From London to Mumbai and back again: gentrification and public policy in comparative perspective

Abstract

Gentrification has become a global phenomenon over the last fifteen years, and has

been understood as an increasingly important strategy within neoliberal policy-making.

Focusing on London and Mumbai, this paper details how public policies and planning

regimes have been reconfigured and rescaled to facilitate and encourage new property

speculation. However, against more generalised and abstract accounts of the neoliberal

city, the paper uses its comparative perspective to emphasise the geographically and

historically specific manifestations and effects of gentrification processes. By

highlighting different forms of state intervention and sharper socio-spatial impacts in

Mumbai, the paper challenges the Eurocentric framing of a global spread of

gentrification, and argues Mumbai can act as an important source of learning for

gentrification research.

> Almost everywhere urban societies . . . seem to be going around in circles: they seem to be strangely slow and maladroit in dealing with the most urgent, material needs which they can well afford to meet – from the elimination of homelessness in London (a relatively small but stubborn problem) to the provision of water taps in the bustees of Bombay.

> (Glass, 1989, p. 102)

Introduction

In January 1971, the British novelist, biographer and historian, Gillian Tindall (1971, p. 52) wrote in *New Society* of 'striking visual change' in 'L' Street in an unspecified part of North West London, possibly Kensal Town (see Tindall, 1977). Tindall (p. 52) detailed how 'affluent "new people"' had moved into this '"decaying" street' in the 'last dozen years' taking advantage of 'the theoretical value of the land' (p. 54) and carefully restoring many of the original features of the street's Victorian houses, such as the 'pristine yellow colour' of the bricks. The result, she (p. 55) concluded was that not only 'working class owner-occupiers' but 'incidental tenants' and 'small shop-keepers' were increasingly leaving the street – which as she (p. 52) pointed out had previously been inhabited by the 'gentry' and 'semi-gentry' during the mid-nineteenth century. Tindall, however, emphasised how these processes were only incipient: 'London's newly expensive areas are still a long way from showing their recently accrued value to the passing casual observer' (p. 52). She predicted nonetheless:

> There are formidable pressures in areas such as these . . . [T]he pressures of money, of space, of people with the money to buy space . . . Inevitably, in spite of superficial appearances, these streets can only become increasingly upper middle class . . . In ten years from now this change will not yet have fully come to pass, but it might in 20 (p.55).

Indeed by the 1990s, the upgrading of previously predominately working-class streets in north London had become ubiquitous. Furthermore, this capture of space and investment in the built environment by users of a progressively higher socio-economic status had spread to other socio-spatial contexts, not just down-at-heel housing. In her 2006 book about Bankside, an inner London area with a recent history as an industrial rather than a residential area, Tindall (2006, p. 232) observed that 'what were originally the "mean streets" and "dark dirty alleys" of waterside Thames are now extremely expensive real-estate, a cosmopolitan ribbon worlds away from the drab hinterlands behind them.'

In December 1991, Tindall (1991, p. 3) wrote in the *Times of India* of 'the sturdy and handsome factory buildings now just waiting in Lower Parel for new life and commerce to be breathed into them.' Six months earlier, the Cambridge and Oxford-educated Finance Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, had ushered in widespread liberalisation reforms of the Indian economy. The private sector was permitted to enter into many areas previously reserved for the public sector, new financial instruments were permitted, the rupee devalued and tariffs lowered. For many this heralded the resuscitation of an Indian economy weighed down by state-led industrial modernisation and comparably poor direct investment flows. As an area located at the heart of central Bombay's[1] swathe of so-called 'sick' textiles mills, Lower Parel was seen as a potential prime beneficiary of this new shake-up

of the Indian economic apparatus. Tindall (p.3) predicted that by 'the end of the century' these textile mills would house 'sought-after and prestigious offices'. Again her predictions proved right. By 2001, companies such as the accountancy firm KPMG, bank HSBC and the advertising firm Ogilvy and Mather had all taken upmarket office space in Lower Parel's mill buildings. Tindall, however, did not predict another subsequent development in the make-over of the area. By the new millennium, several new luxury residential high-rises had been constructed on Lower Parel's mill-land with names such as Phoenix Towers, directly overshadowing the one-room tenements below known as *chawls.*

It would appear that the process Gillian Tindall first documented in 1971 in North London – dubbed 'gentrification' in 1962 by the Berlin-born sociologist Ruth Glass in her survey of new aspects of urban change in London – has not only spread to new socio-spatial contexts but to cities such as Mumbai beyond Western Europe and the Anglophone world. This is indicated by recent gentrification research. There is not only a growing literature detailing the upgrading of industrial buildings and 'new build' gentrification (Davidson and Lees, 2005), but an emerging and increasingly cited roll-call of work charting gentrification's global spread: from St John's, Antigua (Thomas, 1991), to Puebla (Jones and Varley, 1999), Marrakech (Escher *et al.*, 2001), Istanbul (Potuoglu-Cook, 2006) and São Paolo (Sandler, 2007).

The global policy-scapes of gentrification

Three inter-related processes have been highlighted to account for why this gentrification map has become much more detailed and wider over the last twenty years. First, gentrification has been seen as a result of gentrification 'cascading' into new territories through new global 'forces'. Atkinson and Bridge (2005, p. 2), for instance, suggest that 'gentrification appears to have migrated centrifugally from the metropoles of North America, Western Europe and Australasia.' Second, gentrification has been viewed as a product of cosmopolitan lifestyles practiced by certain fractions of the transnational capitalist classes (Rofe, 2003). Third – and the main focus of this paper – gentrification has been understood as an important part of 'neoliberalism'. Neil Smith (2002, p. 440), for example, argues that gentrification had 'evolved by the 1990s into a crucial urban strategy for city governments in consort with private capital in cities around the world'.

In these attempts to account for the global spread of gentrification, there has been a tendency to treat globalisation, cosmopolitanism or neoliberalism as backdrops to gentrification. In part, this has been a product of gentrification researchers failing to engage fully with work outside their own sub-discipline. As Butler and Lees (2007: 4) posit, 'the globalization literature and the gentrification literature have, to date, paid little attention to each other' while Lees (2007, p. 230) similarly suggests that 'writings on cosmopolitanism' need to be brought into gentrification work. There are likewise important yet unexplored links between greater state intervention in gentrification over

the last decade and Peck and Tickell's (2002) identification of a shift from 'roll-back' to 'roll-out' neoliberal policy-making. In the creation of new privatised cultural landscapes and the generation of new circuits of capital accumulation, gentrification has become a key urban arena in the development of neoliberal policies (Brenner and Theodore, 2005; Hackworth, 2007).

In order to better conceive gentrification as interconnected and interdependent with wider processes such as neoliberalism, there needs to be greater emphasis on the actors who shape and legitimize gentrification, and how their ideas and policies travel. Gentrification researchers need to ask who is responsible for the creation of what Davidson and Lees (2005, p. 1167) depict as a 'gentrification blueprint' that is 'being mass-produced, mass-marketed, and mass-consumed around the world'. This parallels recent attempts to conceive neoliberalism as a migratory set of practices rather than an 'atmospheric' system (Ong, 2007). Wendy Larner (2003, p. 510), for instance, has called for a 'more careful tracing of the intellectual, policy and practitioner networks that underpin the global expansion of neoliberal ideas, and their subsequent manifestation in government policies and programmes'.

There has been no mapping, for example, of the significant role for new urban-focused think-tanks in the global spread of policies and practices of gentrification. With close connections to governmental, property and media elites, these have helped push strategies of gentrification onto and up policy agendas – in a similar manner to the role

of pro-market think-tanks in helping distil, diffuse and normalise ideas of 'neoliberal' governance (Desai, 1994). The Centre for Cities, for instance, funded primarily by the former New Labour minister Lord Sainsbury, has enthusiastically supported the property-led upgrading of disinvested inner cities in the UK since its launch in 2005. The Centre's Director, Dermot Finch, not only has close links with the UK Treasury Office, where he worked as a policy advisor, but with leading US think-tanks who have been key in popularising ideas of market-led urban 'revitalisation', such as the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City. Moreover, the current chair of the Centre's Board is Tom Bloxham, joint founder and the major shareholder of the Urban Splash Group, who, according to Rowland Atkinson (2003, p. 2346) 'helped pioneer the gentrification of areas of inner Manchester'. Nevertheless, although proponents of new gentrification processes, the Centre for Cities do not necessarily recognise them as such. Their 2005 report on city centre living in Manchester, Dundee and Liverpool declared that 'gentrification is not a big issue' (Nathan and Unwin, 2005, p. 47).

Also playing an important role in the recent spread of gentrification have been 'crime consultants' such as William Bratton promoting techniques of revanchist urbanism (Smith, 2001) and globally-mobile architects such as Lord Richard Rogers advertising notions of an 'urban renaissance' (Lees, 2003). Another network that has barely been acknowledged is the global-scape of gentrification research itself (Allen, 2008). The growth of the gentrification map has also been the result of its theoretical and conceptual language travelling from its 'core' centres of discursive production (Clark,

2005). At a transnational scale, this first occurred with the circulation of the term from its origins in London to New York during the 1970s (Smith, 2006, p. 194). This led the American journalist Wolf Von Eckardt (1978, p. C1) to declare in *The Washington Post* that 'a new word – "gentrification" – entered the language in 1978.' The international itineraries of academic, writers and journalists familiar with 'gentrification' have subsequently helped further facilitate this diffusion. The British gentrification researcher Tim Butler (2007) has noted the emergence of gentrification as he has travelled to cities 'as apparently different as Buenos Aires, Beijing and Brisbane'. And it is likely that Gillian Tindall's (1991) anticipation of gentrification processes in Mumbai was aided by her knowledge and experience of similar trajectories in London.

Gentrification in a world of cities

Another associated problematic tendency in attempts at accounting for new globalised geographies of gentrification is to neglect the diversity of the process – despite its increasing ubiquity within contemporary urbanism. This is a criticism often aimed at Neil Smith (2002) and his notion of 'gentrification generalised'. Smith (2002, p. 440), nevertheless, emphasises how 'gentrification has occurred in markedly different ways' so that 'insofar as it is an expression of larger social, economic and political relations, gentrification in any particular city will express the particularities of the place in the making of its urban space'. Yet beyond cursory references to Mexico City and Mumbai, and his long-standing work on New York, Smith (2002) fails to provide any in-depth place-specific accounts in his overview of gentrification as a global strategy.

Such analysis is required to investigate how the global spread of gentrification – like the extension of market rule through neoliberalism – operates through different urban economic bases, social hierarchies, cultural histories and institutional frameworks (Wilson, 2004). This is why Van Weesep (1994, p. 80) urges that policy-orientated gentrification research is 'better served by the analysis of concrete problems than by general descriptions of broad trends which disregard many of their manifestations and effects.'

One important way of investigating the global spread of gentrification – while remaining sensitive to its different geographically and historically-specific manifestations and effects – is to adopt a comparative perspective. Such a perspective already has a rich and productive intellectual tradition within gentrification research, arguably more so than in other strands of urban literature. Analytical frameworks have ranged from trans-Atlantic comparisons (Carpenter and Lees, 1995; Van Criekingen and Decroly, 2003), trans-continental comparisons (Slater, 2004), inter-urban national comparisons (Ley, 1996) to *intra*-urban comparative perspectives (Butler and Robson, 2003; Hackworth, 2002).

In a context of new interlinked forms of globalised gentrification and neoliberal urban policy, this moving between different cities and urban areas through a comparative perspective assumes even greater importance. In particular, it helps complicate an often straightforward mapping of the global spread of gentrification onto a so-called 'third-

wave' of the process. This schematic periodisation of gentrification's mutations over the last forty years, proposed by Hackworth and Smith (2001), identifies a 'third-wave' starting in 1993. This, they suggest, is characterised by a greater role for developers, less anti-gentrification activity, an expansion of the process beyond core neighbourhoods and a greater importance for public policy. Although a very useful heuristic model of gentrification that emphasises the importance of cycles of disinvestment and reinvestment related to new forms of state intervention, Hackworth and Smith's (2001, p. 466) heavy reliance on the 'experience of gentrification in New York City' (and to a lesser extent London) means their schema cannot necessarily be transposed across the globe. Its application, for example, to urban areas with strongly divergent political and housing histories is problematic, often implying that gentrification has jumped straight to a 'third-wave'. There is, furthermore, a resulting tendency, despite Hackworth and Smith's (2001, p. 466) qualifications, to assume that gentrification has evolved from a spontaneous, haphazard process (first-wave) to one where the state and developers play a systematic role (third-wave). This ignores how public policy and planning regimes have always been an important factor in instigating and regulating gentrification, albeit not in the increasingly open and assertive manner of the last decade.

This use of models and periodisations that are often not sufficiently sensitive to the wider contexts for contemporary gentrification belies how comparative research has not kept pace with new planetary geographies of gentrification. Although comparative

studies have ranged across cities in Australia, Europe and North America, they have yet to involve cities from the global 'South'. This reflects a continued Eurocentric bias. Recent attempts at setting an agenda for future critical gentrification work have been notable for their complete lack of reference to cities outside the West (e.g. Slater, 2006; Lees, 2007). Conference sessions on 'global' gentrification have also been skewed to Anglo-American case-studies. This is despite contemporary gentrification processes arguably being at their sharpest in the global 'South'. As Neil Smith (2008: p. 196) comments, gentrification is 'happening on a more massive scale in Shanghai or Mumbai . . . than in the older post-industrializing cities of Europe, North America and Oceania'.

This paper will address this absence of in-depth comparative gentrification research involving urban areas from beyond the global 'North' by focusing on London and Mumbai. Although contrasted in art and architectural exhibitions (Blazwick, 2001; Burdett, 2006), there has been no systematic comparison of these two cities within urban studies. This is despite there being important similarities not only in their shared histories of British colonialism but in their economic, political and socio-spatial restructuring over the last thirty years. Formal employment in London and Mumbai's once thriving manufacturing sectors has sharply declined with an accompanying dramatic growth in both cities' financial and business services sectors (Graham and Spence, 1995; Banerjee-Guha, 2002). This has been accompanied by a raft of deregulatory and liberalisation reforms, and the growth of new corporate-governmental

alliances. London has subsequently become, as Peck and Tickell (2007, p. 35) argue, 'a city with a distinctive role in shaping the ideological topography of the market revolution' while Mumbai has similarly become a key site in the creation and promotion of neoliberal South Asia (Patel, 2004). Furthermore – and crucial to this paper's comparative focus – this economic and political restructuring has been manifest and bolstered by major socio-spatial transformations of both cities' central districts over the past decade.

In order to compare gentrification and public policy between London and Mumbai at more than a general level, two areas will be detailed: Bankside and Lower Parel. Bankside is situated on the south bank of the River Thames, directly opposite the City of London, while Lower Parel is located at the centre of Mumbai's island peninsular, a few miles north of the city's main financial district. They have been chosen not only because they are both centrally located areas of comparable size, but because of their important similarities and interconnections in relation to recent processes of gentrification. Until the 1980s, although Bankside possessed a more diverse economic base, both areas were associated with polluted urban landscapes and industrialisation. Without a large stock of devalued nineteenth-century houses, they were not gentrified in the classic form outlined by Ruth Glass (1964). Nevertheless, state-sanctioned gentrification processes have occurred in the two areas over the last two decades with many old industrial buildings converted into offices and several luxury residential developments constructed on previously derelict land.

The first section will explore 'proto-gentrification' trajectories prior to the 1990s. This will provide important historical contexts for the second section which will outline different ways that the state has directly or indirectly intervened in the gentrification of these two areas over the last twenty years. In the third section, the impacts of Bankside and Lower Parel's gentrification on less affluent users of these areas will be compared and contrasted. Throughout, the two areas will be placed against each other within the narrative rather than considered in separate sections. This will help track particular patterns and practices within the recent global spread of gentrification, and help make connections between these two institutionally-specific examples and more generalised political discourses and ideologies (Peck, 2004). The paper draws upon semi-structured interviews, archival research, ethnographic observations and quantitative analysis undertaken between 2002 and 2005[2]. This was strategically carried out in Mumbai prior to London. The aim was to use a comparative perspective not only to emphasise the specificity of the two cities but to try and disrupt the standard flows of urban theory and gentrification research, and develop new lines of enquiry (McFarlane, 2008).

From metropolitan underside to prime property

Both Bankside and Lower Parel have historically acted as what Doreen Massey (2000, p. 25) terms a 'metropolitan underside' to the growing wealth and modernity of their respective cities. In Bankside, power stations, engineering works, metal foundries, large wharves and a variety of food processing industries were all established in the area's conveniently central riverside location during the late nineteenth century (Reilly

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and Marshall, 2001, pp. 35-65). Small pockets of high-density housing were also constructed for workers amidst Bankside's fragmented jumble of new manufacturing premises and railway viaducts so that, according to Gillian Tindall (2006, p. 183) 'by the turn of the [twentieth] century, Bankside was almost entirely working class'. Lower Parel similarly played an important role in forging Bombay's industrial modernity. The area's reclaimed flats were chosen during the 1850s as the location for some of India's first spinning and weaving mills. These were established predominately by Bombay's wealthy multi-ethnic merchants who looked to exploit the cheap supply of raw cotton and labour from the city's Marathi-speaking hinterland, with the British leasing land and machinery, and providing managerial staff (Leadbeater, 1993, p. 61). The construction of the mills also meant that workers, the majority of whom lived within fifteen minutes walk of their workplace, established a thriving new social milieu of tenements, neighbourhoods and markets (Chandavarkar, 1994, p. 169).

Yet, by the 1940s there were growing calls for the 'decongestion' of these two centrally-located industrial areas. Grace Golden (1951, p. 14), writing in 1950, forecast Bankside's 'obvious destiny' was to lose its 'alleyways and wharfs' and acquire 'a wide embankment, gardens, streamlined blocks and flats.' With economic trends and projections in central London strongly indicating there would be far more demand for commercial and cultural uses of Bankside rather than new industrial activity, many politicians, business leaders and planners advocated the removal of industry and electricity provision from the area. The 1943 County of London Plan, in particular,

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envisaged Bankside as part of a new cultural and administrative district replacing the warehouses, factories and jumble of backstreets along the South Bank. As one of this plan's co-authors, Patrick Abercrombie (1947), stated in a letter to *The Times*, 'we came to the conclusion that this section [Bankside] . . . could be spared from industry and given to much needed central uses'.

During this decade, there were similar calls for the deindustrialisation and de-proletarianisation of Lower Parel. A proposal drawn up in 1947, the year of Indian Independence, by Bombay's municipal engineer N.V. Modak and a New York planning consultant called Albert Mayer, a former colleague of the urbanist Lewis Mumford, proved particularly influential. As part of efforts to showcase the fledgling nation's international urban modernity, this proposal looked to emulate American and European models of an industrially cleansed and decongested city – including the 1943 Abercrombie London Plan. Despite never becoming an official document, Modak and Mayer's *Master Plan in Outline* established a new agenda for the closure of Lower Parel's mills and for remaking the accompanying densely populated neighbourhoods into 'good' middle-class localities (Dwivedi and Mehrotra, 1995, p. 299). It was argued, for instance, that the total removal of the textile industry from central Bombay would 'mean an all round subsidence of tension, and a welcome reduction of population' (Modi, 1950, p. 410).

These proposed remakings of Bankside and Lower Parel to match the modernist aspirations of post-War Britain and post-Independence India were stifled, however, by the areas' continued significant role as inner-city industrial centres. Yet by the 1970s there was a notable growth in what Neil Smith (1979) has termed 'rent-gaps' between the land-uses of Bankside and Lower Parel and adjacent higher-value commercial districts. In Bankside, developers proposed new schemes consisting of luxury housing, large-scale office building and middle class amenities, encouraged by a new land-use planning approach adopted by the London Borough of Southwark following the 1969 Greater London Development Plan (Hirons, 1973). As Aubrey (1972, p. 34) commented in *Time Out*, 'the City [of London], sweating under the burden of paying up to £12 a square foot for ordinary office space, looked across the river and saw Mecca.' Although there was not the same demand for new office space in Bombay during the 1970s, there was similarly growing pressure for the redevelopment of Lower Parel's mill-lands. These were no longer located on the edge of Bombay, as they were when first established in the late nineteenth century, but had become strategically situated at the very centre of a rapidly growing city on a geographically-constricted island.

This growing pressure for the redevelopment of Lower Parel and Bankside was met nevertheless with concerted resistance. In Lower Parel, strict planning legislation protecting industrial land-use thwarted any attempt at gentrification during the 1970s. Despite textile employment peaking in the 1920s, mill-workers and their families

remained central to the social fabric of the city and the demands of electoral mobilisation. Moreover, Lower Parel was part of what the historian Rajnarayan Chandavarkar (1998, p. 103) argues was 'an active political terrain'. The area was the crucible for the creation of a self-conscious Indian working-class and retained a strident trade union movement during the 1970s and 1980s. This was demonstrated by a prolonged and fractious textile strike during 1982 and 1983 (Van Wersch, 1992).

In Bankside, the North Southwark Community Development Group, formed in 1972, criticised planners for acquiescing to the demands and financial power of commercial developers, and neglecting approaches to redevelopment which emphasised jobs and homes for the area's working-class population. The re-zoning of much of the area from 'Waterside Uses' to 'West End Uses' in the early 1970s, for example, was seen as accelerating the closure of wharves and promoting new office schemes which employed far fewer local residents than previous industrial uses. Southwark Council was criticised for not demanding substantial planning gains for the local community at a time of increasing restriction of office development in inner London by other Labour Party controlled boroughs. Instead, as Ambrose and Colenutt (1975, p. 85) argued in the *Property Machine,* Southwark planners became so 'alarmed by dereliction' that they encouraged developers to move into the area without due concern for local consultation and social provision. The 1982 local elections ushered in a new planning committee on the Council which, in direct contrast to the policies of the 1970s, emphasised a community-orientated and participative approach to redeveloping

Bankside (McCarthy, 1996). In conjunction with the Greater London Council (GLC), control of which had been wrested from the Conservatives by the Labour Left in 1981, Southwark constructed new social housing and industrial units in the area, aiming to stem the tide of speculative office development and address local levels of unemployment which had reached 20% by the early 1980s (Nicholson, 1988).

Gentrification as an urban strategy in London and Mumbai

The last fifteen years, however, have witnessed the dramatic transformation of both areas. In Bankside, several large residential and commercial developments by renowned architects, such as Bankside Lofts, Bankside 1-2-3 and the Holland Street Towers have been constructed or are under construction (Powell, 2004). Likewise, Lower Parel's traditional chimney-filled skyline has been punctured by new brightly coloured residential high-rises with many of its old industrial buildings, such as those of Phoenix Mills, demolished or converted to make way for shopping malls, office complexes and leisure facilities. As Adarkar and Menon (2006, p. 3) suggest, 'the gentrification of the area is hard to ignore'.

This redevelopment of Bankside and Lower Parel has been connected to new influxes of global capital. Bankside has benefited from the consolidation of the City of London as a major global financial centre, with its attendant generation of new wealth, consumption practices and property speculation (Hamnett, 2003). Lower Parel similarly has been seen as a major beneficiary of liberalisation reforms of the Indian economy in 1991, and the spatialised production of new middle-class urban identities

(Fernandes, 2006). Situated at the heart of Mumbai's Island City, Lower Parel's land prices quadrupled from 1000 Rupees per sq.ft. in 1988 to 4000 Rupees per sq.ft. in 1993, and by the height of Mumbai's post-liberalisation real estate spiral during the mid-1990s, the area's former mill-lands were estimated to be worth $7.5 billion (Manchanda, 1993; D'Monte, 2001, p. 74).

Yet the gentrification of Bankside and Lower Parel can not simply be attributed to new flows of global capital, and the emergence of new middle-class groups. Crucially, it also has to be assessed with respect to the role of public policy acting within the specific historical and geographical contexts of the two areas. Firstly, there have been concerted, ongoing and often crude efforts by commercial and political elites to curtail union power and 'roll-back' oppositional movements to gentrification. In Lower Parel, union strength has been undermined by commercial elites' nurturing of a political organisation unique to postcolonial Mumbai, the Shiv Sena (Hansen, 2001). Industrialists and mill-owners gave liberally to the embryonic organisation, employing Shiv Sena *goondas* (thugs) in their Bombay factories to intimidate communist unions during the late 1960s and 1970s (Katzenstein, 1978, footnote 18, p. 240). This alliance proved highly successful, with radical left-wing unions declining from the 1960s (Sherlock, 1996). In turn, patronage from local capitalists greatly assisted Shiv Sena's establishment as a major political force (Gupta, 1982). Additionally, following – and during – the Bombay Textile Strike of 1982-83, the collective bargaining power of trade unions was rolled back, facilitated by greater outsourcing to suburban handlooms

and powerlooms which were beyond the gaze and costs of organised labour. Attempts at gentrifying Lower Parel also benefited from the introduction of new planning controls in 1991, which sanctioned the conversion of small sections of mills for residential and commercial use. Although drawn up ostensibly to help revive mills declared as 'sick', these controls provided several legal loopholes for private mill-owners to manipulate in new non-industrial mill conversion schemes (D'Monte, 2002). These controls were subsequently altered in 2001 to allow large-scale development on mill land – a ruling which despite several public interest petitions has been allowed to stand.

In Bankside, the post-1982 political emphasis on the housing and employment needs of the area's working-class neighbourhood clashed sharply with the Conservative national government's new market-led approach to the regeneration of inner London and its former docks. This strong divergence away from central government's urban policy framework led to the imposition of financial restraints on Southwark Council such as rate-capping and the withdrawal of funding from the North Southwark Community Development Group. Moreover, Margaret Thatcher's abolition of the GLC in 1986 – promoted as the removal of a wasteful tier of bureaucracy – removed an important source of resistance to new gentrification processes through the Council's advocacy of pro-manufacturing planning strategies, protectionist industrial policies, radical municipal socialism and the extension of trade union power (Wheen, 1985). One of the first people to buy a flat in Bankside Lofts was Carol Thatcher, who apparently only

decided to move once she had the approval of her mother – Margaret (*The Times*, 1995).

Secondly, greater flows of capital into Bankside and Lower Parel have been facilitated by a rescaling of urban policy and planning priorities in London and Mumbai towards the interests of global financial markets – and property developers – and away from local social reproduction. In London over the last twenty years, there has been a flurry of initiatives to assess and improve the city's global economic position (Thornley, 1998, pp. 170-172). Both the centrally-run Government Office for London, and organisations dominated by commercial interests, such as London First, have commissioned studies to investigate how London compares and contrasts with rival cities in creating global business opportunities and attracting international inward investment (Kennedy, 1991; Llewelyn-Davies, 1996). This shift in priorities is exemplified by Ken Livingstone, former head of the GLC, who became London's first directly elected mayor in April 2000. In contrast to the industrial policies he adopted during the last days of the GLC, Livingstone has been eager to strengthen London's position as a major financial centre, appointing leading figures from the City of London Corporation, such as Judith Mayhew, to his advisory cabinet at the newly created Greater London Authority. Livingstone's *volte-face* is, in part, a consequence of the GLA's restricted fiscal and administrative power in comparison with the GLC – as deliberately engineered by Tony Blair's national administration, mindful of the political opposition Thatcher encountered during the 1980s (Travers, 2004, pp. 44-45).

It is also the consequence of how, in the interregnum after the GLC was abolished, inner London's industrial base all but disintegrated. Livingstone has therefore been restricted in formulating many of his policies to strategies that are reliant on London's continued business growth and planning gains from property developers in areas such as Bankside (McNeill, 2002; Harris, 2008).

Urban political discourse in Mumbai has also increasingly been subsumed to a globalised set of economic interests, paralleling new ideological agendas at the national level (Shastri, 1997). Planners, for example, following the precedent set by Modak and Mayer in the 1940s, have attempted to model land-use in ways that directly resemble the trajectories of archetypal 'global cities' such as London (see, for example, BMRDA, 1995, pp. 237-239). This emphasis on Mumbai's global status has been further reinforced by the creation of Bombay First in 1995, a think-tank directly modelled on London First to formulate initiatives to improve the city's receptivity to inward investment. Bombay First invited the Lord Mayor of London and Judith Mayhew to Mumbai in 1997 to offer advice on how to improve the city's regional and international competitiveness, and ran an international conference on urban renewal in May 2005 entitled 'Learnings for Mumbai' (*Times of India*, 1997). Bombay First also commissioned a report in 2003 from the American management consultants McKinsey's (2003) on how Mumbai could change its 'mind-set' and match other 'global metros' such as Shanghai. This has signalled a decisive end to more reformist Nehruvian attempts to secure the equitable distribution of services and resources across

Mumbai through public sector investment and private sector controls (Banerjee-Guha, 2002). The focus has switched towards infrastructure and transport improvements, financed through the Maharashtra state government and an agency independent of municipal jurisdiction, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority. These have been designed primarily to encourage new private investment and property development. It has been noticeable how the razing of many of Lower Parel's old mill buildings over the last ten years has been matched by the construction of new elevated highways providing speedier connections to the international airport and the city's financial districts.

Thirdly, Bankside and Lower Parel's gentrification has been accelerated by the state-sanctioned 'roll-out' of what Neil Smith (2002) describes as 'new landscape complexes'. These have played an important role in affirming Bankside and Lower Parel as 'potentially gentrifiable neighbourhoods' (Vicario and Monje, 2003). In Bankside, this has been exemplified by the conversion of a large, redundant power station into the Tate Gallery of Modern Art during the late 1990s. Crucially, the Tate's scheme benefited from the launch of the National Lottery in October 1993 which introduced new sources of public funding for major capital projects. By choosing a run-down and marginalised area, in preference to a more well-known central London location, the Tate deliberately looked to strengthen their application for £50 million from these public funds by being able to emphasise their new gallery's role in processes of inner-city regeneration. In order to highlight this, the Tate commissioned

a report from McKinsey's in 1994 to evaluate the potential economic benefits for Bankside. Furthermore, the Tate's Project Director, while preparing for the second round of their lottery bid in March 1995, requested information from several Southwark planners and property consultants on any new developments they could link with the Tate's purchase of the power station the year before [*Tate Archives*: TG 12/7/1/6]. Amongst the more positive responses, a planner from Southwark Council stated:

> There has been a noticeable increase in enquiries relating to residential and leisure uses in the Bankside area over recent months, several of whom have mentioned the Tate in background to their plans. In addition, other developments which had appeared speculative now seem to be moving towards implementation. Finally, developers who had been involved in schemes in this area have found their success in letting/selling space (particularly for residential uses) so marked that they are now actively seeking other sites in the same area for further development. [*Tate Archives*: TG 12/7/1/7]

Although framed more widely than simply as a way of 'regenerating' Bankside by encouraging new property speculation, the public funding of the Tate Gallery cannot be divorced from attempts at consolidating the gentrification of the area. As Paul Barker (1999, p. 14) comments, the Tate ensured that Bankside became 'a chirpy monument to the economics of the market.' Similarly, Southwark Council commissioned several innovative architectural practices to create a series of design-rich improvements to Bankside's street fabric, furniture and signs as part of a £3.65 million design initiative in 1999 (Bateson, 1999). This was not only to herald the arrival of the Tate in the area – Southwark Council donated £1.5 million towards the

Tate's initial development costs in 1994 – but to help further create interest and consolidate confidence in Bankside's property market (Teedon, 2001).

In Lower Parel, despite an editorial from *Art India* declaring that the former power station of the Tate Modern 'looks like some of the old mills in Lower Parel', there has been no comparable state-funded new landscape complex (Jindal, 2000). In February 1996, the Maharashtra state government did, however, appoint a study group under the chairmanship of the internationally trained and celebrated Indian architect Charles Correa to investigate how best to develop 57 hectares of publicly-owned mill-lands (Correa, 1996). Proposals included the transformation of congested streets into covered shopping arcades and pedestrian malls (*ibid.*, figure 22), the widening and lining with trees of principal roads to create 'leafy boulevards' (*ibid.*, figure 5), and the conversion of the thirty-metre high, 75 year old chimney at India United Mills into a 'heritage landmark' (p. 9). Although never formally published, Correa's vision for Lower Parel as a consumption-filled district has been taken up, albeit in a more piecemeal fashion, by several private mill-owners during the last ten years. In particular, the opening of a bowling alley, night-club and shopping centre in Phoenix Mills during the late 1990s has played an important role in signalling and asserting Lower Parel's new gentrified cultural landscape (Figure 1).

Yet, rather than trying to encourage gentrification through improvements to the cultural landscape, politicians in Lower Parel have often colluded directly with mill-

owner and builders in the redevelopment of real estate and the manipulation of planning regulations and legal norms protecting industry and textile workers (Pinto and Fernandes, 1996). Sharad Pawar of the National Congress Party, for instance, who as Chief Minister of Maharashtra was responsible for the introduction of new Development Control rules in 1991, allegedly leased the land where Phoenix's mill canteen once stood to build a car repair centre (Dhawan, 2002). In 2005, the 4.9 acre Kohinoor Mills No 3, just to the north of Lower Parel, was sold for Rs.421 crores ($100 million) to a consortium that included the son of Manohar Joshi, the former member of parliament for Lower Parel, and the nephew of Bal Thackeray, leader of Shiv Sena (Katakam, 2005). As well as officially acknowledged forms of state intervention, a 'shadow state' has operated in Mumbai where the boundaries between different centres of political authority and legitimacy have become extensively blurred (Hansen, 2005).

Globalised gentrification and fractured cities

Bankside and Lower Parel's dramatic transformation over the last fifteen years demonstrates how contemporary gentrification processes are actively negotiated through various forms of public policy. Political and commercial elites – often operating in tandem – have weakened the position of anti-gentrification groups and planning regulations in these two areas, emphasised the primacy of global capital in setting political agendas for London and Mumbai, and developed a variety of strategies to attract new property investment. These efforts have been framed through wider

ideologies of neoliberalism and new discourses of the 'global city' which have enabled long-held aspirations to gentrify Bankside and Lower Parel to be met.

Nevertheless, as well as considering how public policy has mediated Lower Parel and Bankside's gentrification, it is also crucial to consider the resultant effects on more marginalised users of the two areas. This is something that has been notably lacking from gentrification research (and policy-making) in recent years (Slater, 2006). It is only by considering the range of socio-spatial, political and cultural impacts that practical responses to gentrification can be assessed and formulated (Paton, 2007). Although the gentrification of Lower Parel and Bankside has been a product of similar planning and economic histories over the last sixty years and the rise of new globalised notions of contemporary urbanism, Lower Parel's gentrification has involved a far greater intensification of socio-spatial inequality than Bankside. This sharper-edged gentrification reveals significant political and socio-cultural differences between the two case-studies and helps highlight several aspects to Bankside's transformation which might otherwise not be so apparent.

The key defining impact of gentrification, albeit one that is often hard to quantify, is residential displacement. In Lower Parel, many former mill-workers and their families have moved to townships and 'shanty' communities on the outskirts of the city, often as a result of the shift of textile production to suburban sweatshops (Bhowmik and More, 2001). This is evidenced by how, according to the 2001 Indian census, the Parel

ward recorded the sharpest decline of population of any census ward in Greater Mumbai – despite the official overall population growing by 2 million between 1991 and 2001. In Bankside, displacement has not been as clear (Atkinson, 2000). There remains a significant amount of social housing in the area, and planners have demanded 'affordable' housing provision and shared ownership schemes as part of new upmarket residential developments – albeit not necessarily on-site. Yet there is likely to have been 'indirect' displacement in the area, with lower income groups unable to access property as the cost of housing has rapidly escalated and the sociocultural image of Bankside changed. Even the Peabody Trust, established as a charity in 1862 to ameliorate the condition of the poor and needy, have looked to take advantage of the rise in property values in Bankside to address their recent financial shortfalls and mismanagement. Several tenants in a housing block behind Tate Modern have been threatened since 2005 with eviction and resettlement (Weaver, 2005). As Davidson and Lees (2005, p. 1184) argue in their work on London's riverside 'renaissance', a large population of gentrifiers introduced into an area through new-build developments can act as 'beachheads' from which the 'tentacles of gentrification' can reach outward into 'adjacent communities'.

Displacement in Lower Parel, however, has been manifest in more coercive forms than a decline in formal housing opportunities for less affluent groups. Gentrification in Lower Parel has been embroiled with intensified efforts by middle-class citizens' groups over the past fifteen years to reclaim Indian cities from the urban poor

(Chatterjee, 2003). As part of heightened fantasies of contemporary global urbanity, greater efforts have been made to eradicate 'slum' settlements in central locations such as Lower Parel through the denial of basic services and various forms of harassment, including mass demolitions of makeshift structures. There has also been a growing intolerance for the proliferation of 'informal' trading. Increasingly street-hawkers and vendors are seen as the cause rather than symptom of post-liberalisation market disorder, with violence directed against them as a way of affirming legitimate and illegitimate property rights (Rajagopal, 2004). One business executive working in an office on former mill-land comments:

> Even the exteriors on the main arteries are getting, or they're looking cleaner. And a lot of the roadside pavement dwellers are beginning to move away, or they've been cleared away, or slum rehabilitation projects have taken them away, and it's a beautiful wide road (interview, 2003).

As Whitehead and More (2007, p. 2433) argue, a process of 'class cleansing' has been undertaken in Mumbai's gentrified areas as part of attempts to produce a 'zone of recreational, commercial and residential excellence'.

These more aggressive forms of gentrification are indicative of some of the political impacts wrought by the restructuring of urban space in London and Mumbai. In Lower Parel, the strong nexus between politicians and private capital has meant that gentrification processes have been characterised by endemic financial irregularities and bribery. There has been no monitoring of mill-land sales following amendments to the 1991 Development Control rules, and no auditing of funds siphoned off from

institutional mechanisms like the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction. Moreover, Mumbai's criminal underworld has been implicated in gentrification processes with several murders of union leaders and mill-owners since 1991 (D'Monte, 2002). Within the context of a degraded civil society, gentrification in Lower Parel has contributed to an increasing 'gutting' and capture of the apparatus of city government by organised mafias, corrupt local officials and a predatory class of real estate speculators (Weinstein, 2008). This has meant formal rights of the urban poor, enshrined in constitutional and legalistic frameworks of the post-colonial Indian state, have increasingly been marginalised – and mediated through violence. Many former mill-workers in Lower Parel waiting for back payments and redundancy money have subsequently become trial 'volunteers' for clinical experiments run by international pharmaceutical companies (Rajan, 2007).

Although the material realities of social injustice have been experienced very differently in Bankside, there has been a similar lack of democratic accountability. Receiving almost £60 million of public funding, it is the Tate's unelected board of trustees, rather than local elected representatives which has set much of the agenda for Bankside's transformation. Their primary emphasis on establishing an internationally-heralded cultural quarter has led to a neglect of many of the social needs of the area's low-income population. One long-term local resident angrily comments:

> I mean we just have to beg for money to improve local amenities here and they still talk about taking amenities away from us like the Borough Community Centre . . . There's all this kind of affluent smart signs, but there is no support

for the local community, there's no way any of these things are ameliorated and if they were people would be a lot happier (interview, 2004).

Recent socio-economic data indicates that Bankside's traditionally high levels of deprivation and social exclusion remain. At the turn of the millennium, Cathedral Ward, encompassing most of Bankside, was still amongst the 7% most deprived wards in England.

Yet, although Lower Parel and Bankside's gentrification has created displacement pressures and accelerated the hollowing out of local systems of municipal government – all set within the context of local deindustrialisation processes – the cultural politics involved have differed. While the 'ruins' of Bankside's industrial modernity have often acted as the direct basis for the creation of new urban aesthetic experiences, Lower Parel's gentrification has entailed an active disavowal of the area's history, vernacular and artefacts (Harris, 2005). As a former mill-worker explained:

Two parallel cultures are coming up [in Lower Parel]. One culture is of the mill workers, they are poor, they have no work, they are unorganised also. The other culture is of the malls, shopping malls, towers, bowling companies and other things (interview, 2002).

Most of Lower Parel's new residential inhabitants have deliberately looked to disassociate themselves from their industrial surroundings and the area's predominantly Marathi-speaking and working-class population. One resident of a new luxury high-rise, for example, declares 'if we blank ourselves to the immediate area outside that then there's nothing to worry about,' insisting on being driven to his fifth-

floor office, even though it is only ten minutes walk away (interview, 2003). Lower Parel's gentrification, and the resulting three-dimensional network of elite residential, commercial, transport and recreational spaces, is indicative of how Mumbai's rich have increasingly attempted to disassociate themselves from what the Bombay-born anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (2000, p. 628) calls the 'heat of public poverty and the dust of dispossession'. The galvanised steel gates (designed by an artist) marking the entrance to the 'public' square of a new 22-storey development at Tabard Square, which opened in 2007 on the site of a former removals depot just to the south of Bankside, hint at how such processes are not exclusive to Mumbai (Figure 2).

These 'sophisticated' spaces of wealth amidst, and sometimes on top of, more marginalised spaces not only demonstrate new forms of power in Mumbai and London but how conceptualisations of the functioning whole of both cities have increasingly been fractured. The jumble of sharply discordant socio-spatial forms created by the gentrification of formerly predominately industrial areas has helped disrupt and dissolve notions of the urban ordering of both cities. In Mumbai, it is no coincidence that the class-based rewriting of urban space through gentrification during the 1990s was accompanied by attempts by the Shiv Sena to re-imagine Mumbai without Muslims, part of what Appadurai (2000, p. 649) describes as a 'bizarre utopia of urban renewal'. Traumatic pogroms in December 1992 and January 1993, which left at least 900 people dead, were – like gentrification – a manifestation and symptom of the corporate sponsorship of criminalised and authoritarian groups, growing socio-

economic polarisation and a widespread dissipation of ideas concerning the relative equality of the city (Sainath, 1994; Masselos, 1995). The rupturing of Lower Parel's social fabric through gentrification processes has been an important part of the emergence of Mumbai as a more malignant city, signalling not just displacement, but systematic dispossession and marginalisation.

Conclusions

In his influential article on gentrification as a global urban strategy, Neil Smith (2002, p. 441) asserts there has been an increasing convergence between 'urban experiences in the larger cities of what used to be called the First and Third Worlds'. The detailed comparison between London and Mumbai undertaken in this paper would appear to support this. In both cities, there has been a direct role for public policy over the last fifteen years in encouraging and stimulating property speculation in central areas once considered marginal – framed in relation to a new political emphasis on the economic landscape and cultural practices of the 'global city'. The accompanying dismantling of planning protections and hollowing-out of municipal government has shown how new forms of state-sanctioned and state-sponsored gentrification have become an important and largely overlooked way of considering the geographies, and histories, of what Brenner and Theodore (2002) call 'actually existing neoliberalism'.

It is necessary, however, to maintain a critical approach to understandings of a *generalised* global strategy of contemporary gentrification. These can lead to the assumption that gentrification has simply been projected out from 'heartland' cities

such as London and adapted and reshaped in cities such as Mumbai (Robinson, 2004). The practical politics of gentrification need to be understood as contingently realised across different global contexts. Although Lower Parel's gentrification has been framed by transnational actors and urban imaginaries, it has also been the product of the whims and wherefores of a powerful nexus of politicians, builders and developers exploiting and profiting from Mumbai's poorly implemented and monitored land-use policies and planning controls.

Moreover, in considering how gentrification has become 'generalised' across cities in *both* the global North and South, it is important to recognise how convergence processes have operated in a two-way direction. Rather than exporting Eurocentric understandings of gentrification, there is a need to learn from the new sharp-edged forms and processes of socio-spatial upgrading in previously 'peripheral' cities such as Mumbai. In this way, some of the more parochial assumptions, practices and language of gentrification research can be 'provincialised' and re-examined (Chakrabarty, 2000). The 'social tectonics' invoked by Butler and Robson (2003) in their study of gentrifiers in London become, in the phrase of Mike Davis (2004, p. 23) , the 'brutal tectonics of neoliberal globalisation' in Mumbai. The 'spectre of displacement' that Freeman (2007) raises in relation to gentrification pressures in New York is reconfigured through the spectral narratives that dominate the 'nervous system' of Mumbai's housing, where more people live in shacks or on pavements than the entire population of Greater London (Appadurai, 2000). As with the colonial construction of European

urban planning or early neoliberal 'experiments' in countries such as Chile, many of the strategies of gentrification currently practiced in cities such as Mumbai may have a 'boomerang' effect on the institutions, apparatuses and techniques of power in the West (Rabinow, 1989; Harvey, 2005).

Recent debates within the gentrification literature about the role of the state in encouraging more 'socially mixed' urban communities can, in particular, learn from Mumbai. From the mid-1990s, the Maharashtrian state government have introduced new slum redevelopment strategies in which property companies have been invited to demolish slums and redevelop land at a higher density. It is assumed that the inflated prices of Mumbai's real estate market can be used to cross-subsidise housing for the original slum-dwellers in new medium-rise apartment blocks (Mukhija, 2003). This strategy has been particularly prominent in the redevelopment of Dharavi, dubbed Asia's largest slum, which is located on the opposite bank of the Mithi River from Mumbai's new financial hub, the Bandra-Kurla complex. For US-based architect Mukesh Mehta, the state government's consultant for this scheme, by mixing people together from different social strata, a process of what he calls 'reverse-gentrification' will occur (quoted in D'Souza, 2007). However, as with similar policies devised in the UK and US, concerns have been raised that people from higher socio-economic groups will eventually displace the original residents of these areas, especially as there has been a failure to acknowledge the integral and highly dynamic social, economic and political practices in which previous 'slum' housing environments were produced

(Sharma, 2000). There are also important parallels between the role of NGOs such as SPARC in slum upgradation projects such as Dharavi and notions of 'managing' gentrification (Whitehead and More, 2007).

The proposed redevelopment of Dharavi will set an important precedent for cities across India and the global 'South' (Patel and Arputham, 2008). Yet Mumbai has not been included so far in discussions of gentrification and 'social mix'. Without recognising these wider contexts for the role of public policy in gentrification, there remains a danger that in accounting for the global spread of gentrification, certain cities are isolated into separate analytical categories or located on older developmental continuums. Gillian Tindall (1979, p. 671), for example, argued in 1979 that:

> London too once had its beggars, its abandoned waifs, its lepers, its cholera. In cities like Bombay we are, in one sense, simply seeing a society at an earlier stage of development than our own.

By emphasising how similar social, economic and institutional issues and networks impact contemporary cities across the world, regardless of levels of national economic development, gentrification research has an important role to play in creating new more cosmopolitan frameworks for urban studies (Robinson, 2006). This in turn allows a more diverse basis for imagining equitable urban futures. Mumbai, for instance, offers significant sources of learning in terms of new forms of community resistance to predatory processes of gentrification. The Collective Research Initiatives Trust (CRIT) has developed financial models, policy advice and support services that allow

communities – rather than builders – to design and construct integrated home and work units, and channel any profits into the physical and legal maintenance of their housing (see also, Nijman, 2008). These new community planning interventions, developed alongside local housing rights movements and associations of the urban poor, counter fatalistic accounts of the sweep of gentrification across the globe. Moreover, they offer ways of establishing new anti-gentrification collectives and alliances that can begin the vital task of challenging and reconstituting the role of public policy in gentrification.

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[1] In 1995 Bombay's name was officially changed to Mumbai. This paper will mainly use 'Mumbai', although 'Bombay' will be used to refer to the city in earlier periods. See Hansen (2001) on the politics involved in this renaming.

[2] This paper draws on a multi-method research project that investigated the creation of art districts in contemporary London and Mumbai. It involved interviews with property developers, planners, mill-owners and estate agents, as well as community leaders, trade unionists and residents. Interviews were undertaken in an interviewee's office, corporate meeting room, studio or place of residence, or in a café. They were all undertaken in English, the *lingua franca* for professional groups in Mumbai, and where permission was given, recorded. Information was also collected from a number of different secondary sources, including newspaper and planning archives and demographic and socio-economic surveys. This was used to verify and cross-check statements in the interview material, provide historical and contextual background information and an overview of London and Mumbai's recent restructuring. Another important element to the research was the regular use of a field-diary to record observations, impressions and informal conversations on visiting case-study areas.