Golf Gardens as a self-contained mini-city is reflective of a particular response to middle class perceptions of the failure of the state to control, plan, and develop the city that is particularly pertinent in the context of Gurgaon. At the same time, and through situating this development in the political economic landscape of Gurgaon, I showed how the Golf Gardens can be read as a form of hyperbuilding (Ong, 2011). In this way, the Golf Gardens could be interpreted as an example of the ways in which the state encourages developments such as this one in order to facilitate economic growth – but also how the city portrays an image to the world of a globally connected urban future (through catering to the desires of 'globally' connected populations) (Ong, 2011). The analysis presented in this chapter called into question the 'origin stories' of gated developments as originating in North America and then transplanted elsewhere, while also demonstrating how these sorts of developments are undeniably connected to structures and forces beyond its specific boundaries.

6.2 Limitations and Future Directions

There are limitations involved in conducting this study which need to be recognized. These limitations also open up avenues for future research. First, the timing of this research might be viewed as a limitation. At the time of field work, construction was still ongoing in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Golf Gardens. While some buildings had been completed, this meant

that at the time, there were only a handful of families who had moved in. In other words, the Golf Gardens was still undergoing its evolution, and was just beginning to ‘come to life’. While I do think that the timing of fieldwork enabled some unique insights (i.e. being able to focus on architectural decisions, being able to focus on the ‘process’ of development, interviewing individuals connected to or impacted by this community at a time where it was still at the forefront of the mind), it also meant that I was unable to explore how this community was taken up, made, and remade in intended/unintended ways by residents and those who maintain the property. Relatedly, this resulted in the voices/experiences/perspectives of those who chose to buy property in the GLD Golf Gardens and make this community their home being absent throughout my dissertation. These perspectives would have added even more depth and nuance to this research, as the outcome of this community (and the meanings it will take on by those who will ultimately live there, and those that will maintain it) are far from guaranteed.

As mentioned briefly in Chapter Two, GLD decided to enter an agreement with Trump real estate to build two towers within the Golf Gardens. A discussion of this venture is absent within my dissertation. This is a result of both the accusations and threats that were made to me regarding this partnership as well as the timing of the fieldwork. Even though GLD began advertising the development in January, 2018, I still did not feel comfortable exploring this aspect of the development through this dissertation. Indeed, however, there are important and fruitful aspects of this partnership that are undoubtedly worthy of academic attention. For example, upon publicly releasing information about the development of Trump Towers in the Golf Gardens, it was also announced that the first 100 individuals to put down a deposit would also be flown to New York City to be hosted by Donald Trump Jr. (Hindustan Times, 2018). There are important geopolitical concerns with such a promise, not least that the current United

States President's children (who are claiming to run his business while he sits in office) are using his name for profit and the potential for conflicts of interest if political/social elites buy property with the hopes of getting close to the presidential family. Paying attention to the relationships formed and implications of this aspect of development would allow for a deeper discussion of the ways in which transnational capital flow in and through gated communities, how particular moments in political climate (i.e. the similarities of the political orientations between current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Donald Trump) enable or constrain particular forms of urban development, and how buying and living in these properties might reflect new tensions among and between powerful groups on national and transnational scales. Indeed, future work looking into these relationships (and others unfolding in Mumbai and Pune, as well as others in different countries) would certainly add important insights into the ways in which gated development communities fragment or extend state spaces (Ong, 2006), as well as provide avenues to explore the relationality of cities and places (Robinson & Roy, 2016) – and the ways in which specific histories and local variations are constitutive forces in global urbanization, while paying heed to shifting relationships between place and power (Roy, 2016).

Additionally, and as highlighted in Chapter Four, the recent CBI inquiry into state facilitated illegal land acquisition in Gurgaon points towards an important area for future research. Particularly, while Dev's failed attempt to protest illegal land acquisition through the court system indicated that the ability of individuals to resist land acquisition through the use of records had been foreclosed, this recent investigation points to the possibilities that this might not necessarily (always) be the case. Future research that follows this case closely and its outcomes, would provide important insights into how and when particular acts suddenly become called into question as corrupt or illegitimate. Additionally, this research might have important

practical implications, as it could illuminate fissures and cracks in the legal system that could allow for change (or collective mobilizing) that could lead to social justice around these issues.

There are also some methodological limitations that are necessary to discuss. As mentioned in Chapter Two, I am the limit of this research. By this, I mean that my positionality both opened up avenues for access of sites/people in the research, but also worked to constrain my access in different ways. Particularly, the ability to discuss more experiences of exclusion/dispossession would have been fruitful for this research. This was limited in part due to the threats made during the research experience, as well as my inability to speak fluent Hindi. Here, I also return to the possibility about whether this research was *on* the disenfranchised (not with or for them). I continue to feel uncomfortable that the work presented here reproduces problematic research practices where local knowledge becomes “discovered, extracted, appropriated, and distributed” (Smith, 1999, p. 61), and understandings of marginalized groups needing to be spoken for (instead of speaking for themselves). Additional concerns remain with these interviews conducted in English with the aid of a translator, as English remains a technology of colonization, and it is possible that nuance gets lost in the act of translating experiences from Hindi to English. One of the goals of this research, following Chakrabarty (2000), was to inhabit the epistemological problems of Eurocentrism, and to produce a narrative that highlights the translucence between non-Western experiences and histories and not transparencies. A researcher fluent in Hindi would perhaps produce a different story, and one necessary to pursue in future research.

Finally, this dissertation highlighted the importance of thinking about the meanings, politics, and implications of sport-focused spaces. The role of sport and leisure in facilitating, anchoring, or justifying large-scale urban changes remain understudied and neglected in the field

of urban studies. This is perhaps due to sport being seen as unworthy of ‘serious’ inquiry (as it is often understood as an institution of play, spectatorship, child-like pleasure) in the face of seemingly larger or more pressing issues at hand. The research here sought to highlight that paying closer attention to how meanings of sport are mobilized in the development of urban environments works to also illuminate broader socio-historical-political relations in the making of space. Instead, it demonstrates how sport and leisure are far from innocuous, and that studying sport/leisure (and particular meanings associated with these institutions) is an important avenue towards learning more about urban spatial changes unfolding in a variety of contexts. A recent article by Latham and Layton (2019) in *Progress in Human Geography* point to this importance through seeking to understand the urban through the lens of what they call ‘kinaesthetic cities’ in order to unpack the topographies, materials, and societies that make up urban environments (of which sport/leisure are a vital part). This dissertation, along with this recent work from Latham and Layton (2019), could be seen as starting points for more work in these areas.

6.3 Final Thoughts

Using global ethnography (Burawoy, 2000) anchored in postcolonial theoretical perspectives inspired by Ong’s (2006) theorizations of neoliberalism and Chakrabarty’s (2000) project of provincializing Europe, this dissertation looked to explore the development, meanings, and implications of building a gated residential community around golf and polo. It is the hope that the multitude of concepts employed at different points through this dissertation – hyperbuilding (Ong, 2011a), hybridity (Bhabha, 1994), neoliberalism as exception and graduated citizenship (Ong, 2006), urban informality (Roy, 2009b), backgrounding and hyperseparation (Plumwood, 1993), and the politics of aesthetics (Rancière, 2004) – highlight that this gated

residential development is undeniably connected to impacts of colonial practices of domination and shifts towards the facilitation of global capital, but also cannot be reduced to this narrative exclusively. In using the different conceptual tools, and investigating this development from different perspectives and scales, I hoped to illustrate ways to question the “monist core, challenging the seeming naturalness of its knowledge claims, and questioning their core-like status by unpacking their own situated – provincial – origins” (Sheppard et al., 2013, p. 231).

The work here remains the study of a fragment – a singular space, in a particular location that is segregated and exclusive. However, and following McFarlane (2019) and his reading of subaltern studies, my studying of the fragment of this gated community development was not necessarily positioned in relation to a whole (i.e. where the whole is linked to capitalist modernization, neoliberal policy objectives that splinter cities, and the commodification of public space). As McFarlane (2019) argues, fragments can be interpreted in two ways. First, it is a phenomenon in the world, which is connected to colonialism and pushes for capitalist modernization. Second, and following what he calls a subaltern urban studies imagination, the study of the fragment is also a “provocation to how we understand knowledge, politics, history, or space” (McFarlane, 2019, p. 221). In studying this one particular fragment – the gated residential community of the Golf Gardens – I attempted to utilize this subaltern studies imagination to provoke different ways of interpreting gated community developments in relation to broader histories and socio-spatial politics.

This is evident in how the mobilization of specific imaginaries of both sport and space are connected to, and reflective of, broader state objectives to facilitate economic development, as well as to portray a specific image of the urban future. This projected and idealized future, however, is inseparable from colonial pasts and the postcolonial present. For example, this is

revealed through paying close attention to the ways in which specific sport and leisure practices and brands are chosen in the making of space – as well as the (colonial) histories and aesthetics of these sports, and their postcolonial expressions. Additionally, it is also clear through investigations of how land is made available in order to make possible the aforementioned imaginations of space. Specifically, the colonial past is marked into the contemporary law of the land through the use of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894 – a colonial era act that led to, and continues to facilitate, violent forms of dispossession. This act, and other instruments of law – inherited from colonial time and amended through the postcolonial present – are used to define and re-define the boundaries of protectable and valuable citizens and spaces. In turn, the design, architecture, and fabric of the urban space reflect those that are valued, protected, and privileged in urban development efforts by making these populations and their desired spaces more visible, while rendering other spaces and people invisible. The politics of these invisibilities and visibilities are, of course, deeply connected to colonial approaches to the management of nature and people, and contemporary postcolonial politics of spatial cleansing.

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Appendix A: Contact Letter



a place of mind
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Date: April 13, 2017

Dear ***

My name is Devra Waldman and I am a Doctoral student in the school of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia. I specialize in the study of sport and international development. I am conducting a study for my doctoral dissertation that is designed to find out more about the building of sport-focused master planned communities in India. I hope to learn more about the processes of developing these communities and the perspectives of a variety of groups involved the building of these spaces, as well as those who are living in these developments. My research is supervised by Dr. Brian Wilson, who is a professor in the School of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia.

The goal of this letter is to request an interview with you to discuss your experiences with and perspectives on the development of or living in master planned communities in India. Your involvement in this study would be most helpful and appreciated as I try to learn more about how and why decisions are made to create sport-focused master planned communities in India, how these spaces are experienced by those that live or work within them, and how these communities are connected to broader relationships between different groups and institutions. While this study will be part of my broader doctoral dissertation, it is my hope that the information attained from this study would extend current understandings about the role that sport/leisure is playing in international community development and about how decisions are made by executives in prominent sporting, real estate organizations, architects and other organizations regarding development work. I also hope to inspire further thinking about the benefits of and potential problems associated with international community development work among policy-makers, city planners, real estate developers and sport organizations.

I have attached an information and consent sheet that will tell you more about the study and about the guidelines that this study will follow regarding confidentiality and research ethics.

After you have had a chance to look over the information and consent sheet, please let me know if you are interested in being involved in the study by email at devra@alumni.ubc.ca. If you are interested, we can work out a time and location for an interview that is convenient for you.

Thank you very much for time and considering this request. I look forward to being in touch.

Sincerely
Devra Waldman.

Version: March 17, 2017 – Page 1 of 2

Appendix B: Information and Consent Form for Interviews



a place of mind
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INFORMATION AND CONSENT SHEET: FOR A STUDY ON SPORT-FOCUSED COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

Study Title: A Multi-sited Global Ethnography of Sport-Focused Residential Developments in India

Brief Description of the Study: It is well known that master planned and gated communities are a significant and well established part of the international housing market. Existing studies show, for example, that facilities, amenities, and aesthetics are increasingly important to developers and potential residents in the building of such communities. Additionally, recent studies have demonstrated that there is an increasing number of public/private partnerships being formed around the development of such spaces. I am also aware that a number of real estate developers and sport organizations have partnerships, with one of the goals of the agreements being the building of master planned communities in India that are anchored by sport/leisure brands.

It is also well known that sport is often used to spearhead urban (re)development in cities hosting mega-events such as the Olympics and the World Cup. The majority of studies that investigate the role of sport in urban development tend to focus on mega-events and the impacts associated with the building of stadiums, increases or changes in housing structures, and modifications of policies related to urban renewal. Little is known, however, about how sporting brands/identities are used to aid those who lead in the development of master planned communities.

With these concerns in mind, I have developed a study of the building master planned, sport-focused communities in India. This study is guided by three broad goals. The first is to explore the emergence of sport-focused residential developments in India and how decisions are made regarding the development of these spaces. The second is to understand how these spaces are experienced by those living and working within them. The third is to investigate how these spaces are connected to broader relationships between different groups and institutions.

The Researcher and Project Funding: This study is conducted through the School of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia. Devra Waldman is the primary researcher for the study. Devra Waldman is a doctoral student at the University of British Columbia in Kinesiology and is specializing in the study of sport and development. This study will be the focus for her dissertation. Dr. Brian Wilson is Devra's supervisor and is a Professor in Kinesiology. This project is funded by a Doctoral Fellowship and Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Mitacs Globalink Research Award.

The Interview and Your Participation: Your experiences in and perspectives on sport-focused communities in India would be extremely helpful and much appreciated as I try to learn more about the topics mentioned above. The interview would take approximately one hour, depending on your availability. Most of the questions are fairly general. The interview will be recorded on a digital recorder with your permission. If you are not comfortable with this, I will take notes by hand.

Version: March 27, 2017 – Page 1 of 2



Confidentiality. Before the interview we will discuss the level of anonymity that you would prefer to have. If you would like to not have your identity revealed, then your name will not be referred to in any documents that emerge from the study. The recordings of the interview will be stored on a password protected computer and/or in a locked filing cabinet in the principal investigator's lab.

Your Voluntary Participation: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to not answer any question and you may withdraw from the interview at any time. If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participants and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance email RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free at 1-877-822-8598.

How the Study Findings Will Be Helpful: The information attained from this study is intended to extend understandings of the role that sport is playing in international development. It is also hoped that this study will expand on the limited research concerning how decisions are made by prominent sporting organizations, real estate companies, architects, public officials, and related groups regarding the development of master planned communities. It would be extremely beneficial to learn more about how decisions are made, processes involved in building communities, perceptions of community development, experiences living in gated communities, and development-related issues. Also, it would be useful to gain a better understanding of how sport and leisure practices can and do play a role in such developments. The information generated from this study will become part of Devra's doctoral dissertation. However, the ultimate goal of this study is to inspire balanced thinking about the benefits of and potential problems with international urban development work among policy-makers, city planners, real estate developers, architects, and sport organizations. The work would also be published in academic journals and/or as a report. All published material would be made available to study participants on request.

Further Contact Information or Concerns: If you have questions or would like further information about the study, please contact Devra Waldman at devra@alumni.ubc.ca. You can also contact Devra Waldman's supervisor, Dr. Brian Wilson at brian.wilson@ubc.ca

CONSENT

I have read the above information and understand the nature of the study. I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may refuse to participate in or withdraw from the study at any time.

I hereby agree to the above stated conditions and consent to participate in the study

Your signature below indicates that you have received an information and consent sheet for your own records. Your signature also indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix C: Oral Consent Script



a place of mind
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

School of Kinesiology
210-6081 University Boulevard
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z1

Phone 604 822 9192
Fax 604 822 6842
www.kin.ubc.ca

Oral Consent Script:

“A Multi-Sited Global Ethnography of Sport-Focused Residential Developments in India

Hello, my name is Devra Waldman, I am a graduate student in Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. I am conducting a study for my doctoral dissertation that is designed to find out more about the building of sport-focused master planned communities in India. I hope to learn more about the processes of developing these communities and the perspectives of a variety of groups involved the building of these spaces, as well as those who are living in these developments.

It is my hope that the information attained from this study would extend current understandings about the role that sport/leisure is playing in international community development and about how decisions are made by executives in prominent sporting, real estate organizations, architects and other organizations regarding development work.

If you are interested, I would like to request an interview with you to discuss your experiences with and perspectives on the sport-focused communities in India. Your involvement in this study would be most helpful and appreciated as I try to learn more about how and why decisions are made to create sport-focused master planned communities in India, how these spaces are experienced by those that live or work within them, and how these communities are connected to broader relationships between different groups and institutions. The interview would take approximately one hour, depending on your availability. Most of the questions are fairly general.

Before the interview we will discuss the level of anonymity that you would prefer to have. If you would like to not have your identity revealed, then your name will not be referred to in any documents that emerge from the study. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to not answer any question and you may withdraw from the interview at any time.

I have printed handouts with information of who to contact if you have any questions or concerns about my research here.

Version: March 17, 2017 – Page 1 of 2

Appendix D: Oral Consent Handout



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Oral Consent Handout:

“A Multi-Sited Global Ethnography of Sport-Focused Residential Developments in India”

Principal Investigator:

Dr. Brian Wilson
School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia
Auditorium Annex 156D
1924 West Mall
Vancouver, British Columbia, V6T 1Z2
Phone: +1 (604) 822 3884

Co-Investigator:

Devra Waldman
School of Kinesiology
University of British Columbia
Auditorium Annex 156
1924 West Mall
Vancouver, British Columbia, V6T 1Z2
Phone: +1 (778) 835 5444

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Devra Waldman by email at devra@alumni.ubc.ca, or by writing to the address above. She is also reachable at +1 (778) 835 5444.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598 (Toll Free: 1-877-822-8598).

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

Version: March 17, 2017 – Page 1 of 2

Appendix E: Information and Consent Form for Observations



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INFORMATION AND CONSENT SHEET: INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT

Study Title: A Multi-sited Global Ethnography of Sport-Focused Residential Developments in India

Brief Description of the Study: It is well known that master planned and gated communities are a significant and well established part of the international housing market. Existing studies show, for example, that facilities, amenities, and aesthetics are increasingly important to developers and potential residents in the building of such communities. Additionally, recent studies have demonstrated that there is an increasing number of public/private partnerships being formed around the development of such spaces. I am also aware that a number of real estate developers and sport organizations have partnerships, with one of the goals of the agreements being the building of master planned communities in India that are anchored by sport/leisure brands.

It is also well known that sport is often used to spearhead urban (re)development in cities hosting mega-events such as the Olympics and the World Cup. The majority of studies that investigate the role of sport in urban development tend to focus on mega-events and the impacts associated with the building of stadiums, increases or changes in housing structures, and modifications of policies related to urban renewal. Little is known, however, about how sporting brands/identities are used to aid those who lead in the development of master planned communities.

With these concerns in mind, I have developed a study of the building master planned, sport-focused communities in India. This study is guided by three broad goals. The first is to explore the emergence of sport-focused residential developments in India and how decisions are made regarding the development of these spaces. The second is to understand how these spaces are experienced by those living and working within them. The third is to investigate how these spaces are connected to broader relationships between different groups and institutions.

The Researcher and Project Funding: This study is conducted through the School of Kinesiology at the University of British Columbia. Devra Waldman is the primary researcher for the study. Devra Waldman is a doctoral student at the University of British Columbia in Kinesiology and is specializing in the study of sport and development. This study will be the focus for her dissertation. Dr. Brian Wilson is Devra's supervisor and is a Professor in Kinesiology. This project is funded by a Doctoral Fellowship and Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Mitacs Globalink Research Award.

Your Participation: In order to gain a better understanding of how sport-focused residential developments are built and presented, I hope to gain access to spaces within these environments. Observation is a common technique that is helpful when gathering a range of data within a particular setting and to help gain a sense of everyday life/movements through space. With the consent of your organization, I hope to spend time in these spaces and observe how these communities are built, managed, and lived. In particular, I would like to learn more about how space is allocated and used, the aesthetics of the communities, the architecture, and the role of sport/leisure brand/identities in the design of spaces inside these developments.

Version: March 27, 2017 – Page 1 of 2



Your Voluntary Participation: Allowing me access inside these sport-focused residential developments is entirely voluntary. You are free to withdraw consent from access to any spaces at any time. If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participants and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance email RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free at 1-877-822-8598.

How the Study Findings Will Be Helpful: The information attained from this study is intended to extend understandings of the role that sport is playing in international development. It is also hoped that this study will expand on the limited research concerning how decisions are made by prominent sporting organizations, real estate companies, architects, public officials, and related groups regarding the development of master planned communities. It would be extremely beneficial to learn more about how decisions are made, processes involved in building communities, perceptions of community development, experiences living in gated communities, and development-related issues. Also, it would be useful to gain a better understanding of how sport and leisure practices can and do play a role in such developments. The information generated from this study will become part of Devra's doctoral dissertation. However, the ultimate goal of this study is to inspire balanced thinking about the benefits of and potential problems with international urban development work among policy-makers, city planners, real estate developers, architects, and sport organizations. The work would also be published in academic journals and/or as a report. All published material would be made available to study participants on request.

Further Contact Information or Concerns: If you have questions or would like further information about the study, please contact Devra Waldman at devra@alumni.ubc.ca. You can also contact Devra Waldman's supervisor, Dr. Brian Wilson at brian.wilson@ubc.ca

CONSENT

I have read the above information and understand the nature of the study. I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may refuse to participate in or withdraw from the study at any time.

I hereby agree to the above stated conditions and consent to participate in the study

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Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Appendix F: Oral Consent for Observations



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I have printed handouts with information of who to contact if you have any questions or concerns about my research here.

Version: March 27, 2017 – Page 1 of 1