ASIAN CITIES

Siddhartha Sen

Colonizing, Decolonizing, and Globalizing Kolkata

From a Colonial to a Post-Marxist City

Amsterdam University Press

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Cover illustration: Metro movie theatre. The architect for the building, which opened in 1934, was Thomas W. Lamb.
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To my late father, Subhendu Bikas Sen, and my late mother, Anjana Sen, who made my journey from the 'coolie town' of Haora to the United States possible.

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Acknowledgements

The idea for this book emerged from an article, 'Between Dominance, Dependence, Negotiation, and Compromise: European Architecture and Urban Planning Practices in Colonial India', that I published in the *Journal of Planning History* in 2010. However, this book is very different and much richer than that article. As the title of the book suggests, not only did I focus on one city, but I extended the period of coverage to post-colonial and global epochs of urbanization. Some of the primary data for this book go back to the fieldwork for my dissertation in 1988. That fieldwork was supported by a Graduate College Dissertation Grant, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Human Settlement Management Institute, New Delhi; and International Development Research Centre, New Delhi. My fieldtrips to India in 1992 and 1994 were supported by the Institute for Policy Studies at Johns Hopkins University. I am grateful to L.M. Salamon, who is still with the University, and Helmut K. Anheier, who is now the president of the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, Germany, for granting me permission to squeeze in time for my own research while I was a field associate for the Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project. The fieldtrips in 1996, 1999, and 2003 were self-financed, for which I thank my immediate and extended family.

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A Note to Readers

For place names and other proper nouns the book uses the British name in the first instance followed by the current Indian or Bengali name, and thereafter refers to them by the current Indian or Bengali name.

1 Overture

Introduction

Over some three centuries, various actors – including Europeans, Americans, Indians, and East Asians – have tried to shape the urban fabric of Kolkata, formerly Calcutta, using architecture, urban design measures, infrastructure improvements, and city planning schemes. British efforts to intervene in Kolkata's urban fabric through architecture and urban planning encountered resistance, resulting in compromises and negotiations that yielded a colonial Kolkata neither 'British' nor 'Bengali'.[1] Despite the British desire to build a neo-classical imperial city, ultimately, the natives of Kolkata resisted. These struggles created not one urban colonial Kolkata, but two, the White Town and the Black Town, each hybrid in its own way. At that same time, domination and control through architecture and planning, imposition of planning concepts from Britain, racial segregation, discrimination in the provision of services, and discourses that justified it all significantly shaped colonial urban patterns in Kolkata. The material and discursive legacies of British colonial planning made Kolkata the epitome of urban disaster in the Global South in the late 1950s and affected planning endeavours in the city. The fear of communism led to an unprecedented transfer of an American planning paradigm in the 1960s in the hope that providing better urban infrastructure would curb communism's growth.

Paradoxically, these efforts failed to stop the rise of the Left Front government that dominated the political landscape from 1977 until 2011. The government neglected Kolkata's development until the early 1990s, resorting to Marxist rhetoric for re-inscribing and representing Kolkata's post-colonial urban identity. Ironically, this same communist regime could not remain isolated from the forces of globalization and had to reinvent itself at the periphery of global change. Today, we see the emergence of new urban forms such as Euro-American housing models, shopping malls, gated communities, private townships, information technology (IT) parks, intelligent buildings, and special economic zones (SEZs). This book narrates the amazing story of Kolkata's urban transformation from the late seventeenth

1 Bengalis are natives of Bengal, which includes the State of West Bengal, India, and Bangladesh. The term *state* is defined later in the chapter.

century to the turn of the twenty-first century. Kolkata's story is told in the context of Indian colonial, post-colonial, and global urbanism.

In the eyes of Westerners, Kolkata has long been associated with teeming millions, poverty, squalor, and filth. Such an image has often influenced planning endeavours in the city. In general, the British deemed it an unhealthy place to live. Within a few weeks after the founding of Kolkata in 1690, the city acquired a fearsome reputation for its unhealthy environment that persisted for the next three centuries (Murphey 1964). The first British governor of Bengal, Lord Robert Clive, called Kolkata 'the most wicked place in the universe' (Robert Clive as cited in Thomas 1997: 3) as early as the 1770s. Because of such concerns, early planning efforts in the city were restricted to improving the quality of life of the British colonizers.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the English Nobel laureate poet and novelist Rudyard Kipling called Kolkata 'The City of Dreadful Night' (Kipling [1899] 1907: 185) – a label that remained with the city for a long time in Western minds. Describing the smell of Kolkata, he wrote that 'Calcutta is above pretense' in hiding its stench. According to him, the air 'is faint, it is sickly, and it is indescribable [...] and there is no escape from it (Kipling [1899]1907: 187). He continued: 'Calcutta is a fearsome place for a man not educated up to it' (Kipling [1899]1907: 190). As we shall see, such discourse justified the British obsession with controlling the native parts of the city and making it healthy for themselves.

The stereotypical image of Kolkata as a filthy, poverty-stricken city with millions of beggars, slums, and urban decay continued in the nineteenth and twentieth century in Western imagination and affected planning interventions. Well-known French anthropologist Lévi-Strauss furthered this image in his book, *Tristes Tropiques*, by characterizing the city as one of '[f]ilth, chaos, promiscuity, congestion, ruins, huts, mud, dirt, dung, urine, pus, humours, secretions and running sores' (Lévi-Struass [1973] 1955 : 135). Even the Nobel laureate novelist V.S. Naipaul, a Trinidadian of Indian origin, declared 'Calcutta, even to Indians, was a word of terror, conveying crowds, cholera, and corruption' (Naipaul [1964] 1966): 264). For Geoffrey Moorhouse, an English journalist and author who visited Kolkata in the 1969 and 1970, 'nowhere is there beggary in the scale of Calcutta's' (1971: 79). For him, Kolkata's bitter taste had to be washed out 'with a gin and tonic or a Pepsi' and he recalled it 'thereafter only as an emblem of experience to show' that one knows 'the worst that Life has to offer' (Moorhouse 1971: 6).

The same is true for Western films made about Kolkata. The acclaimed French filmmaker Louis Malle's 1968 documentary film *Calcutta* showed

repulsive images of the city such as pigs playing alongside *bustee*[2] children, dying destitutes at Mother Teresa's Nirmal Hriday, public transport packed with people like sardines in a tin, and destitute cripples and lepers in the streets. Such representations of Kolkata spurred Western planning interests in the city in the late 1950s as it became the epitome of urban disaster in the Global South. But the Western image of Kolkata did not improve. Günter Grass, the German Nobel laureate poet, author, sculptor, and artist, who visited the city in 1975 and 1986-1987, was equally condescending about the city in his book *Show Your Tongue*. For Grass, 'after three months Calcutta begins to gnaw' and his 'eyes have grown tired and dry from all the openly spread-out misery' ([1988]1989: 47). Western films on Kolkata continued to portray squalor and poverty. Roland Joffé's 1992 film *City of Joy* is a classic example in which we see tuberculosis-affected rickshaw pullers, lepers, ruthless slumlords, and abject poverty. Dominique Lapierre originally based the novel (Lapierre 1985) on the *Pilkhana bustee* in Howrah, or Haora as it known in Bengali. The film adaptation changed the scene to a Kolkata *bustee* and made the city an icon of slum to the Western world. As aptly summarized by Hutnyk in his book *The Rumour of Calcutta* (1996), Western representation of Kolkata is that of 'an overcrowded place of poverty and despair, of desperation and decline' (Hutnyk 1996: vii) and the rumour of Calcutta travels all over the world. Yet popular Western notions of this incredible city are scant, wrong, contemptuous, ideological, vicious, and shitty. There is little good said about the place, and what is said is often extreme: Calcutta, crowded and stinking, brutal and dark, black hole and slum. (Hutnyk 1996: vii)

Even in the new millennium, Mike Davis's 2006 book *Planet of Slums* identifies Kolkata as a metonym for underdevelopment. As this book illustrates, such an image and discourse deterred Kolkata's effort to integrate into the global economy.

Scope of the Book

The role of discourse and the Western conception of the city in influencing urban planning is only one aspect of this book, which is more ambitious

2 The word *bustee* is a distortion of the Bengali word *basati*, which means a habitation, residence, or colony. *Bustee*s are the predominant type of housing for the urban poor in Kolkata. These are legal 'slums' and should be differentiated from illegal squatter settlements along canals and railroad tracks, under bridges, or on pavements. Unlike squatters, *bustee* dwellers have housing rights and cannot be evicted.

in scope. Included is the history of architecture, urban design, and urban planning in Kolkata. Following King (1990a), 'urbanism' is broadly defined as the symbiotic relationship between the material aspects of the cities, their built environment, architectural form, and the social, economic, and cultural systems in which they exist. Clearly, such a definition positions architecture, urban design, and urban planning in the city's political economy and social milieu. As the title suggests, the book analyses Kolkata's urbanism from colonial times to the beginning of the twenty-first century. It presents an interpretive history of the transformation of a colonial city into a Marxist one and its attempt to become a global city. The book provides a new interpretation of Kolkata's spatial and architectural history by positioning it in its political economy and social milieu. It attempts to unravel the complexities of the political struggles of the post-colonial period, including globalization and the impact on the planning of space and built environment.

This book compares and contrasts Kolkata's urbanism with the rest of India to illustrate why Kolkata was unique and illustrates several distinctive features of the city. Kolkata was a testing ground for British colonial urbanism and as such was home to a number of firsts. By the turn of the nineteenth century, Kolkata became the first British possession where architecture was employed as a symbol of power. From Kolkata this practice spread throughout India. Kolkata also was the first city in which the British altered the physical form of a city to impose social and political control. The dominant colonial planning paradigm of imposing social and political control on the native population to create a healthier city for the British was rooted in Kolkata. Discourse surrounding such planning first appeared here. It was the first city where European ideas of townscaping were imposed by the British on a large scale as they attempted to transform the city into a symbol of power and a stage for propagation of their empire in India. At the zenith of colonialism, from the mid-1850s to the early 1900s, Kolkata became the first city in which the British built a unified and coherent centre of power and knowledge employing architectural symbolism and townscaping. The city was also unique because it adhered to neo-classical architecture, while other styles that were deemed appropriate for representing the empire had been tried elsewhere since the 1860s. The book explores why the discourse on the inferiority of indigenous architecture that emerged in the 1870s was not as pronounced in Kolkata.

As we shall see, Kolkata's post-colonial urbanism was even more unique than its colonial saga. Unlike the rest of India, which had adopted the

Chandigarh style of modernism,[3] the comprehensive planning that was transferred by Americans became the dominant paradigm for Kolkata's post-colonial urbanism. In no other Indian city was planning more influenced by political economy than it was in Kolkata. Consequently, very little of the post-colonial architecture that appeared in newly independent India can be found in Kolkata. It had few skyscrapers to represent it as a symbol of independence. New towns planned and constructed around Kolkata in the early post-independence period were mundane compared to Chandigarh's grandeur. Even lesser new towns such as Bhubaneswar and Gandhinagar that were planned later in the mid-1960s were more elegant. Nowhere else in India do we see the desire to curb communism dictate planning as it did in Kolkata. Yet, Kolkata became a Marxist city – the first and perhaps the last of its kind in India. The leading party in the Left Front government, Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPI(M), penetrated Kolkata's urban fabric in an unprecedented manner. The infiltration was so deep that the local state[4] and the party became synonymous, leaving no political space for the grassroots planning seen in other parts of urban India. Not surprisingly, politics influenced efforts to introduce municipal reforms in the city. The local state's leftist agenda during the first twenty years of its regime led to a contained culture of domestic architectural design that surpassed any other Indian city.

Kolkata's attempt to globalize took a different trajectory. Market-driven built forms representing images of globalization and the emergence of new planning paradigms associated with globalization appeared later in Kolkata. This course can be attributed to the Left Front's initial resistance to liberalization and globalization, tendency to protect labour, and scepticism about capital. The regime resorted to leftist rhetoric, *michils* (processions), meetings, *gheraos*,[5] and trade unionism to carve out an unparalleled city in India, one in which labour came before capital. Politics continued to play a key role in the city's development as the CPI(M)'s political agenda of rural land reform resulted in the neglect of Kolkata. Kolkata is unique in that its venture into the global economy is primarily taking place through real estate investments. After its dismal failure to attract capital through other types of investments, the Left Front turned its energy to develop the city

3 The style is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

4 The term is defined later in the chapter.

5 The word *gherao* means encirclement. This is a technique that trade unions used to meet their demands by encircling a political leader, industrialist, or senior manager. Subodh Banerjee, the Labour Minister of the United Front Government, introduced the technique in 1969.

through real estate. It acted as an interventionist local state through various measures to promote the real estate industry. The Trinamool Congress that came to power in 2011 has continued the same policy, with minor variations. Despite all the attempts made by the Left Front and subsequently the Trinamool Congress, Kolkata will never become a global or world city, as delineated in the literature (Friedmann 1986; Sassen [1991]2013; Knox and Taylor 1995).[6] Kolkata's globalization is more easily understood from Ong's (2011) treatise on the styles or 'art' of being global.[7]

Analytical Framework

To understand the central argument of the book, a discussion on the propositions of the treatises and theories employed in the analytical framework is necessary. To explain the imposition of architecture and urban planning as instruments of domination, subjugation, and control, and the discourses that accompanied such practices in the colonial period, the book draws on material from post-structuralism and theories of dependent urbanism. In particular, the author relied upon Foucault's treatise on the nature and dynamics of discourse, power, knowledge, and architecture; Edward Said's Orientalism; and theories and studies of dependent urbanism (see Wallerstein 1974,1979; Amin 1976; Foucault [1969] 1972; [1975] 1979; Frank 1979; King 1976, 1980a, 1980b, 1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1992; Castells 1977; Said 1978; Racevskis 1983; Mitchell 1988; Rabinow 1989; Wright 1991; AlSayyad 1992; Celik 1997).

Foucault's proposition that architecture has always been used to exercise domination, control, power, and authority can be employed to understand British architecture in Kolkata. For Foucault, 'Antiquity had been a civilization of spectacle. To render accessible to a multitude of men the inspection of a small number of objects: this was the problem to which the architecture of temples, theatres, and circuses responded' (Foucault [1969] 1972: 216). The spectacle of such architecture was aimed at inspiring multitudes of people by controlling them through spectacular events. In the confines of such architecture, the citizenry observed and experienced the power of the authoritarian state. Drawing from this proposition, the book argues that the logic of most British architecture since the late eighteenth century was that of spectacle; the British resorted to monumental architecture in Kolkata

6 The definition of such cities is discussed in Chapter 6.

7 The concept is explained in Chapter 6.

to impress upon Indians the nature of British power. Foucault's treatise on modern architecture is also employed for an analytical inspiration. According to him, this is architecture of surveillance, which enables a few to observe and control a multitude of individuals. Following Foucault's treatise, the book argues surveillance played an important role in guiding British city planning in Kolkata.

Foucault has also argued that it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together. Discourse can be defined as 'the abstraction of any written or oral process of communication through which meaning is transmitted' (Racevskis 1983: 16). Discourse, on particular subjects, establishes knowledge and imposes truth in intricate and deceitful ways. Therefore, this functioning of discourse is inevitably political. Hence, the constitution of knowledge is inseparable from the exercise of power. Drawing from Foucault's notion of discourse, Edward Said developed the notion of Orientalism in his seminal book *Orientalism* (1978).The thesis presented in the book is also regarded as the emergence of post-colonial theory (Moore-Gilbert 1997). In Said's original thesis, the wide body of knowledge developed by various colonial powers about the Orient can be called 'Orientalism' (1978). According to Said, 'Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient, dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, by teaching it, settling it, and ruling over it' (Said 1978: 3). Accordingly, institutionalized discourse established knowledge and imposed truth in intricate and often deceitful ways for 'dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient' (Said 1978: 3). Drawing from these propositions, we see how the discourse legitimized the imposition of certain types of architecture.

Post-colonial theory refers to the set of analytical approaches or theories that criticize the material and discursive legacies of colonialism still apparent in the world today (McEwan 2009). As pointed out by Blunt and McEwan, 'postcolonial approaches are committed to critique, expose, deconstruct, counter and (in some claims) to transcend the cultural and broader ideological legacies and presences of imperialism' (2002: 13). Post-colonial studies were developed to address the cultural production of those societies affected by colonialism (Ashcroft 2001). It was not conceived as a grand theory but as a methodology for analysing strategies by which colonial societies have engaged in imperial discourse. It is also used to study the ways in which many of those strategies are shared by colonized societies and are re-emerging under different political and cultural circumstances (Ashcroft 2001). Post-colonial theory is helpful in examining the discourses and institutions as well as the resistance and negotiations that shaped colonial urbanism.

The notion of constructing 'otherness' and 'racial inferiority' (see Bhabha 1994; Chatterjee 1993, 2012) in post-colonial theory helps us understand how colonial discourse used this concept to vilify Indian architecture, impose surveillance over the indigenous population, and justify the lack of planning in the indigenous parts of Kolkata. For Bhabha (1994), an important feature of colonial discourse is its ideological construction of the 'otherness' (i.e., the colonized) that was entirely knowable and visible. As he points out,

> [t]he objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction. [...] [C]olonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible (Bhabha 1994: 70-71).

This notion of constructing the otherness is also emphasized by other post-colonial theorists. For example, Chatterjee points out that the premise of the colonial state's power was 'a rule of colonial difference, namely, the preservation of the alienness of the ruling group' (1993: 10). He maintains that this rule of colonial differences also constituted the representation of the 'other' (i.e., the colonized) as incorrigibly inferior and radically different (Chatterjee 1993). The civilizing mission of the British helps us understand why they prescribed certain types of architecture and planning for Indians. As pointed out by Chatterjee, '[t]he imperial power must then take on the responsibility of educating, disciplining, and training the colony in order to bring it up to the norm. [...] The colony must either be disciplined by force or educated ("civilized") by culture' (Chatterjee 2011: 251).

Said himself revised his treatise on Orientalism in *Culture and Imperialism*, in which he recognizes the response to Western domination that eventually culminated in the great movement of decolonization in former colonies (1993). The book builds on this notion of resistance and particularly the works of post-colonial theorists such as Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Partha Chatterjee to provide these alternate explanations about the resistance and negotiations in architecture and planning during the colonial period (see Guha 1981; Chatterjee 1982, 1986, 1988, 1993, 1995, 2010, 2012; Spivak 1985a, 1985b, 1985c, 1988; Guha and Spivak 1988; Bhabha 1994). Post-colonial scholars such as Spivak and Bhabha enhanced the notion of resistance by arguing that the colonial experience was far from unidirectional and had a transformative effect on both the colonized and colonizer (Bhabha 1994; Moore-Gilbert 1997). Drawing from these treatises and theories, the book shows instances where the colonizers were unable to impose their own models

of planning due to resistance from the indigenous population in Kolkata. These studies also provide the analytical inspiration to shed light on why the Bengali elite in Kolkata were able to negotiate a hybrid form of architecture, or why the British adopted this form, despite their desire to impose English models.

Pioneers such as Manuel Castells (1977) and Anthony King (1976) initiated the first steps on theories of dependent urbanism. Castells's (1977) work was an empirical and theoretical exploration of dependent urban patterns. It argued that city growth and patterns, while differing in form and content in various parts of the developing world, must be understood as an expression of imperialist/neo-imperialist social dynamic at this level. King (1976) added a new dimension by introducing the role of culture and power into dependent urbanization. The relationship between dominance and dependence was used as a major explanatory variable in illustrating how colonizers imposed certain types of planning. His work also examines imperialism and colonialism in the development of the world economy and the role of cities within this economy (King 1989, 1990b). King also introduced another important treatise, motivation for colonization and its effect on colonial urban patterns (King 1990b). Spanish and Portuguese colonization included cultural and religious motives such as Hispanicization and Christianization, which led to the construction of large numbers of churches and monasteries. In contrast, the Dutch, British, and French rationales were economic and militaristic, as evidenced by the construction of large numbers of administrative buildings. Whether the settlement was seen as temporary or permanent also had an effect on urban patterns. Whenever it was seen as permanent, a premeditated planned city was the result. Hence, the city was the major instrument of colonization. In some cases, the indigenous city was eliminated; in others it was incorporated in the plan. However, both of these instances represented a total and symbolic domination by the colonizers. In contrast, if trade was the primary motive a variety of physical forms may have resulted, depending on the activities of other powers in the region, which could range from a mere landing stage and warehouse to a 'factory'[8] or a 'port and fort.'

Drawing from the above treatises, the book argues that types of European settlements and their patterns around Kolkata primarily depended on the changing nature of the international political economy and internal political climate. The subsequent wealth and power of Europeans in and around Kolkata, because of these changes, contributed to the rise and decline of European enclaves. Motives for colonization significantly shaped urban patterns: In Kolkata, the colonial economic and political landscape

8 This type of settlement is described in Chapter 2.

dictated the building activities of Europeans, as well as wealthy Indians. These theories also shed light on how domination and control, imposition of planning concepts from the core, racial segregation, and discrimination in the provision of services all shaped Kolkata's colonial urban patterns.

The overall analytical inspiration for the post-colonial period is also drawn from post-colonial theory and post-colonial studies of urbanism. The propositions of post-colonial theory (McEwan 2009; Ong 2011) are useful in examining how the material and discursive legacies of British colonial planning made Kolkata the epitome of urban disaster in the Global South in the late 1950s, thereby affecting planning endeavours in the city. Such approaches or theories criticize the material and discursive legacies of colonialism that are still apparent in the world today and shape the geopolitical relations between the North and South. These approaches examine the representations of the South through a critical analysis of knowledge and power. They scrutinize relationships of power that determine who creates knowledge about the 'other places' (i.e., the South) and the consequences of this knowledge in the form of developmentalism (McEwan 2009). They also seek to demonstrate how the language of colonialism still shapes Western ideas about other parts of the world. These theories also help us understand how Western planning and architecture were exported to Kolkata after Independence. Anthony King's (1976) concept of cultural colonization is also useful in examining such planning and architecture. King argued that cultural independence lagged behind the political and economic autonomy that comes with independence. The new elites continued to be influenced by colonial values, having been linked to colonial social, political, and cultural models for the entire period of colonization. The information flow continued, as did the exchange of people.

Post-colonial studies address issues such as the challenges of developing post-colonial nationalist identities and strategies in the transformation of colonial power (Ashcroft 2001; McEwan 2009). They also examine the assertion made by post-colonial societies to redress the impact of European imperialism and resistance and transformation taking place in such societies to re-inscribe and represent post-colonial cultural identity (Ashcroft 2001). According to Loomba, it is useful to think of post-colonialism as 'the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism' (1998: 12). To Jane Jacobs, post-colonialism can be 'conceptualized as an historically dispersed set of formations which negotiate the ideological, social, and material structures established under colonialism' (1996: 25). As pointed out by Ashcroft, 'the striking thing about colonial experience is that after colonization post-colonial societies *did* very often develop in ways which sometimes

revealed a remarkable capacity for change and adaptation' (2001: 2). We must, however, remember that post-coloniality 'is articulated alongside other economic, social, cultural and historical factors, and therefore, in practice works quite differently in various parts of the world' (Loomba 1998: 19). Hence, each post-colonial occasion needs to be located and analysed for its specificity (Blunt and McEwan 2002). Such propositions are most instructive in examining the decolonization of Kolkata's colonial spaces and lack of emergence of grandiose architectural and spatial formations in the immediate post-colonial period, compared to the rest of India.

Chatterjee's (2004, 2010, 2011) concept of 'political society' is also useful in shedding light on Kolkata's post-colonial and global urbanism and is expanded upon in chapters 4 and 5. Originally developed to provide an account of the alternative history of suppressed groups (see, for example, Guha 1981; Guha and Spivak 1988), one approach to study globalization from a post-colonial perspective is to focus on subaltern groups (see, for example, Chatterjee 2004; Appadurai 2000, 2001; Ong 2011). Following this path, the story of Kolkata would have been limited to *bustees*. To avoid this theoretical orthodoxy, the book draws from a variety of urban theories to understand globalization in Kolkata. In particular, the Marxist political economy of Lefebvre's ([1970] 2003) and Harvey's (1981) 'secondary circuit of capital' provides an explanation of the importance of real estate in Kolkata's effort to globalize. Lefebvre ([1970] 2003), the pioneer in analysis of built environment from this perspective, asserts that when principal circuits of capital consisting of industrial production slow down, capital is invested in a second circuit consisting of real estate. Real estate speculation can become almost the exclusive source of capital formation and surplus value generated in these cases. In such a scenario, overall surplus realized in the primary circuit decreases, while surplus value from construction and speculation increases. Building upon Lefebvre's work, Harvey (1981) developed a three-circuit model for capital accumulation over time. For him, the primary circuit consists of the productive process involving wage and labour to produce profit. The secondary circuit consists of investments in the built environment for producing fixed assets and consumption goods. The tertiary circuit consists of investments in science and technology and other social expenditures for the reproduction of labour power. Harvey emphasizes the importance of an interventionist state to entice capital investment in the secondary circuit. Others such as Gottdiener ([1985]1994)) also emphasize the role of an interventionist state and a freely functional capitalist money market for the flow of capital to the secondary circuit. For Smith (2002), gentrification has now become a global strategy for attracting

capital. Such an urban strategy involves city and local governments weaving together a nexus of global financial markets – with large and medium-sized real estate developers, local merchants, property agents, and brand-name retailers – in which real estate development becomes the centrepiece of the city's productive economy.

In explaining Kolkata's changing spatial structure and the emergence of new spatial and architectural forms, the book draws from Graham and Marvin's (2001) concept of 'splintering urbanism'. They define splintering urbanism as the dialectical set of processes that surround the parallel unbundling of infrastructure networks and fragmentation of urban space. In the case of cities of the Global South, such splintering occurs because of the proliferation of 'glocally' oriented enclaves that are self-contained but surrounded by spaces that are socially and economically disconnected with them. The divisions between such communities and the surrounding ones are enforced through walls, ramparts, fences, and security forces that maintain the sanctity and security of such enclaves. These communities splinter themselves from the poor local infrastructure by developing their own private infrastructure at a higher cost.

Another treatise relevant to our understanding of the proliferation of Kolkata's global spaces is what Falzon (2004) terms the 'politics of exclusion'. Such politics tends to purge encroachment of public spaces by the urban poor including the homeless, slum dwellers, beggars, urchins, and hawkers, as this is offensive to the elite's sense of a safe and healthy environment. The elite's aspiration to a global middle-class lifestyle calls for a well-regulated healthy environment, which is under a constant threat because of these encroachments. Gated communities are a private means for the wealthy to fulfil their dreams of ideal lifestyles (Falzon 2004). In a similar vein, Fernandes's (2004) analysis of the emergence of new global spaces as a product of socio-spatial boundaries that resist the encroachment of the poor and aspire to create a new urban aesthetics of class purity is useful in understanding the logic of global space in Kolkata.

Voyce's (2007) proposition that Indian shopping malls are social fortresses that divide middle-class consumers from the poor who cannot participate in this purified quasi-public space is also employed to understand Kolkata's shopping malls. The book also examines malls from the post-colonial theoretical perspective which sees them as hybrid sites where the consumers from the Global South, especially young people, attempt to transform their identities through a Western spectacle (Varman and Belk 2012). Drawing from Fanon (1952, 1967) and Bhabha's (1994) notion of post-colonial identities, Varman and Belk (2012) argue that the use of these spaces represents the

consumer's quest for being Western, modern, and developed. They postulate that exposure to the ex-colonial powers of the West through a global culture creates a desire to mask their identities and copy the West. Malls are spaces where the youth from the Global South masquerade in order to transcend their realities by imitating and competing with the West, overcoming the stigma of a colonial past and an impoverished present. These are also hybrid spaces where the new middle classes and elite compete with the West and offer resistance and at the same time are transformed (Varman and Belk 2012).

Chatterjee's (2004) proposition of how a post-industrial city became globally available in the 1990s is useful in explaining the proliferation of spaces of global culture and new urban planning paradigms in Kolkata. According to Chatterjee, the post-industrial city is driven by finance and producer services and characterized by a central business district, forming the node for an inter-metropolitan and global network of information processing. Advanced transportation, telecommunication facilities, and office space are an integral part of the central business district of such cities. The rest of the city is characterized by segregated and exclusive spaces for the technical and managerial elites. Another important feature of the post-industrial city is the transformation of the city in such ways that the elite are comfortable and secure in their new quarters. Orderliness, cleanliness, and safety are important factors that must be addressed. Additionally, the reconstitution of space befitting the model of a post-industrial city must occur through the eviction of undesirable elements and elimination of slums coupled with the proliferation of exclusive shopping malls and segregated housing complexes. As the book illustrates, all these treatises apply to Kolkata's global spatial aspirations.

The Concept of the State in India

It is important to distinguish the various uses of the term 'state' employed in the book. Prior to the 1970s the Marxist literature viewed the capitalist state as a monolithic entity (among others, see Miliband 1969; Poulantzas 1973), ignoring the variations in the actions and policies of local authorities and institutions. The capitalist state was seen as a central institution which acted in the long-term interests of capitalism or the dominant classes. The industrial, economic, and social restructuring that took place in the advanced capitalist nations in the 1970s developed the distinction between the central state and the local state (Cockburn 1977; Duncan and Goodwin 1982; Krätke and Schmoll 1991; Kirby 1993). Two distinct concepts of the

local state can be gleaned from this literature. In the first, the local state is viewed as an executive body of the central state or as a local branch of an inflexible bureaucracy of the central state. In the second usage, the local state is seen as a counterforce to the central state. In this concept, the actions and policies of the local authorities may be autonomous from those taking place at the national level or other local levels. Local politics and political agendas are important in bringing about progressive or regressive social changes at the local level.

Regime theorists further contributed to development of the concept of local state. Developed in the context of the United States, the theory posits that urban regimes consist of private and public interests that join forces to initiate development or address issues to arrest disinvestment in cities. Such a theory allows for autonomous action of the local regime or local state (Hackworth 2007). The theory also develops a typology of regimes that, based on policy agendas, can vary from regressive to progressive (Reese and Rosenfeld 2002). Another variation of the theory links local action to national policy and demonstrates how alliances at the local level are constrained by the capitalist urban system in the United States by drawing from Marxist theory (Lauria 1997).

For the purpose of this book, we need to make a distinction between the local and the central state. Indian local states can range from a city's administrative, municipal, and urban development institutions to the administrative apparatus of political and territorial units in independent India known as States and Union Territories. British India had Princely States that were nominally sovereign. Local rulers governed them, but they were in subsidiary alliance with the British Raj and were indirectly governed by it. The Indian central state is the set of central institutions in New Delhi that deal with the country's overall social and developmental policies. There was also a colonial state that consisted of the entire administrative apparatus of the British Empire. Whenever capitalized, the term 'state' refers to the political and territorial units of independent India or the Princely States of British India. Otherwise it refers to the concept of the state discussed above.

Socialism, Communism, and Marxism

Since the book critiques a Marxist regime by drawing from leftist-oriented theories of culture and politics, including post-colonial theory and Marxist urban theory, it is important to explain that this is not a paradox. As pointed out by Jameson (1996), there is a need to distinguish between Marxism as a

mode of thought and analysis and socialism/communism as representing a political and societal aim and vision. Modern socialism arose mainly from Marxist thought of the nineteenth century and in ideal form consisted of creating a society where the means of production were socialized through expropriation of private owners of the means of production (Hoppe [1989]2007). Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels believed that socialism would emerge as a historical necessity due to inherent contradictions that would make the capitalist system obsolete and unsustainable. Although Marx himself never made a clear distinction between 'socialism' and 'communism', the first was a lower stage of the second in Marxist-Leninist ideology. Socialism would precede communism. Such a concept came into existence after the Russian revolution (Nove 1986). Communism consisted of a utopian society of the future in which everyone shared the means of production according to their needs (Kornai 1992). A Marxist analysis can be applied to socialist societies. For example, even in the heydays of the Soviet experiment in socialism, many Marxists of Trotskyist persuasion believed that the revolution was betrayed as the Soviet society had deviated from the true principles of socialism. A similar type of analysis was also applied to other countries that claimed to be socialist. The origins of the debate go back to the early 1920s and 1930s when Leon Trotsky, one of the leaders of the Russian revolution, critiqued Soviet socialism using Marxist analysis (Nove 1986). In recent times David Harvey's (Harvey [2005] 2006) analysis of China's entry into the world market is a classic example of using leftist theory in analysing policies of socialist governments. Castells's (1983) analysis of the relationship between the squatters and the state during the elected socialist regime of Salvador Allende in Chile in the 1970s is another example. Roy (2003, 2004, 2011a) has also analysed the Left Front in West Bengal using leftist urban theories.

The modern socialist movement and thought received the maximum impetus from the late 1840s, with Marx and Engels's influential writings that came to be known as Marxism. Marxism was enhanced by the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 that established the first socialist system through armed revolution (Lindemann 1983; Brown 2009). Subsequently, Vladimir Lenin founded the Communist International (Comintern) – an organization to advocate world communism – in the second Congress of Socialists held in Moscow in 1919 (Pons [2012] 2014). Not everyone who attended the Congress adhered to the Russian path to socialism. In fact, the rift between those who believed in a revolutionary path to socialism and evolutionary or democratic socialism grew after the congress (Brown 2009). Subsequently, democratic socialist parties rose in Western Europe, especially in Austria, Germany, Sweden, and England. Such parties even

participated in coalition governments in these countries (Lindemann 1983). 'International communism' referred to a political movement made up of parties with a central organization spread strategically all over the world with a base in the Soviet Union until the Second World War. These parties were closely linked to Moscow even after the war. The notion of international communism also included the formation of states created after the Second World War in Europe and Asia that followed the Soviet political, social, and economic model. The international communist movement declined with the schism between the Soviet Union and China in the early 1960s when China split from the 'socialist camp', claiming the Soviet brand of socialism had deviated from Marxism (Pons [2012] 2014). Even with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, countries such as China, North Korea, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam, and Cuba still have their own brand of socialism.

The father of communism in India was Manabendra Nath Roy. He attended the second World Congress of Comintern in 1920 in Moscow and founded the Communist Party of India (CPI) in Tashkent in 1921. The party did not develop a significant base in India until the 1930s. In the early years of its existence, CPI was involved with the labour movement in India. The party's participation in the Indian Independence movement was limited mainly because Roy believed that the party should oppose the reformist stance of the Indian National Congress (Haithcox 1971; Mallick 1993). The party was involved in mass organization of the unorganized labour and landless peasants in various parts of India between mid-1940 and the early 1950s. This included leading armed rebellions in Telangana in the State of Andhra Pradesh from 1946 to 1951 and the Tebhaga movement in Bengal from 1946 to 1947. The CPI(M) was created in 1964 as a result of a split in the left and centrist factions in the CPI. The left faction consisted of the Maoists and other radicals. The Maoists followed Mao Zedong's writings and thoughts and believed that India should follow the Chinese path to communism of agrarian reform through armed struggle. They eventually established the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) in 1967 (Mallick 1993). The CPI(ML) led a peasant revolt in the Naxalbari area in the State of West Bengal that was suppressed by police force (Shah 1988; Mallick 1993). Those involved in the movement came to be known as Naxalites, and the Naxalite movement not only spread to Kolkata, but all over West Bengal in the late 1960s and early1970s. The CPI(M) that led two United Front coalition governments from 1967 to the 1970s used police force to crush the Naxalite movement. The central government also deployed paramilitary forces against the movement. The two parties were involved in mutual mass

killings in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which created a reign of terror in Kolkata. The Naxalites were virtually eliminated as a political force by the time the CPI(M)-led Left Front government came to power in 1977. Unlike the earlier coalition governments, which consisted of anti-Congress parties and the left, the Left Front consisted only of leftist parties. By this time CPI(M)'s policymaking was dominated by centrists. The party had been transformed from a revolutionary to a reformist one (Mallick 1993).

Data Sources

Data sources for the colonial period are drawn from the literature on European architecture and urban planning in India and archival sources such as travelogues, literature, paintings, and photographs from the colonial period. Data sources for the post-colonial period for cities other than Kolkata are also drawn from the literature and photographs. The literature is critically synthesized to develop an original and alternative interpretation of the evidence. My association with post-colonial Kolkata began with my birth in the city and my childhood and youth in the 'coolie town'[9] of Haora. Since I came to the United States for my graduate education in 1981, I have returned to Kolkata and Haora many times and observed the physical, social, and cultural changes in Kolkata and its immediate environs. Parts of this book draw from these observations. Thus, ethnographical methods are an integral part of the methodology.

The primary data for the book were collected from several field trips, beginning with the data collection for my dissertation in 1988. Since then, I have conducted fieldwork in Kolkata in 1992, 1994, 1996, 1999 and 2003, studying urbanism in the city. The methodology for the fieldwork is drawn from critical ethnography and studies of practice in planning and public policy (among others, see, for example, Van Maanen 1988; Hummel 1991; Flyvbjerg 2001; Forester 1997, 1999, 2009). Such a methodology relies on qualitative interpretative inquiry and seeks to understand the unique and contextual, rather than make generalized propositions. Multiple methods were employed for studying the post-colonial period. These included qualitative interviews with government officials, planners, scholars, official of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), and *bustee* dwellers of Kolkata and Haora. Since the study did

9 The British referred to the native labourers in India as coolies. The transformation of Haora into a 'coolie town' is discussed in Chapter 3.

not follow the logical positivist method of inquiry, a random sample was not employed for the interviews. Instead, people from a variety of organizations and affiliations were selected. Although the interviews were open-ended, a formal questionnaire was developed for each organization. Additional questions arose during the interviews because of their open-ended nature.

The interviews were supplemented with literature collected from the NGOs and CBOs, annual reports of NGOs and CBOs, and government policy documents provided by various organizations in Kolkata and Haora. I also conducted a visual documentation of Kolkata and Haora during my fieldwork. Subsequently, I have supplemented the data gathered during the fieldwork with an extensive literature search that included popular sources such as newspapers as well as materials found on websites of various organizations and real estate developers that are building the gated communities and private townships in Kolkata and its surroundings.

A host of willing students of architecture, architects, contractors, academic colleagues, and amateur photographers provided me with the photographs that were essential for the study. Most of these are physical manifestations of globalization that have appeared since my last field trip in 2003. I benefited from informal conversations conducted in 2013 with two practicing architects – one in Delhi and the other in Kolkata – to gain a better view of the profession in the face of globalization. An email correspondence with another architect/planner in Kolkata increased my understating of the Nabadiganta township. A telephone interview in April 2015 with the president of the Kolkata West International City Buyers Welfare Association enhanced my understanding of that private township.

Organization of the Book

The first half of the book focuses on the colonial urbanism in Kolkata and the second on post-colonial urbanism and globalization. The chapters are organized according to major themes in Kolkata's urbanism. Chapter 2 presents the major junctures in Kolkata's early imperial urbanism. Chapter 3 denotes a major theme in the planning and architectural history of Kolkata, namely the consolidation and decline of British power and the subsequent planning and architectural efforts that accompanied it. Chapter 4 marks a major epoch in Kolkata's architectural and planning history, namely, its total deviance from urban India. Chapter 5 defines the final epoch in Kolkata's spatial and architectural history – its effort to globalize. Chapter 6 provides concluding remarks for the study.