

Cloning Colonialism: Residential Development, Transnational Aspiration, and the  
Complexities of Postcolonial India

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# Cloning Colonialism: Residential Development, Transnational Aspiration, and the Complexities of Postcolonial India

## Abstract:

Within this article, we discuss/unpack a speculative international property development born out of a license agreement between the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) and real estate investment company, *Anglo Indian*. The proposed building of twelve cloned, MCC branded, cricket communities in India—targeted to the consumption-based lifestyles of India’s new middle class—is addressed within the context relational to the political, economic, and cultural rationalities of postcolonial India, shifting power dynamics within the international cricket formation, and the associated re-colonisation of cricket-related spaces/bodies. Anglo Indian’s proposed communities are understood as part of a complex assemblage of national and global forces and relations (including, but certainly not restricted to): transnational gentrification; urban (re)development; and, revised understandings of historical and geographic connections between places, governance, and the politics of be(long)ing in branded spaces. This analysis explicates how Anglo Indian’s idealized community development offers a literal and figurative space for embodied performance of “glocal competence” for consumption-based identity projects of the new Indian middle-class (Brosius 2010, p. 13) through the somewhat ironic mobilization of colonial spatial logics and cultural aesthetics.

Keywords: speculative (re)development, master planned communities, cricket, new Indian middle class, (post)colonialism, urban branding

Within this article, we focus on what we might term the *re-colonisation* of spaces and bodies as enacted within and through, the political, economic, and cultural rationalities of post-colonial India. Our focus is on analysis of a speculative, and indeed spectacular, international property development: a proposed series of twelve branded cricket communities targeted at metropolitan locations throughout India (specifically, Delhi, Jaipur, Ahmedabad, Indore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Pune, Goa, Bangalore, Chennai, and Kerala). This unusual property development scheme was born out of a 2011 brand license agreement signed between Anglo Indian (an international real estate investment company), and the Marylebone Cricket Club (henceforth MCC, an exclusive private members club and venerated British institution [Stoddart & Sandiford, 1998] located at Lord's Cricket Ground [known internationally as the 'home of cricket'] in London, England). These communities aim to clone—emblematic of what Bianca Bosker (2013) would call *duplitecture*— iconic elements of the MCC's physical and imagined spaces. Thereby, each of these communities would incorporate a simulation of Lord's cricket ground; an exclusive MCC members club with associated recreational facilities; an MCC cricket academy; a

Lord's tavern-themed restaurant/experience; and, various merchandise outlets consistent with the ethos and aspirations of the community.

Following McGuirk & Dowling (2009), we explore how the MCC-Anglo Indian (MCCAI) partnership, and the planned communities that it bore, reveals the perhaps inescapable complexities and contradictions embedded within this property development. As such, we examine how transnational development strategies articulate with the context-specific combination of post-colonial subjectivities, co-evolving national/community development projects and practices, and the global growth trajectories of the MCC. Although the cities targeted by the MCCAI partnership have very different histories, geographies and material relations (inevitably leading to the development of these communities taking shape in varying ways, with a range of implications), these appear quite incidental to the MCCAI and its formulaic and approach to this ambitious, multi-sited development. As such, we illustrate how these planned developments invoke and re-appropriate various expressions of (cricketing) colonialism (material, symbolic, spatial, and organizational), that serve as the internal logics, and external designs, for communities conceived to appeal to the consumption-based lifestyles, and associated forms of commodity consumption/display, to which India's new middle class are thought to aspire (Fernandes, 2011). This raises important questions over why, and indeed how, the spatial and cultural reinvigoration of a (British) colonial ethos and sensibility

might find resonance with the new Indian middle class; one routinely celebrated as the standard bearers of postcolonial India. As such, we aim to make sense of MCCA's seemingly unapologetic (re-)invocation of a hierarchal order in which the vestiges of privilege and status are unproblematically, and perhaps apolitically and certainly ahistorically, incorporated into the lived mores of India's transnational gentrified class (Sigler & Wachsmuth, 2015). As corollary to the strategic (re-)inscription of colonial tropes and hierarchies linked to the creation of a postcolonial *colonial* Indian class within reimagined (and certainly mythologised) 'English' oases, we tentatively conclude with respect to how such developments incorporate further possibilities for the differentiation—both spatially and culturally—of the transnational gentrified class from an increasingly pathologized, 'unproductive' and impoverished Indian 'other'.

Our analysis of these planned developments requires articulating the (post-)colonial refashioning of space addressed above with contextual and structural concerns over governance, the mutual constitution of bodies and places, transnational gentrification, the economic and political trajectories of neoliberalism, the socio-spatial control of bodies, and, the politics of be(long)ing in carefully marketed, managed, aesthetic, and branded city spaces. We argue that to contextually understand these planned MCCA communities necessitates holding together these (sometimes conflicting) theoretical tendencies. Indeed, whilst speculative residential development initiatives, such as that advanced by the MCCA,

by their very nature and ambitions, are rooted in the practices, protocols, and processes of global neoliberal capitalism (c.f. Harvey, 2001)—even if they might be lived in messier and non-standardized ways—such developments are unavoidably both local and global in derivation, and implication. Hence, following Pow (2011), we seek to move away from conventional approaches that often conceptualize gated communities as internal to a particular area, instead adopting “... 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” (p. 383). Consequently, we begin by contextualizing the creation of these cloned cricketing spaces within the cultural politics of planned/utopian developments, and explicate how these communities are designed to articulate with the (somewhat contradictory) cosmopolitan mores/embodied lifestyle practices of the new Indian middle class.

#### Planned/Utopian Residential Development and the New Indian Middle-class

The proliferation of gated and master planned communities in cities across the world is an established dimension of metropolitan development; an entrenched aspect of international housing markets (Shen & Wu, 2013). Linking many such communities is their spectacular simulated spatial form (see e.g. Author B, 2014): planned communities have become secure, cloned, isolated, branded, city spaces/stages (e.g. Bartling, 2006; Author B 2004, 2007, 2012; Raco & Tunney, 2010), acting as emblematic containers of neoliberal urban

development with private actors, or pro-growth local governments (or amalgamations thereof), having increased powers to regulate and reconstitute space (Author C & Author B, 2008; Shen & Wu, 2013). These spaces often possess: an identifiable boundary marking inside and outside (with technologies of securitization policing boundaries); a consistency in design and layout feature; a single entity controlling the development process (whether corporation, government, or other group); private ownership of facilities/amenities within the space; an emphasis upon elements exuding lifestyle prestige and social status; and, a vigilant and protectionist enforcement of community 'covenants' by community associations (e.g. Blakely & Snyder, 1997). Space is thereby presented as controlled, separated, sanitized, ordered, and beautified with 'real estate' being marketed and packaged as an 'ideal state' (Raposo, 2006). These spatial aesthetics maintain an exclusion that 'protects' the landscapes from the poor, maintains a level of homogeneity, and obscures social inequalities and power relations while also naturalizing class distinctions (Pow, 2009). In masking a (hyper)polarized development of suburbia (Shen & Wu, 2013), spatial aestheticization practices centre on the promise of an ideal future, but also induce a nostalgic yearning for a sense of tradition and 'community' seemingly diminished by the accelerating ravages of modernity (Raposo, 2006); something especially pertinent given the complexities of post-colonial discourses inherent in the MCCA partnership, and the creation of idealized version of community built around a nostalgic, imagined, and mythical idea of how cricket-themed communities could/*should* function and appear

(Rosenblatt, 2005).

While gated communities are often conceptualized as a relatively recent phenomenon originating in the United States, India has a long history of such housing enclaves (Falzon, 2004; Wissink, 2013); it is commonplace to refer to blocks or apartment complexes as 'colonies', with 'colony' implying an enclave dwelling (Falzon, 2004). In rural India, living hierarchically in segregated enclaves is common; while these may lack physical walls or boundaries they are relatively homogenous spaces that tend to be separated along linguistic, regional, caste, or religious lines (Waldrop, 2004). Within imperial India, gated communities containing private clubs were important institutions and expressions of British colonial rule (Fernandes, 2004). Despite this historic backdrop, the emergence of new forms of planned community in a neoliberalizing and post-colonial India have received sparse academic attention; this is especially apposite given India's rapid rise within the global economy which has, in turn, influenced the ways that India's gated communities are perceived, designed, and realized by speculative developers (Fernandes, 2004; Waldrop, 2004; Wissink, 2013).

India's neoliberal economic reform (see e.g. Pedersen, 2000; Reed, 2002) had multiple impacts on privatization, internationalization, investment and outsourcing (e.g. Chopra, 2003); of interest here is the mutual constitution of the 'new Indian middle class' (Mathur,



2010) and urban transformation. Increased real estate prices in urban centres drove India's middle classes into suburban peripheries, resulting in the production of new and distinctive forms of suburban cultural and social communities predicated on security, exclusive lifestyles, facilities, and marked separation from the poor (Fernandes, 2004). Increasingly inward looking, such developments offer more than residential facilities (shops, schools, leisure), they also offer *lifestyles* (Falzon, 2004); they are an aesthetic and consumptive antithesis of the (state sponsored) politics of spatial purification, cleansing and pathologisation enacted upon the poor beyond the security of their hallowed gates. In this way, these communities manage boundaries between insiders/outside, offering facilities that provide opportunities for individuals to *reside* without having to venture out unless desired. Following Falzon (2004) such communities promise a serene *paradise*, a self-contained city for upper middle class lifestyles: postmodern architectures, cloned British private schools, shopping centres, international foods/brands, and isolated spaces for local products. Sold on security from the (working and poor) dangerous and violent 'Other', beautified environments and a cosmopolitan lifestyle provide a haven for the relatively small—but highly differentiated—new Indian middle-class that is both exponentially growing and becoming increasingly powerful cultural, economic, and political force within contemporary India (see Author C, 2013).

The new Indian middle class' experiences, values, and ideologies are framed and propelled

by economic liberalism, corporatist compulsions, and conspicuous consumption (Fernandes, 2011). Unselfconsciously transnational in their aspiration, orientation and display (Munshi, 2001) they mobilize a specific set of aesthetic, spatial, and civic practices to create spatial and social boundaries between them and other groups. This is largely realized by enacting cosmopolitan (not only Indian) dispositions and preferences, that normalize exclusive and exclusionary practices of consumption (Brosius, 2010). Indeed, master planned communities not only foster such aspirations, they are often explicitly designed to appeal to the mores of emerging (transnational) middle (gentrified) classes, whom look to embody an aesthetic performatively expressed through distinctive lifestyles in controlled, sanitized, beautified yet secure spaces (Pow, 2009; Shen & Wu, 2013)—including the planned MCCA development to which we now turn.

## Methods

To enable us to excavate the planned MCCA development, our methodological approach was integrative, bringing together document and image analysis, interview data with high ranking members of the MCCA partnership and to avoid reductionism, articulation (as an analytical tool) to connect empirical data with wider social, economic, political, social and spatial systems, structures, and forces (Grossberg, 1997). In combining these different, yet complimentary, analytical and methodological approaches, we have produced a robust and rigorous empirical data set that forms the basis for developing our conceptual

understanding of these speculative planned spatial developments. We began with Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) to understand the ways that Anglo Indian and the MCC presented their partnership, and the plans for the cloned community developments. Documents collected included the promotional materials produced by Anglo Indian, the plans for the spatial developments, and material gathered from the Anglo Indian and MCC websites. Following Altheide et al. (2008, p. 128), we utilized QDA as a tool for “locating, identifying, retrieving and analyzing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning”. This allowed us, with Millington & Wilson (2013), to identify major themes in these documents and examine the processes through which particular meanings and representations came to be privileged and taken-for-granted. As an emergent methodology, QDA allowed (and expected) for unanticipated themes to emerge; through an emphasis on ‘discovery’ in these documents we searched for contexts, meanings, and patterns within, while allowing for and embracing nuances, surprises, and contradictions that emerged in the research process (Altheide et al., 2008).

To supplement QDA, we undertook in-depth elite interviews with those responsible for developing the planning documentation and (brand partnership) for these speculative developments. As such, we conducted in-depth interviews with senior MCC and Anglo Indian Executives. These were a relatively small, but powerful group, whom, following Delaney (2007), Rice (2010) and Welch et al., (2002), were selected given their position and

influence within either MCC or AI, the knowledge they possess, or exclusive privileges they are afforded. Whilst elite interviewing is relatively rare (given problems associated with access and the willingness to divulge data), and the sample relatively small (given the nature of their 'elite status'), we conducted interviews with these partners and executives on multiple occasions. The elite interviews focused on the insight they possessed on the development plans of these organizations, their ability to discuss the decision-making processes in the design, planning and building of these communities, the ideologies and aspirations that influenced the creation of these planned communities, and the strategies they use to garner support for these developments. These data are exceptionally important in the development of our analysis of these planned communities, especially given elites responsible, in this case, for planned/speculative developments, tend to be visible inside, yet invisible outside, their organization; as such they are often understudied precisely because of their power and ability to protect themselves from intrusion and/or criticism (Mikecz, 2012; Welch et al., 2002). Indeed, with Delaney (2007), the inclusion of elite interview data offered us a rare opportunity to understand the worldviews of those who have significant influence in decisions that influence greater aspects of society; this thereby offered a unique and punctilious empirical data-set for developing analysis.

To further develop our conceptual analysis derived from these empirical data, we drew upon the process of articulation (as an analytical tool) to connect with, and locate the

planning documentation and narratives within, wider social, economic, political, social and spatial systems, structures and forces. In this regard, these data, as a site of analysis, offered an important focus of critical inquiry from which we followed a process of connecting/articulating these data to the multiple material and ideological determinations which suture the site of the proposed cloned community development to the conjunctural forces and relations, of which it is a constituent element. Our analysis involved “starting with the particular [the data], the detail, the scrap of ordinary or banal existence, and then working to unpack the density of relations and of intersecting social domains that inform it” (Frow & Morris, 2000, p. 354). In this sense, following Fine (1994) we ‘worked the hyphen’ as a way to make sense of the images and narratives of development that are presented, who is represented and included in these images and discourses (and who is excluded), whose voices are privileged (and whose are absent), and how and what specific language is used to convey the development objectives. Following Johnson et al. (2004) then, our analysis of documents, images and interview transcripts aimed to illustrate how relations of power are present in seemingly innocent places, how hegemonic power relations operate, and the potential post-colonial appropriation of colonial logics and aesthetics in the imagining of these proposed communities.

Cricketing (Re-)Colonization: ‘Legitimate Hierarchies’ & Speculative Residential  
Development

It's all history, tradition and the colonial thing. [The] vision is to create MCC academies, cricket grounds, and develop a community around it with a Lord's club, a Lord's Tavern, a museum... *replicate what we've got here* to a certain extent and sell the property on the back of the MCC brand (MCC Executive, our emphasis).

Our vision builds a community based on a cricket enthusiast's idea of *paradise*. Whether you are a visiting business executive, a school-teacher or a family seeking entertainment and relaxation at the weekend, Anglo Indian developments will provide you with a ... 'home away from home' as we develop communities across India's thriving cities (Development Plan Document, pg. 29, our emphasis).

As these extracts intimate, the proposed MCC-branded enclaves are anchored in, and promoted as, a 'home away from home', a mythical version of cricket/community, a repackaged product to be bought, sold, and consumed (Rosenblatt, 2005). Since the MCC is a spatial commodity *already in existence* (Rosenblatt, 2005), these planned developments are idealized spatial forms; a *paradise* predicated on particular discursive constitutions of cricket (and imperialism), beauty, convenience, safety and community—all the symbolic and material associations that make-up the fabric of the MCC brand. This positions the MCCAI as credible and 'legitimate' developers for these communities due to their English/British (colonial) status and, by inference, their self-evident (if mythologized)

cricketing provenance. Indeed, this uncontested colonial authenticity was an important part of the 'understanding' upon which Anglo Indian (the international real estate development company) was formed, and through which it attempted to realise a sense of institutional credibility:

The name Anglo Indian, I wanted it to reflect something that is taking the best of both worlds (one of our sort of corporate strap-lines): the entrepreneurial dynamism and fast-moving development of the market that India represents, with the more established, governance driven Western ethos of *how to do business* that Anglo-Saxon...corporate ethos represents. (Anglo Indian Executive, our emphasis)

In this vein, MCCA I traded on the perceived superiority and legitimacy ascribed to British businesses within development discourse as the originators of development ideas, policies, and processes, that those in India *must* lack (McEwan, 2009). As the Anglo Indian Executive emphasized, the 'Western ethos of *how to do business*' is privileged, *the* standard to which Indian businesses should achieve, and with which the UK (these two organizations in particular) have the legitimate knowledge to assist. India's 'entrepreneurial dynamism', the potential the country has for development, is juxtaposed with a perceived lack of efficient and effective corporate governance which positions India as 'underdeveloped' in relation to the 'overdevelopment' of the UK (Rist, 2008). Indeed, the 'legitimacy' of the MCCA I partnership conjures up a stark binary between 'knower'/knowledge and recipient/ineptness that is moored in a (post)colonial gaze that positions the Global North

broadly, and Anglo Indian specifically, as the possessors of experience and knowledge to impart onto an India that has the 'potential' to know (Darnell, 2010).

The perceived credibility of the MCCAI partnership becomes even more pronounced given the place of cricket (the MCC/Lord's brand) as a community anchor point within the proposed development. Cricket held a unique and important historical role in the British imperial mission: it was materially and discursively imagined as the *imperial game* and was deployed throughout the British Empire by colonizers as a way of establishing 'normalcy' and re-creating Englishness in 'strange lands' (Malcolm, 2013). To know, understand, and play cricket in an aesthetically sanctioned manner was to know, understand and embody a preferred Englishness; playing cricket was mobilized to strengthen bonds with the 'Mother Country', and simultaneously a technology in the control of colonial bodies (Malcolm, 2001). Moreover, the MCC—as custodian and administrator of the international cricket laws—was entangled with the purveyors of colonial rule; many MCC members were also members of the political class, aristocracy, or, of other fields of the British establishment (Stoddart & Sandiford, 1998). The economic and cultural destabilization of cricket, often manifest in the South Asianization/Indianization of the game (Malcolm, et al., 2009), has seen the cricketing/colonial dominance of England (and its spatio-material manifestation at Lords cricket ground) as the 'rightful' *home* of cricket increasingly eroded (commercially, organizationally, spatially, and in terms of world rankings). Nonetheless, the (symbolic)



importance of cricket/Lords as a distinctly English institution remains unabated in MCCA promotional material: 'permeated with the history and tradition of cricket', 'the home of cricket', a 'quintessentially English' space that provides overseas players with 'every incentive to excel' (through earning a place in history on the Away Team Honours Board) (Development Plan Document, pg. 22).

Positioning Lords as *the* legitimate epicenter of cricket's coloniality, arguably furthering neocolonial sensibilities, not only masks the histories and contemporary power of Indian cricket, it speaks to a disciplining of the colonial body that has continued into post-colonial contexts (McEwan, 2009). This apparatus of colonial control was redolent in the discursive framing of the 'superior' standard of cricket (and coaching) that the cloned MCC academy would bring to the planned developments:

How are we going to integrate coaches in India into the MCC way of coaching?

We're going to look at bringing coaches over here [to India]... it's about the employees of an MCC branded cricket academy in India... giving them the opportunity to *learn* from the home of cricket. (Anglo Indian Executive, our emphasis)

With the history, tradition and excellence of Lords, the MCC, and of coaching and academies *accepted*, following Johnson et. al. (2004) we are reminded to look at the absences and the silences of the text. With privilege accorded to Lords/MCC/England,

there is a simultaneous positioning of India and of Indian cricket—both in past and in present—as subordinate, subservient and inferior. With a nod to institutional theorists (see e.g. Amis & A'issaoui, 2013; Greenwood et al., 2013; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991), isomorphic processes ensure that dominant, universalizing and oft arrogant discourses of the North (see McEwan, 2009) become legitimated, accepted and taken for granted business/development practices within the Global South. In this regard, the bodies, practices, language and professional habitus of Indian 'partners' is governed by 'legitimate' Western assumptions that determine 'expertise' that privilege certain voices while silencing or marginalizing others. Through privileging the expertise and knowledge of individuals at Lords, and thereby legitimizing their development of these communities, the complexities of development processes are masked (Author B, 2005).

These hierarchical sensibilities/assumptions are clearly embedded within the plans for each community, with each location—despite their differing histories, geographies and material/social relations—directly mimicking the material and discursive structures inherent within the MCC (e.g. an MCC private members club, the Long room, Pavilion and the Lords Tavern). Through 'duplitecture' (Bosker, 2013), the intent is to foster a particular sense of place (that would be mutually constituted with those who 'belong') that speaks to power, prestige, privilege and hierarchies of legitimate be(long)ing. At the core of such re-colonizing projects (as within its colonial antecedents) are a particular biopolitics: a logic of

the body based on certain Eurocentric assumptions that justify 'legitimate' interventions, all the while serving to exclude and de-legitimize the bodies (McEwan 2009), and existences, of specific Indian 'Others'. To further elaborate, with Sigler and Wachsmuth (2015, p. 3), we hold together discussions of (post-)coloniality with thinking about gentrification as a "local outcome of globalised socio-spatial processes." In this formulation, global capital (in this case, the MCCA) becomes injected into a local marketplace that subsequently morphs to conform to the preference of local urban middle class citizens. With Sigler and Wachsmuth (2015), in such processes emergent subjectivities form, and the new middle class (re-)imagine themselves as part of an international cosmopolitan class. As such, the gentrification phenomenon becomes one that connects redevelopment capital to housing demand transnationally, providing new avenues for profit and new mechanisms of marginalization and symbolic exclusion (Sigler & Wachsmuth, 2015). That is, the proposed community design is rooted in the hierarchical ordering of peoples with the corollary, intended or otherwise, being the reinforcement of socio-spatial distinctions, in this case through the development of branded cricket communities.

Capital Spaces, Urban Imagineering and the Cultural Politics of Cloned English 'Paradise'

There is an obvious irony present with MCC/Lords being appropriated (materially, symbolically, and organizationally) as a 'brand identity' for a community targeted at the vibrant, aspirational swathes of India's post-colonial upper middle class. At best, it

highlights a problematic insensitivity, a harking back to an imperial ethos founded upon premises of Indian inferiority; and it remains to be seen how the MCC/Lords (as signifiers of imperialism, colonisation and Englishness) are either un-problematically lived as an aspirational and performative consumptive ethic, display and disposition, or deemed as locally insensitive. Albeit corporate inspired—ground within the market-led dictates of international real estate development—such assertions speak to the complex ironies that coalesce around (re-)colonisation with the ‘logics’ of speculative entrepreneurial development. They also relate to larger questions of identification and be(long)ing within post-colonial India. This is perhaps especially the case for those middle classes targeted by such developments, and for those citizens who would be directly excluded from such spaces.

The aesthetic materialization of Indian communities as some sort of (post)colonial/(re)colonized “paradise”, are bound within an imagined and mythologized Englishness—one that would, at first instance, seem difficult to reconcile with a post-colonial Indian imagination. However, the MCCAI communities are predicated precisely on the opposite; that a mythologized English upper-classness, and conjoined cricketing/colonial hierarchies, *will resonate* with an aspirant transnational gentrified class in India. With the power to control the symbolic meanings and interpretations of these particular planned spaces (Author B, 2004), the MCCAI plans (see Figures One and Two)

appropriate Lords/MCC and the spectres of (cricketing) colonialism as blueprint/brand identity for the aspirational swathes of India's post-colonial upper-middle class.

[Insert Figure One here]

[Insert Figure Two here]

As indicated in Figures One & Two, the cricket ground forms the epicenter of the community. The faux-MCC duplitecture, medium to high-density housing, and 'key retail' surround the cricket ground. Moving concentrically outward, the plan details an 'eco village', a seniors village, an art village, and low-density villas. The spatial concentrations situated on the peripheries are identified as a remote high-end village, spa, cultural quarter, 'local retail', and a temple. Those entities placed centrally—the club, the grounds, the Tavern, and key (read: international) retail—are intended to be the focal point of the village, and thereby what is deemed most valuable in/for the community. These entities are technologies that encourage leisured consumption and an embodied performance of a particular faux-Englishness—becoming a member, watching or playing cricket on *the* Lords ground, enjoying the fares of the Lords Tavern, or the conspicuous consumption of international goods through 'key' retail outlets. The spatial aesthetic privileges Englishness (or at least an imagined version) that exudes privilege and colonial (male) assurance, whiteness and prestige; Englishness is positioned as advanced, legitimate, desirable, a

standard/state to be achieved. Placing elements of *difference*—local retail, the temple and cultural quarters on the periphery, positions them as inferior; they are physically removed and isolated. In this sense, and following Brenner & Theodore (2002), the spatial design, redevelopment ‘logics’ and planning practices of these communities speak to uneven development in which *certain* places, territories, and ideologies are privileged over and against others as sites for capital accumulation.

The aesthetic ‘urban imagineering’ (Author B, 2004) of these communities are containers of specific ideologies cricket and material manifestations of *paradise*:

Like a classic English village, the cricket green provides the focal point—with a classic pavilion providing an iconic reminder of all things MCC and Lord’s. But this is no style-based façade (Development Plan Document, p. 29).

The dangers of duplitecture (Bosker, 2013), of urban mimicry and serial replication in the faux-production of nothingness (see Ritzer, 2004) within distinct geographical spaces, are all too easy to see in these. Perhaps more concerning, however, are the ‘logics’ that provide the context for particular symbolic and physical signifiers of these MCCA communities. Yet, the logics surrounding secure/sanitized spaces is, unsurprisingly, manifest in the aesthetic visualizations of the environment itself. Distinct from, but related to, geographical layout, the planned communities aim to evoke and utilize specific aesthetic features in the construction of the homes and community amenities that may

work to produce normative and exclusionary effects (Pow, 2009). The aesthetic visualizations harbour a sense of tranquility, beauty, and (social) order:

Our planners have considered every possible need, and set it all in an idyllic environment to suit *everyone* - whether a cricket devotee or not. Naturally, prime locations overlook the cricket ground, in the time-honoured style of the classic English village. A short walk leads to the pavilion and clubhouse. Radiating outward from the centre, a variety of house styles and sizes designed to suit different life stages complete a thoroughly well-balanced community (Development Plan Document, pg. 46, our emphasis).

[Insert Figure Three about here]

The development images (in Figure Three) provide a sense of the idealized aesthetic imagined within these planned communities—putatively for *everyone*, yet predicated on an exclusionary, rather than democratic, aesthetic. The plans are explicit in assuring aesthetic quality and the finest features/details, again legitimized through association and affiliation with a sense of English superiority. An emphasis on a seemingly naturalized aesthetic idyll—the smell of the freshly cut green grass and distinctiveness of the overly stylized English cricket ground—fosters a sense of exclusivity, maintained through strictly enforced aesthetic regimes that police space (Pow, 2009), and which speaks to those citizens connected (and those disconnected and excluded) to capital (cricketing) space.

## Cricketing Performativity and the Productive Idealized Indian Consumer/Citizen

The physical, ideological and aesthetic spatiality of the planned communities, and the 'appeal' of living within these branded communities, is targeted toward the perceived esteem indicators desired by new Indian middle class subjectivities. This group is thought to harbor complex identity projects that require a "glocal competence" in the productive melding of both global and local influences (Brosius 2010, p. 13). These 'logics' are explicit according to the Anglo Indian Executive:

To have somewhere ... where they can go and play cricket, go to an academy, go to a Lord's Tavern pub restaurant, or be a member of a club—individually or corporately— that's a tremendous opportunity. So that's why location is important... it's really the emergent middle class of India that we are targeting (Anglo Indian Executive).

Explicitly targeted (despite claims that they are for *everyone*) towards the aspirations of the transnational middle (gentrified) class, the communities become part of a larger process in which the new Indian middle class consumer-citizen is projected as *the* idealized representation of consumer India (Bijapurkar 2009). The 'opportunity', building on Walks (2006) and Shen & Wu (2013), is for the display of embodied aesthetic performativity based on distinct lifestyle, albeit contained within a secure and controlled environment. A commodified, and indeed transnational, embodied and exclusive performativity are central



to the planning process:

Imagine dining in the Tavern, surrounded by all things cricket and soaking up some of the most distinctive memorabilia in the world. Marvel at the achievements of bygone sportsmen...all whilst enjoying a simple cold beer or some fine International or Indian cuisine (Anglo Indian Development Plan, p. 46).

By 'Invitation Only' – The Lord's Club, India: Certain timeless qualities define the essence of a classic private members club, and our new clubs will have them all ... There will be stylish club suites to stay in; areas to relax with friends and family; and somewhere to conduct business, with all the privacy and amenities one would expect from the finest hotels. Membership will provide the ideal environment for those seeking a closer association with the leaders in their community from the fields of sport, business, media, entertainment, government, education, culture and the arts (Anglo Indian 2013a).

Herein, the MCCA I partnership are inviting (selling, more accurately) the new Indian middle-class to engage in an imagined experience/aesthetic that they believe will find resonance with an economic liberalism, and the transnational consumptive ethic that propels the dispositions, tastes, identities and display of embodied subjectivities of this emergent group (Fernandes, 2011). Indeed, the 'opportunity' to reside within the confines of these communities is portrayed as some form of transnational gentrified Indian middle

class *nirvana*, providing even greater participation in the epicenter of these communities: the mock MCC members (the original, historically marked by gendered exclusivity until very recently). As with the original, the Indian rendition will incorporate an institutionalized exclusivity, designed to circumscribe the perceived boundaries of social inclusion/exclusion. According to Anglo Indian:

Residents of the apartments will have a preferential deal [to the members club]. It won't be free to them, but there will be a preferential deal. What we are also doing is offering non-residents memberships to the club as well so that we're expanding ... to corporates (Anglo Indian Executive).

Here, the market-led rationale explicitly surfaces, and *the* product of distinction becomes the need (and ability) to purchase competitive advantage (in the form of the power of Britishness/Englishness) for corporate transactions/elite networking. We do not want to overstate the case that the new Indian middle class identity is exclusively global or transnational in its orientation, nor would they necessarily be attracted by a distinctly British way of life (as alluded to above, this argument contains a certain degree of post-colonial perversity). It is possible, following Brosius (2010), that those who will inhabit spaces could realize (perhaps ironically) the 'value' of brand Britain as a means to distinguish their cosmopolitan selves from those with the economic capital to directly participate. However, and as a reflection of continued presentation of the Indian middle class and their associated consumptive and living practices as an idealized and normalized

standard that other groups can and should aspire to through similar practices of consumption (Fernandes, 2006), the planned communities operate to capitalize on and promote aspirational cosmopolitan consumerist/ corporatist sensibilities. Indeed, this normalized lifestyle is seductively expressed as an effect of individual enterprise and choice, a pervasive neoliberal understanding that denies the influence of the extant structures of disadvantage and inequality (Fernandes 2011): structures which preclude many from being able to take advantage of India's expanding education, employment, and earning opportunities. The active creation of planned spaces such as these then operates to further normalize a specific set of aesthetic, spatial, and civic practices that creates/maintains boundaries and serves to further embed the political/economic rationalities and trajectories of neoliberalism (Fernandes, 2006).

Concomitantly, the normalization of idealized, productive and sanitized neoliberal Indian subjectivities/spaces arguably serves to further exacerbate a pernicious attitude towards poverty and the poor; that is, consumer India's (Bijapurkar 2009) socio-cultural politics of (bodily) distinction are inextricably linked to a socio-spatial politics of exclusion.

#### Cloned Communities & the Socio-Spatial Politics of Exclusion

The articulation between these imagined MCCA spaces, and the bodies that will inhabit them, speaks to a landscape of exclusion (Walks, 2006) that preserves the aesthetic

qualities of spaces designated for certain groups of people. The paradox of urban development is especially clear in this context, the communities are touted (at least in planning parlance) as a celebration of diversity (they are for *everyone*), yet they can serve to increase isolation and boundaries between those who are included and excluded (Walks, 2006). The middle class ideologies are imprinted onto the aestheticized designscapes of the MCCA development with highly selective (and brand-driven) understandings of 'niceness' (Pow, 2009), where whiteness (or perhaps more accurately, the legitimacy afforded to/by an imagined whiteness performed through the postcolonial body) and class hierarchies continue to be reproduced (Low, 2003). The visualizations for housing units and the natural environment within the MCCA planning documents paint a picture of space as especially ordered, beautified, and tranquil; one which favours modern (i.e. clean, rational, and individualistic) and private versions of society (Raposo, 2006). Nature, in particular, is conceptualized as tamed and manicured, but important for the reproduction of exclusivity (Raposo, 2006). However, exclusive space is permeated, albeit in a controlled manner that only serves to reinforce historic hierarchies of belonging in space:

Look at the real estate brochure, and the floor plan of a property, they will have it marked on the plans 'servants room'... whether you think that's acceptable or not, it's part of Indian society and culture. What we want to do within this, is we want to make sure, relative to standards that you might see elsewhere, we want it to be

better (Anglo Indian Executive).

The historic 'cultural' incorporation of servants highlights the ways in which privileged Indian citizens rely on the poor to nurture and sustain their lifestyles (Fernandes, 2004). More specifically, the inclusion of servants quarters casts light on the 'necessity' for the poor close at hand to work as servants, yet far away as humans (Appadurai, 2000)– excluded from being able to purchase their own homes in such spaces. In some ways, the separation between the rich and poor will continue to be blurred and semi-permeable; the poor will continue to occupy selective spaces within these community enclosures, and indeed will rub against 'productive' citizens in the streets leading to such spaces (Waldrop, 2004). Despite this, there remains a clear 'politics of forgetting' where particular social groups continue to be rendered invisible through the building of spaces planned by the MCCA (Fernandes, 2004).

Anglo Indian and the MCC are, of course, sensitive to the accusation that such communities would be exclusive and appear somewhat attuned to the stark inequalities amongst the Indian populace. To counter such critique, the development includes plans to ensure a level of permeability:

[We will ensure the] opening up the cricket facilities and making facilities open to local people, however poor they are. So they will have the freedom to access. There will be some controls (MCC Executive).

In this sense, the 'moral compass' of neoliberal development focuses on 'including' those who would not necessarily be able to afford to participate. However, only a select few are incorporated into these development logics and subject to measures of 'control.' Again, rather perversely, those inculcated poor may well have to ensure 'acceptable' British, upper/middle-class standards of 'being' (behaviours, hygiene, deportment and on) and literally leave their 'Otherness' behind (i.e. markers of poverty, difference, traditionalism) to gain access. This could serve to further demarcate boundaries between the new middle class and other groups, making visible those who are able to transcend into this lifestyle, and giving the illusion that transcending into the new middle class is relatively easy and attainable (Author C, 2013). Indeed, while there is an *invitation* to belong, as Paton et. al (2013, p. 1471) argue, such processes are merely gentrification acting as governance; "consumer-citizenship paradoxically extends participation to citizens but, because this is based on consumption and ergo people's material propensity to consume, it simultaneously denies participation and disadvantages those who cannot afford to consume." In this case, the inclusion of highly selective 'others' may well make more invisible those who are unable or unwilling to shed this 'Otherness', furthering the demonization of the poor (Author C., 2013). There is thus a contextual embeddedness of neoliberalism in these planned spatial developments that emphasizes the (re)criminalization of poverty and the surveillance of those that are outside this specific consumptive, market driven space (Peck & Tickell, 2002). As a material expression of an

“actually existing neoliberalism” (Brenner and Theodore 2002), the entrepreneurial approach to urban governance and development epitomized by these MCCA developments implicitly valorizes the new Indian middle class subject (those who ‘properly’ belong to such secure spaces [Skey, 2010]), while simultaneously positioning its discursively constitutive and legitimizing antithesis—the Indian impoverished—as economically unviable, environmentally harmful and criminal ... a homogenous category inseparable from the built environments of the illegal ‘slums’ that they inhabit” (Bhan 2009, p. 141). At the same time this clearly (re)positions the ‘dirty’ and unproductive Indian ‘other’ as excluded and demonized, yet simultaneously ‘invites them in’ (no matter how unobtainable this idealized notional ‘standard’ might be) through assimilation into pseudo-authentic and ‘legitimate’ faux-English communities—in effect both the rural and urban poor in India have become pathologized for their very poverty and inability to afford the ‘great Indian dream’ (Friedman, 2004). Indeed, this pathologization of the impoverished further justifies—and provides legitimacy for—ongoing neoliberal policies and speculative entrepreneurial development within India. As such, planned communities such as this may well exacerbate the exclusion of India’s poor populations (Baviskar, 2011), fixing instead on the transnational cosmopolitan gaze of the new middle class: designs such as this imagine how ‘accepted’/productive forms of identity will be performed and celebrated (they are legitimately able to ‘be’ in, and control ‘others’ in, this space), yet at the same time, they could serve to further illuminate and stigmatize the suspicious, the undesirable, the dirty,

and the different (Patel, 2012).

## Concluding Thoughts

Given the complex colonial relationship between Britain and India, and the apparent contradictions inherent within the MCCA partnership, our analysis of these planned communities has focused around: a complex assemblage of the legacies and aftermath of colonialism; intense postcolonial power relations; the ongoing impacts of neoliberal forms of capitalism and development; and, the perceived (in the design), and highly localized, cosmopolitan aspirations of those deemed to be connected to such spaces (McEwan, 2009). Our analysis is of course attuned to the complexities and nuances required to speak about diverse populations, the apparent inequities within social research/development discourses that position the South as somehow 'lacking' in comparison to the North (see McEwan, 2009), and our own positionalities with regard to challenging the Euro/Western-centric dominance that places particular imagined geographies of the North at the highest stage of civilization, and thereby, the 'standard' of/for development (McEwan, 2009). Our empirical/theoretical explications suggest a fascinating, complex and particular spatialized biopolitics: a somewhat ironic logic of a preferred body politic based on certain Eurocentric assumptions that legitimates urban development (and subsequently securitization).



The planned MCCAI developments then can be considered as being at the confluence of various forces and relations redolent of the contemporary Indian context, and that frame the cultural politics of life therein. The global ambitions of the MCC, the 'logics' of speculative international real-estate development predicated on the production of 'capital space', the perceived performative and consumptive based dispositions of India's new middle class/gentrified transnational class and their relationships to a post-colonial Indian imagination, and, uneven and shifting hierarchies in world cricket, all combine in and around these utopian post-colonial Indian spatial imaginings. While these communities are embryonic in terms of material manifestation, they already speak to the (re)colonization of Indian land and the symbolic place of transplanted 'quintessentially English' cricket (post-colonial *paradise*).

That is, we read the proposed community designs as being rooted in the hierarchical ordering of peoples with the corollary, intended or otherwise, being the reinforcement/reproduction of such socio-spatial distinctions and (colonial) hierarchies. To further delineate separation, these are planned spaces that are selective and secure (Raco, 2003), that foster 'privilege' (Brenner & Theodore, 2002), that are designed to physically and discursively exclude, and mark off, 'unwelcome' (Bigo, 2006) 'scary' spaces/citizens (Kern, 2010).

Such developments do not exist in isolation and alongside local state practices contribute to exclusionary models of community that may work to narrow the very definition of liveability/citizenship/inclusion (Fernandes, 2004). Indeed, again, with Fernandes (2004), the spatial politics of such spaces, and the concomitant visibility of middle classes in these developments, produces a simultaneous 'politics of forgetting'—the discursive process where particular social groups are rendered invisible in, or threatening to, productive neoliberal spaces. Indeed, fortified exclusive development projects, like other new build gentrification/gated community developments premised upon a fear of the 'Other,' can lead not just to a pernicious exclusion (England & Simon, 2010), but to an 'unliving'/ 'ungrievable population' (Butler, 2009) targeted for control or evisceration to protect the lives of the 'living' and who lose their claim to be "legitimate urban citizens" (Bhan, 2009, p, 141). Somewhat reworking Sigler & Wachsmuth (2015), in the (re-)creation of historically and geographically specific pathways between places, and the connection of global capital to Indian consumer/citizens, we wonder about future spatial and human localised impacts and the potential for new threats of displacement. That is questions remain about how the MCCA initiatives might act simultaneously as both a *driver* and *result* of social exclusion vis-a-vis the management of class and other(ed) social identities (Walks, 2006). By this, we mean that new global pathways for gentrification may well create possibilities of exacerbated displacement, social control and even systematic evisceration of those without the means to conform to an embodied class aesthetic and lifestyle.

These concerns need to be held together with the (perverse) ironies that coalesce around the appropriation of colonial sporting practices and institutions as a blueprint for speculative entrepreneurial development, especially with respect to how an imperialist ethos and sensibility, at least as reimagined within the logics of transnational gentrification (Sigler & Wachsmuth, 2015), might resonate with an aspirant Indian upper middle class. Our research will continue to explore how such detached free-floating colonial signifiers, tropes and hierarchies are lived and experienced within the imaginations of the new Indian middle classes. For, we are fascinated by the potential (re-)invocation of hierarchies and how, or not, such tropes and status politics (as attached to space) become (problematically) lived and (a)historically understood and situated. Likewise, this leads us to questions over the politics of be(long)ing in post-colonial India, the inward/outward directionalities towards national/transnational/British colonial markers of distinction and value, and the (re-)production of lived hierarchies of belonging. Recognising the multiple drivers of planned communities, our future work aims to further understand this project as it becomes actualised, not just as a transforming urban space, but as a “discursively constituted governance paradigm, as an open and active assemblage, intertwined with multiple co-evolving projects, practices and strategies of governance, lacking an encompassing coherence” (McGuirk & Dowling, 2009, p. 121). As such, our future work, will address the MCCA as a diffuse, multidimensional and multiscalar project (McGuirk &

Dowling, 2009), a new development mutation that accommodates and perhaps legitimizes the 'global industry' of neoliberal urban development. Indeed, within the context of these developments and their impacts, with Pierce et al. (2016), we will explore how urban rights can be understood as "multiple, overlapping, fractured, and contentious, constantly (re)negotiated through urban political processes.

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