

Resourceful Cities

Berlin (Germany), 29-31 August 2013

Gentrification in the mill land areas of Mumbai City: A case study

Dwiparna Chatterjee

Paper presented at the International RC 21 Conference 2013

Session: 13. Living with gentrification.

Department of Humanities and Social Science

Indian Institute of Technology Bombay

Powai, Mumbai

dwiparna@iitb.ac.in

© the author(s)

Not to be quoted without permission

Gentrification in the mill land areas of Mumbai City: A case study

Abstract

The process of gentrification started after the closure of the textile mills in Mumbai. This paper tries to bring out the process of gentrification that is going on in Mumbai with the help of a case study. The study aims to bring out the uniqueness in the process occurring here and its difference from the West. It highlights the internal conflict, contestation and the daily negotiation with everyday life that are occurring in the neighbourhood. The study looks into the formation of gated communities within the neighbourhood and the sense of resentment and anger among the original inhabitants of the *chawls* (houses of the workers) due to the inevitability of their eviction. The stagnation of rent in the *chawls* with Rent control act and its dilapidated condition, the astronomical growth of land values in the neighbourhood after the closure of the mills, allowed the builders to take over the area for redevelopment. The moving in of the upper class outsiders and paying exorbitant rent create certain expectations. This inhibits the bargaining capacity among the inhabitants of the chawl and builders. The study tries to disentangle the complex nexus and tensions between the builders, politicians, upper class residents and chawl owners.

Introduction

The transformation of the city space per se is an important phenomenon in today's world. In spite of its origin in west, we witness city space's shape of transformation and its galloping presence all over the world. The processes of rejuvenation of an underdeveloped city area not only bring structural and functional changes but it also reshuffles the socio cultural structure of those areas. The city not only gets a makeover but it gradually turns into a land of conflict and contestation heading towards spatial inequality. The outcome of the city redevelopment is termed differently by different scholars by adding some positive and negative connotations. Gentrification is one such term coined by urban sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964. The process is not only limited to big cities but it has gradually trickled down to the suburbs and rural areas, thereby making physical alterations in the built up area, rising the property value and finally driving out the poor (Schaffer & Smith, 1986). Much of the studies in gentrification are based on western context where study of gentrification in the third world country like India remained untouched. Thus the study of Mumbai as a site of gentrification become necessary and worth exploring.

The gentrification process in Mumbai has acquired prominent status only after the decline of textile mills which was thought to be its lifeline. The huge area of Parel, Lower Parel, Chinchpokli, Sewri, Dadar, and Elphinston known as *Girangoan* or the land of the mills possessed a historical significance from time immemorial with its mill and indigenous culture. It was considered to be the birth place of the working class and its culture in the city. The huge mill lands with magnificent mill structure, tall chimneys, the sounds of the machines, sirens during change of shifts, the *chawls* of workers, forms a milieu of the mill. However, with the advent of neoliberal policies the process of deindustrialisation has contributed to the closure of the mills one after the other, with the longest textile mill strike during 80s that lasted for two years (Krishnan, 2000; D'Monte, 2002). Once, honoured as the heritage of Bombay, textile mills have fallen into a matter of disgrace. Gradually, the huge abandoned landmass in the central part of the city became a focal point of attraction for the builders and the city built up area started gentrifying from the land of mills to malls and towers. New age of modern constructions began to occupy the old land of mill and within a span of few years what we witness is wholesale deconstruction of the structure or piecemeal renovation, that resulted the industrial land to get transformed into the land of service sectors by bringing up new glass façade offices, high end service sectors, entertainment and new generation creative industries. The continuous speculation of land value and its astronomical growth on one hand, with the Rent control act application on the older *chawls* in the locality, restricting it to a minimum rent bringing in a locational advantage to the original inhabitants a greater bargaining power. Similarly, the newly rich migrant population from all over the world found it easy to settle at the central location, consequently transforming mill lands into the land of transnational elites or 'transnational capitalist classes' (Rofe, 2003) as cited by Harris (2008:2409). Frequent formation of gated communities is producing an invisible wall making the locality a land of contrast. The huge residential towers are juxtaposed to the age old dilapidated chawls in the vicinity that made the built up area into a land of contestation where struggles and negotiations become a way of life. Therefore, as the city built up area transforms it leads to the transformation of socio-cultural political system and structure with reconfiguration of the social space.

Objectives of the paper

This paper is an attempt to bring out the internal conflict and contestations and the daily negotiation with everyday life that occur in the neighbourhood of Sitaram Yadav Marg when gentrification has touched the area. The paper also looks into the process of formation of the

gated community in and around the neighbourhood, formation of the imaginary walls that separates the self from the others, where community living is the main *mantra*. The study also aims to highlight certain uniqueness in the process of gentrification occurring in the city of Mumbai as compared to its experience in Western cities, where the phenomenon has been often understood through the conceptual tool of revanchism. While there is a sense of despair and anger among the original working class residents of the *chawls* due to the inevitability of their eviction from these localities; as outmigration would rob them of their community life and easy access to work, shopping, medical and other facilities. By living here, they enjoy certain situational advantages which give them certain bargaining capacity with the builders. Given the astronomical land values in these neighbourhoods, the upper class outsiders moving in need to pay exorbitant rents or pay huge amounts to buy flats. They therefore have certain expectations and the chawls are an eyesore. In comparison the original inhabitants pay either notional nominal rent or no rent, given the existing rules of the Rent Control Act. Furthermore by claiming ownership to their one room tenements, the residents of these chawls are able to bargain high rates of compensation from builders so as to facilitate their movement into more comfortable housing in the suburbs. The study tries to disentangle the complex nexus and tensions between the builders, politicians, upper class residents and chawl owners.

The paper begins with a brief introduction of city space transformation followed by objectives of the paper. Then it moves gradually towards the study of neighbourhood: the case study, conceptualising gentrification in the context of Mumbai and further move towards chawls in neighbourhood and gentrification and redevelopment of chawls. The paper explores the transformation and its impact on everyday life and finally unpacks the spatial transformation and formal informal practices in the commercial area of the neighbourhood. The paper finally ends with a conclusion.

The Study of Neighbourhood: The Case Study

The small neighbourhood along the Sitaram Yadav Marg located in the G/S ward of Mumbai bears the historical imagination of the past. There was an agglomeration of large and small mills in the area from the time of industrialisation. Large cotton textile mills in this area are Apollo Mills, Bharat Mills, Jupiter Mills, Madhusudan Mills, Mumbai Mills, Podar Processors (Edward), Podar Mills, Sitaram Mills, Bombay Dyeing Mfg Co. Ltd(Lower Parel – Worli Unit), Century Spg & Wvg Mills, Dawn Mills, Gokuldas Morarji Mills No. 2,

Hindustan Spg & Wvg Mills 3 & Process House, Mafatlal Mills Unit Nos. 3, Matulya Mills, Phoenix mill, Piramal Spg & Wvg Mills, Raghuvanshi Mills, Shreeram Mills, Srinivas Mills, Standard Mills No.1 (Prabhadevi) and Victoria Mills. Among these mills the first eight mills were under the ownership of National Textile Corporation and the rest were under Mill Owners Association (Status as of September 2006) (Compiled by Ghag, 2006:74-75). Other than these mills there were some other textile mills also like Mathuradas Mill, Sun Mill and Dhanraj Mill which were supposed to be much older than the above mills. On the western side of the Tulsi Pipe Line presently known as Senapati Bapat Marg, few winding lanes merge to Sitaram Yadav Marg. The neighbourhood along the Sitaram Yadav Marg with old dilapidated half wooden clingy chawls with small shops on the ground floor on both the sides of the road with criss crossing by lanes portray the story of the bygone days. The darkness of the 10/12 square feet room and hundred years old structure at Sitaram Yadav Marg narrates the history of the textile mill workers who are the original inhabitants of this area. From the early morning till late evening the busy and the faineant pedestrians bring life to this place. The informal daily market at one end of the road merges to the Lower Parel Station and N.M Joshi Marg. The other end meets the Senapati Bapat Marg.

Conceptualising gentrification in the context of Mumbai

Gentrification is a burgeoning phenomenon in today's world, where the meaning itself got gentrified time and again with certain positive and negative connotation attached to it. In 1980 Oxford American Dictionary states gentrification "as the movement of middle class families into urban areas causing property values to rise and having the secondary effect of driving out poorer families (Schaffer & Smith, 1986:347)." From then onwards different debates started regarding the causes and consequences of gentrification, how it had taken place in different cities around the world. The term can be explained in various ways. Available literature explains gentrification in three different ways. The first was mentioned by (Ley, 1981, 1996) and others who argue that gentrification happens due to the shift in the industrial structure in the cities from manufacturing to service based industries, there by changing the occupational class structure. Secondly as a result of changes in class composition and occupational structure there is also cultural transformation. The middle class colonises in the core area instead of the suburban area. Therefore it is the newly formed middle class which makes gentrification. Thirdly, Smith (1979, 1987, 1996) as cited by Hamnett (2003) argued that the main force behind gentrification is not the new middle class but the rent gaps. There are three inter related processes that leads to gentrification. First, due to certain global forces it has been observed as "cascading into new territories", secondly, it is a product of cosmopolitan lifestyles practised by certain fractions of "transnational capitalist classes" (Rofe, 2003: 2518) as cited by Harris (2008) and lastly, it is an important part of neoliberalism. (Harris, 2008: 2409). The process of gentrification whether in Europe, in USA or in Australia was sporadic in nature till the neo liberalisation period appeared. Later with the passage of time, it had acquired a wider extent. Therefore, the main characteristics of gentrification exhibited that it is not only evenly distributed across towns and cities but it is also concentrated in small regions and areas of large cities such as London, New York, Paris, Sydney, Toronto, Boston and San Francisco (Hamnett, 2003).

The processes of gentrification have both positive and negative impacts. It tends towards stabilisation of the declining areas by improving the housing, decentralising the poverty from the area increasing the property value and local revenues with further development and ultimately reducing the urban sprawl. It also introduces socio cultural changes in the area by increasing social mixing of people. At the same time the process of gentrification causes large scale displacement of population thereby creating homelessness. This displacement of population is due to increase of price and high demand for housing. Therefore, this process

always receives mixed opinion from the policy makers, researchers, urban sociologists and planners. For some gentrification helps to regain money by revitalisation of areas whereas for others it is a huge social cost incurred in an area in order to rejuvenate, thereby causing large displacement of population and little or no gain for the city (Atkinson, 2004).

Gentrification does not follow any discreet process; it often acts in the combination with many. Therefore whether it is in the form of displacement of population from the inner city due to the process of deindustrialisation, displacement due to racial conflict in places like Harlem, upcoming cafes, bars nightclubs and art galleries in SoHo of New York and formation of new cultural capital erasing the old or movement of people back to the city from the suburbs popularised as 'revanchism' in the Society Hill Philadelphia or in Washington DC (Smith, 1996:52) the various discourses of gentrification occurs in various stages.

When we compare the developing world with developed world it is found that there is always a difference between the first world cities and the third world cities round the world (Deb, 2006). Specifically, in India the contrast is very prominent because India once being a colonial country had the centralised administrative system. Therefore the role of the state is very important here. Moreover a large number of population in India is under the below poverty line and the technological development is low as compared to other countries. All these drawbacks compel government to form different policies for its growth and development. To study the growth and development of Indian cities Marxist approach seems to be relevant as Deb (2006: 347) stated that, "presently cities in India are growing according the logic of capitalist mode of accumulation of surplus. The urban land use is therefore primarily structured by a rent maximising land market and the geographical pattern that develops is of a dense commercial core, a tendency for ever widening peripheral scattering of industries and the appearance of socially segregated residential neighbourhoods". In the Marxist approach the accumulation of capital takes place in the production sphere i.e. industries, gets circulated in the circulation sphere by roads, highways, commerce, banking etc and goes to the reproduction sphere which in this case is housing for the labourers near their working place. Due to profit motive approach of the capitalist there are many sectors where the private investors do not find any interest to interfere. State's intervention at that point of time becomes very important. Any breakdown in the equilibrium among the three spheres can lead to crises. Like any other cities of India, in Mumbai the State often acts as an agent of the capitalist class because it is operating under the capitalist system. At this point I

would like to take up a case study of gentrification happening in the neighbourhood of the mill lands in Mumbai.

Gentrification in the textile mill lands of Mumbai started after the closure of the textile mills and with the formulation of the neo liberal policies. The government and the mill owners formulated certain policies for redevelopment in order to revive the mills and to generate profit from it. But the original motive behind the revival was never philanthropic. With certain vested interest in their mind, the portion of the mills which were not sick was also made to be sick either by selling the machineries from the mills or by excessive retrenchment. The mill owners looked for short term profit and they siphoned off the money to other commercial projects in order to make more profit (D'Monte, 2002; Adarkar, 2006)

The mills started closing one after the other after the great textile mill strike. The mill lands and associated chawls in the neighbourhood went into a blighted condition. This phase was aggravated by change in occupational structure that caused to outmigration of people. As mills went on closing, there was a large scale retrenchment of the workers with minimum compensation. Workers were forced to take retirement with meagre compensation. Those who have taken the retirement in 1993 under the pressure of the mill owners and the active trade union RMMS received a compensation of merely Rs 60,000 to 70,000. But those who have managed to work in the mill till 1996 they have received a compensation of approx 1 lakh 70 thousand rupees or more according to the year of service. But those who were badli workers they did not received anything.

When we glance through the migration pattern of the area, we realize that, during this period many have returned back to their villages. Out of them some returned after a long period of time. It has been noted in the census that in the G/S ward at Chinchpokli Section the population increased till 1981 with a positive decadal growth rate of 4.49 percent in 1961-71 and 17.05 percent in 1971-81 whereas since then it started decreasing continuously with a negative decadal growth rate of -5.98 percent in 1981-91 and -4.02 percent in 1991-2001. Considering the male population, it has increased till 1981 with a positive decadal growth rate of 2.24 percent in 1961-71 and 14.99 percent in 1971-81. But as the total population decreased the male population simultaneously decreased with a negative decadal growth rate of -10.65 percent in 1981-91 and -6.18 percent in 1991-2001. The female population on the other hand rose steadily till 1991 with a positive decadal growth rate of 9.07 percent in 1961-71 and 21.10 percent in 1971-1981. In 1981-91 though the female population increased but the

decadal growth rate declined to 2.60 percent. In 2001 the decadal growth rate became negative -0.568 percent. Related to occupational changes it has been noted that the non working population in 1981 was 56.29 percent. In 1991 it increased to 58.69 percent and in 2001 it became 58.52 percent (District Census Handbook Mumbai, 1981-2001). Therefore the overall situation creates a 'hollow effect' or 'donut effect' (Pendse, Adarkar & Finkelstein, 2011:6) in the area and the entire city space got reshuffled.

Government policies also played fundamental role in gentrification. For example, as per the Mumbai regional plan, a number of textile mills shifted to suburban area. But within the city after the closure of the mills 600 acres of land had been generated. These lands could have been judiciously used by producing a large open space for its citizen, but the land became a matter of higher speculation for the mill owners, builders and government. In 1991 the Development Control Rule 58 was formed. Under this rule the mill owner could develop the land either by demolishing the mill structure or by retaining the mill structure. If the owner demolishes the mill structure he is supposed to hand over 33 percent to B.M.C (Bombay Municipal Corporation), 27 percent to MHADA (Maharashtra Housing Area Development Authority) and 40 percent for the mill owners themselves (D'Monte, 2002). Therefore a very small amount is being left for the owners. Development of only 40 percent of the land became unsuitable to the mill owners. So some of them started restoring the mill structure and started redevelopment in a haphazard manner. Sometimes they rented out or leased out part of the land for different commercial purposes. In a way they could escape from the submission of the land to the BMC (Bombay Municipal Corporation) and MHADA (Maharashtra Housing Area Development Authority). In 2001 the modified D.C Rules came into effect. It allowed the mill owner to demolish the mill structure without any submission of land to the BMC, MHADA. The mill owners started for a planned development. But for Chandavarkar (2005), the new DC rules totally wiped out the public interest and made things absolutely for the interest of the builders. Immediately after the modified DC rule the owner's share at the Victoria Mill at Lower Parel increased from 40 percent to 78 percent. The entire area of the Kamla mill has been transformed into Corporate Offices without leaving anything for open spaces and low cost housing. The Phoenix Mill has been developed into High Street Phoenix Mall with two towers and discotheque leaving no space for low cost housing and open space. For Piramal Mill after the new DC rules the area for the owner increased from 14,200 sq metres to 32,712 sq metres and the area of recreation ground decreased from 11,715 sq metres to 1,533 sq metres. The area for public housing also decreased from 9,585

sq metres to 1,255 sq metres (The Times of India, 19 Dec 2004).The Jupiter mill under N.T.C. (National Textile Corporation) only shared 9 percent of vacant land to BMC and MHADA. (The Times of India, March 13, 2005).Casa Grande “two ultra- luxury 23 storey buildings” has been constructed on Matulya Mill. To Atul Ruia of Phoenix Mill, development is quite different. “Old and derelict mill structures are being replaced by good quality housing projects surrounded by gardens, recreation grounds,” as told to Newslite. “This is planned development.”(Mehta and Choudhury 2005, Indian Express) In Morarjee Mill Unit 1 the luxurious Ashoka Tower came up this is named as the Peninsula Tower by demolishing the mill structure. Morarjee Unit 2 has been transformed into a world class office on 400 acres of land which is about the size of six Nariman point. Rameev Piramal in an interview stated, “Mill lands cannot be singled out to solve Mumbai’s problems. Why should we give up our land?”(Choudhury& Mehta 2005, Indian Express). During the period of 2005 to 2010, eight NTC mills sold their land to different real estate builders. Jupiter mill sold 11 acres of land to India Bulls at 276 crore. Apollo mill sold 7.5 acres of land to Lodha group at Rs 180 crore. Mumbai Textile sold 17 acres of land to DLF Akruiti at Rs 702 crores, 8 acres of Elphinstone mill land is sold to India Bulls at Rs 441 crore, 4.8 acres of Kohinoor mill land had been sold to Kohinoor at Rs 421 crore, 2.39 acres of Poddar Processes sold to India Bulls at Rs 474 crores, 8.37 acres of Bharat Textile land is sold to India Bulls at Rs 1505 crores, and 10.4 acres of Finlay mills sold to Lodha at Rs 657 crore. (Data compiled by Girni Kamgar Sangharsh Samity)With the redevelopment policy the city of Mumbai transitioned itself from ‘multi ethnic multi lingual cosmopolitan culture to bourgeoisie class based modernity (Patel, 2010) which had been further asserted by Chatterjee (2003) in, “Are Indian Cities Becoming Bourgeoisie at last?” Area surrounding the mill lands became expensive due to the strong market force that started operating there and the mill workers started moving out and it became gold mine for the builders.

Chawls in the Neighbourhood

There are number of chawls in the neighbourhood with a gate at the entrance where the name of the chawl is written with name of the society and the year. At the entrance, there is a space for sitting on both the sides made up of cement, where mostly are children found playing. Usually these portions remain very dark and cool during the day. Every time one entered the *chawl* during the day in the hot summer months, felt a sigh of relief. There is also a small religious space in every chawl just beside the main gate. Mostly the idol of *Shirdi Sai Baba* and *Hanumanji* are kept in it. The religious space is always specially secured with grill gate.

Often I have seen people resting in that area during the day. The *chawls* which are bigger in area with a courtyard inside have their religious space in the courtyard. Sometimes I found the religious space around the corner of the staircase in each and every floor. While exploring the chawl from one floor to another I came across an area specially made for sitting and resting. Each and every floor has a long corridor which usually remains very dark during the day with all the rooms having their doors open facing towards each other. The dark corridor remains filled with colourful clothes hanging from the top. The chawls having courtyard are generally rectangular pattern with very long common gallery running all through. For all the chawls the toilets are arranged separately on one corner of the corridor with a separate washing area. Generally four to five toilets are grouped together for each floor. In some of the chawls I noticed the toilets are totally outside. The rooms in every chawl are very small sometimes with or without separate kitchen. The size of the room generally is 225 sqfeet, 325 sqfeet sometimes 375 square feet to 450sq feet. Each and every room has a loft with a wooden staircase and an half enclosed area with maximum three to four feet wall on one side for bathing, changing clothes and washing utensils. This seemed to me the only legalised private space in the room although the loft can also be used as a private corner.

These chawls were occupied by the mill workers at a very nominal rent or almost without any rent when mills were functional. Frequent shifting of rooms by workers from one chawl to another alludes to the enough space available for them during the early period. But during the later phase twenty people would stay together in a single room. Some of the chawls were directly attached to the mills and some were privately built. With the passage of time, rent control act brought in stagnation of rent. Therefore apart from minor alteration and renovation work from MHADA, chawls have never been through any major changes. With the process of deindustrialisation chawls turned into old dilapidated structure, leaving the neighbourhood in a deteriorated condition. This process of devalorisation of neighbourhood makes a sufficient condition for it to gentrify. According to Neil Smith (1996) when an area undergoes deterioration the rent of the area lowers down creating a wide gap between the current rent and the optimum rent when the land is in its best possible use. As the gap widens the land becomes much dearer and turns into a matter of higher speculation and redevelopment touches the neighbourhood.

Gentrification and Redevelopment of Chawls

There are number of chawls which are under the process of redevelopment or ready to go for redevelopment. Because of their nominal rent of Rs 50 to Rs 150 due to rent control act the fate of chawls were sealed. The decision of redevelopment depends on the society after taking the consent of others. The real estate builders wait till the appropriate time approaches. Whether it is a minor 'decorative alterations' (Whitehand, 1978:79) or large scale replacement of structures, the term redevelopment attached to it has always certain greater implications. However, as the real estate builders, private investors and land mafias started speculating a high amount of profit from these areas by the process of redevelopment of chawls and slums, the area suddenly turned very lucrative for them. Gradually it has started losing its characteristics as an industrial area and began to transform itself into a post industrial area. Thus use value of the land and the potential value of the land became almost same and therefore prices became very high. Many dwellers of the chawl moved away to other places in search of affordable housing and more space for living. Some of the owners started selling their chawls to the real estate builders in order to earn huge amount of money from the builders. More over with the illegal tenancy, the *pagdi* system, the owner or the legal tenants of the chawl started earning black money from the new comers who are much more affluent. The transition is not only reflected among the new comers of that area but it can also be noticed in the residents of the older building who tried to bring a balance between the space they lived for generations and the globalised world. The culture of community living, the formation of historical narratives in the chawls transformed into a place of conflict and antagonism.

The current land value is so high that builders are ready to render fifty sixty lakhs to the owners in order to vacate a single room. Acquiring the land from the owner, the builder constructs a building for the tenants of the chawl providing all the provisions as per the demands of the society but the main portion of the land is used for constructing tall towers and they sell them in much higher prices. Likewise the builders make a huge amount of profit. In the first phase after the demolition of the chawl the tenants are temporarily shifted to transit accommodation. Sometimes the builders give a lump sum amount as per the current rent. Most of the tenants try to invest a portion of that money and live in a place of lower rent. According to my respondent Ravi Dass when their chawl went for redevelopment they were not being provided anything by the builders. They were shifted to Pratiksha Nagar transit camp. After the redevelopment, initially for the first ten years the builders do not charge any

maintenance cost from the tenants. The builders keep some amount of money in the bank as a corpus. Gradually they deduct the maintenance charge of the building, water supply electricity bill from the corpus fund. But after ten years the tenants have to pay all the charges, tax, maintenance charges, water supply bill electricity bill, and lift in the current rate. But there are many discrepancies in it. On the other hand tenants of the building before the completion of ten years sell their room at a very high rate and shift to a house in suburban areas of Mumbai. Another respondent Dilip Kochrekar an ex textile mill worker, his chawl is ready to go for redevelopment. According to him, 'most probably the Lodha builders will take the responsibility of the redevelopment'.

The value of the land in this area increases by leaps and bounds. If the room is on the main road in a prime location, the builders are ready to pay one crore for a small room. A widow, my respondent whose husband had worked as an electrician in Prakash Cotton mill, lives in the chawl of Shreenivas Mill just opposite to Prakash cotton mill. The very small room of 10/10 square feet facing the road side opposite to the Peninsula Tower constructed in the mill compound of Morarjee Mill No.2 receives a value of one crore. The builders are pressurising the chawl owners to undergo redevelopment and they are ready to pay one crore to procure the road side room. But the lady hesitates because she does not prefer to stay at the backside of the plot. Moreover, being unemployed she is trying to evade the maintenance charges. Another lady respondent of mine, a widow, while sharing her experience, explicitly mentioned about her purchase of the room in 1982 out of 14,000 rupees in *pagdi* system. There is no formation of society in her chawl. She had renovated her room according to her own choice and with own expense. People also feel for change under the desire for better life. E.g. this lady is in favour of redevelopment because she needs a decent life. The building of towers, the high land value eventually became very lucrative for many. Even in their utter despair, many look forward to the rising land values in order to gain profit but at the same time they think of avoiding the maintenance charges. This dualistic role played by the inhabitants makes the situation much graver.

The city of Mumbai is under the control of the builders. All the renowned and the small industrialists are in real estate business, because there is an extensive profit margin. The politicians have also become a part of it (Datta Ishwalkar, secretary of GKSS in an interview). According to an ex textile mill worker redevelopment is profitable for both the parties (builders and tenants). He further adds:

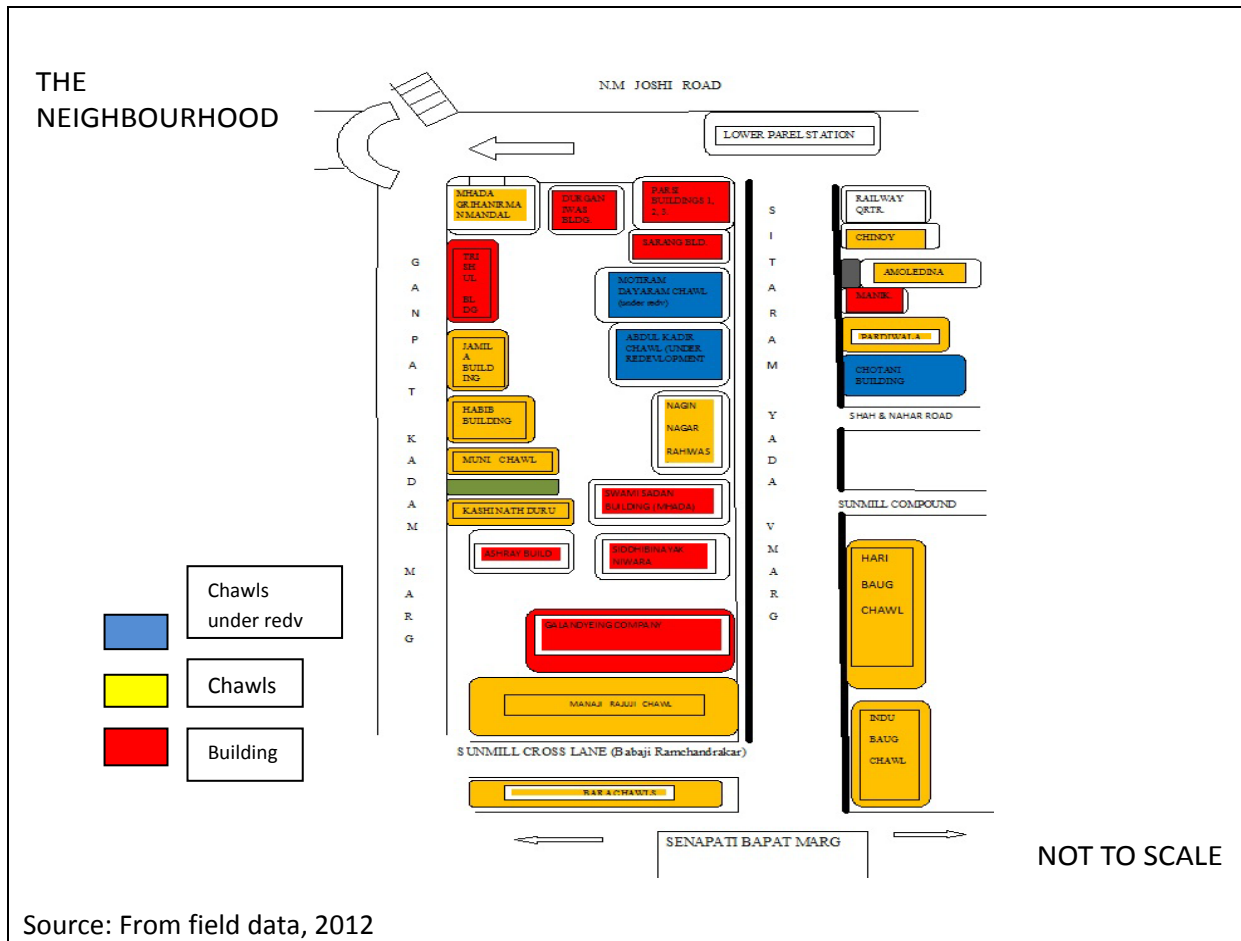
Sometimes the builders purchase the land from us... suppose in five crore... and if someone offers him more money, suppose 10 crore and he is in profit, he immediately sells the land to the other person. Such things happen. If I had stayed in Prabhadevi, the builder would have given me 85 lakhs. Presently the rate is going more than one crore. The same chawl, the same building. But they impose the maintenance charge on us. Our income is less. At the first phase the maintenance charges are less. But as the building gets old, after one or two years, we have to give 3500 to 4000 rupees as maintenance charges. For the initial 10 years, the building remains under individual ownership, than the society is formed. In order to give the maintenance charges we have to curtail other expenses. The builder purchases a plot and set up their office in the locality and starts negotiating with the people. At the initial stage of negotiation, they offer fewer amounts, and then gradually they increase. The more the inhabitants of that building leave; the builder will be able to manage a plot for building another tower which is profitable for him. This is how the process is going on presently. The builder's knew that these inhabitants cannot afford to pay the high maintenance charge. They will receive the money from the builder and leave the place. His aim is to make more and more towers. Instead of giving house to the tenant, the more the towers they built the more profit they make. At the same time the area becomes attractive for others. Small eight storeyed and eleven storeyed building by the side of a forty five storeyed building do not look good...

The process of redevelopment gets entangled by the multiple roles played by small builders, big builders, and politicians and chawl society members and other inhabitants. The Secretary of Girni Kamgarh Sangharsh Samity Datta Ishwalkar once expressed in his interview:

If we look into the city of Bombay, the city is no more for the mill workers. They have to leave the city by any means. Mill mazdoors have become a marginalised section. The mill workers want to stay in this city but how will they stay? The 225 square feet room in the slum costs Rupees 25 lakhs, 30 lakhs. People are selling their room and going to the suburbs. The rates of the chawls are more than 50 lakhs. Presently people are selling their room and going to suburb. This is not a forceful eviction but it happens according to their own will. The employment opportunity is also less here. Bombai has become a city of housing. The income of the people is less but numbers of buildings are more. But the housings are all high rise buildings. Therefore the city by any means is going out of the hand. If the city is only for the capitalist than those who are the working class, have to move out from it by any means. But those who do not have any house in the village, what will happen to them? It is true that some people are of the opinion that development is making them profitable, but that is in a different way. But if the city has decided to remove the lower class, working class people they will be moved out by any means even if they want to stay. (Datta Ishwalkar, 2013)

Therefore eviction of population from their neighbourhood and replacement by people of affluent class is an ongoing process. Because of the locational advantage, the neighbourhood and its surrounding commercial space has been taken over by the transnational elites. Upcoming of international brands, international food chains and international stores in the area, across the main road, within the old mill compounds fortified the global appearance. The city branding process, forgetting the legacies of the past the area is gentrifying itself. The local inhabitants who are either forcefully or willingly evicted are mainly going to the

suburban region. This is how the process of suburbanisation happens with gentrification. On the other hand the rejuvenation of the neighbourhood can be observed in the daily life of the inhabitants. Here I want to unpack the multiple identity of the city space in the phase of gentrification which gets reflected on the everyday life of its inhabitants.



Neighbourhood transformation and everyday life

In the process of gentrification the space redefines and restructures itself with time where the everyday life gets to be constituted and reconstituted. “It is through the everyday life we enter into the world of dialects with the natural and social world in a profound way where essential human desires, powers and potentialities are initially formulated, developed and realised concretely. It is through our mundane interactions with the material world that both subject and object are fully constituted and humanized through the medium of conscious human praxis (Lefebvre, 1987:8) as cited by Gardiner (2000:75).” Gyan Prakash once quoted Henry Lefebvre and stated that, “Lefebvre writes that urban space has a structure more like that of flaky pastry than the homogeneous and isotropic space of classical mathematics. This is how

we should understand Bombay that is as a space that contains several patterns and layers in its flaky structure.” The unpacking of different layers of the area in the study of gentrification showed fragmentation of spaces and the internal conflicts over it. The formal and informal practices in the area, the conflict over spaces, or the relationship among the tenants, society, builders and politicians and the inbuilt system of negotiation constitutes and reconstitutes the everyday life of the people. As Massey (1991) has always stated the sense of place doesn't possess a single identity. 'The sense of the place is constructed'. It is redefined again and again as the 'place of plurality and mix of spaces' (Massey; Allen & Pile, 1999:52). This spaces of plurality in the process of transformation sheds its impact on the everyday life of the people.

During my field visit to the neighbourhood, in every busy hours of evening or lazy Sunday morning or Saturday afternoon the rhythm of life changes in the neighbourhood. The waves of busy office goers in the morning going towards the small and big corporate offices, in different industrial estates and in the High Street Phoenix Mall captures the vision. Big cars like BMW struggling in the narrow winding lane and people walking towards the Lower Parel Station are a usual scenario. The prominence of certain groups obscures the original inhabitants. They become unnoticeable in the crowd. Lefevre (1991) as cited by (Massey; Allen & Pile, 1999:63) pointed out in the “production of social space” how certain places and certain groups become dominant over the others that rhythms of certain groups can only be heard and other become out of place. To them “certain groups superimpose their rhythms over the other (Massey; Allen & Pile, 1999:62).” Once my respondent uttered, ‘there was a time when the entire train would get empty in Lower Parel and Currey Road Station and all the passengers were mill workers. Then people would walk to their mills. But now all these people work in industrial estate and offices.’ When I asked the owner of the road side food stall who would sell vada pav once upon a time and now has shifted to alu paratha sabzi and lunch thali, about his customer he replied, ‘previously the mill workers used to come whereas now the people who works in the industrial estate, phoenix mall come for lunch and snacks. One plate of alu paratha and sabzi cost Rs 12; the other hotels are much more costly so people prefer to come here for lunch and snacks.’ One lazy Sunday morning when the local people usually move around the market place, I came near to a flower shop. The owner of the shop Satya Prakash pointed towards the hotel by the side of his shop and remarked:

Look! The hotel does not have any customer now. Who will come to this hotel? All the people have left this place. The tower people will not come to such kind of hotel. Development has done nothing positive related to our business.

But when 19 years old Pramila utters that the man who irons nearby her chawl has increased the rate from Rs 6 to Rs 13 per saree after the upcoming of towers and they had to stop giving clothes to him or the people living in the tower building receives more water from BMC than us, it showers a new light on the other side of the aspect.

The formation of gated communities in and around the neighbourhood enhanced the confrontation of self versus the others. In order to get better facilities and larger amenities people are moving in to these areas from around the world. It transforms into a land of multiple culture where the culture of the corporate world takes the dominant position and the ethnicity remains behind. The 24/7 services by the service providers within their enclave makes them isolated from the outer world. There is a creation of finer wall between the two world of community based living and the gated community in the neighbourhood. This is where 'self' confronts the 'other' and the "individual acquires a coherent identity of selfhood (Gardiner, 2000:76)." But according to Mihir Mehta, Director of Mahalakshmi Silk Mills life doesn't move in isolation. He stated that:

People who think they are islander; they can't survive in the long run. They will survive in short run but at every stage people are interdependent on the other land. We are interdependent on our driver, interdependent on our sweeper, maid servant who comes to our house to clean, interdependent on the grocery guy, news paper guy and all the service provider people. We cannot really be an islander as such. The people who say that there are facility management in the gated community they are collapsed. "*Isko bhejo*", "*usko bhejo*" (send him or send her) but it really doesn't work that way. It's very simple to say "*isko bhejo, usko bhejo*" (send him or send her) but at the end of the day there has to be a question of human interaction. There has to be a mutual cohabitation of both in order to sustain a balanced livelihood. (Mihir Mehta May 2013)

On the other hand people who restrict themselves to the old culture are also living in gated community because change is inevitable and that has to be adapted. Therefore the question of inclusion and exclusion comes in the process of "haussmanisation" (Harvey 2010:22) in multiple ways.

Spatial Transformation and Formal Informal Practices in the Commercial Area of Neighbourhood

The mapping of the area in the process of gentrification remains incomplete without the unpacking of the commercial area its formal and informal practices and the bargaining and negotiation attached to the everyday life. Sitaram Yadav Marg consists of rows of shop on

both the sides of the road. Some are licensed and many are temporary stalls on both the sides which are occupying the space for many years. The permanent shops on one side of the road ranges from a variety of products starting from garment shops, sweet shops, small hotels, titan watch, lottery shop, electric appliances etc. On the other side of the road there are number of food stalls one after another. The stall looks very old and shabby with temporary tarpaulin on the top to cover it from rain. It was a vada pav shop earlier but now it sells alu paratha lunch thali etc. I interviewed three boys who were working and chatting among each other and sometimes selling alu paratha to the customer. The boys are all 18 to 19 years old. I asked one of them about the shop, he replied, that he knows nothing about the shop because he is new to this place. Prior to this shop he had worked in another food stall at Worli. Since he was getting lesser payment there, he joined here. Presently he is getting Rs 4000 per month with food and staying in the shop. The shop opens at 7.30 am or 8 am in the morning and closes at 11 PM at night. Another boy, named Tinku came to Bombay when he was 12 years old from his village in UP. He has started working in different places like bar and hotel. Both of them are from same village. Since fifteen days he joined another shop and he does not work here anymore. His family is still there in the village. They have their farm land and his brother looks after it. He came here to earn. Whatever he earns he sends to village. When I enquired to the owner of the shop who is also from Uttar Pradesh, Gondia District and came here at an early age of 17 or before that for job, he replied that this shop is here for 25 years. The shop does not have any license. When I enquired about the role of BMC, he replied:

Previously the municipality car often used to come and break the shop but now the frequency is less. They throw away the things here and there; take away things. We also try to hide our things in different narrow lanes. When I started the shop, during that time I did not know what license is for. During that time there were very few shops. Only the jalebi (sweets) wala was there. The road was empty. A person from municipality asked me to make the license but it was never made. Now I have some xerox copy of some documents and a duplicate license.

When I asked him regarding the other shops in this locality, he replied most of the shop like his own does not have license. Many of the shops on the ground floor of the chawl has been renovated, went through a series of makeover. Many a times the ownership has changed. Many of the owners have also given the shop in rent. Looking at the opposite Titan watch shop, 'the rent of that shop is Rs 60,000 now.' The owner used to stay in the chawl earlier, now stay at Goregoan in a flat. When I enquired him about his family, he replied his parents have expired. His father had worked in a gold shop and presently his wife children brother and sister in law is there. Asking him about his income, both of them replied, 'It

depends...sometimes 1500, 2000 or 2500 per day.’ Whether it is an informal flower shop which is running from 60s or the shop of Ravi Dass and his octogenarian father which is there from 1981-82 during the time of the strike, the daily bargain makes their livelihood vulnerable.

Ravi Dass and his father who came Kolhapur Sonarwadi to join the mill is running a business for thirty five years but still the BMC did not give any license. The old man utters:

This land belongs to the municipality. I have all the papers for making license. They do not evict us but sometimes they come and break the shop. Now a day they are not breaking but they have broken our shop twice and have taken our goods. Presently they are not doing anything. When I enquired him about the other shop his son replied, ‘other than these two shops (pointing towards the shop) all are without license, same as mine.’ He further mentioned, ‘My father is the first to sit here. At that time there were no other shops. All other shops came here after five or six years.’

In every evening from 5 PM to 10 PM there is a long stretch of informal vegetable market on both the sides of the Ganpat Kadam Marg from the Lower Parel Station. One of the respondents, a widow has a book stall. After her daily household chores she sits there, sometimes her son also sits. According to the lady the BMC people do not take away her books because most of the books are religious books. She has given the shop after her husband expired. Later I came to know from my key respondent about the type of negotiation they have to make with people. They have to pay a rent of about Rs 2000 which is negotiable for the space they occupy. If anybody discontinues his business he gives his space in rent. Therefore who so ever has started the informal business prior to others becomes the owner of the space. This shows how the city space gets fragmented over individual claims in different hours of the day. As the former claims to be the owner of the space, the later tries to remove the traces of the former. This is how individual gets included and excluded in the city space. (Bayat& Biekart, 2009; Harvey, 1990; Massey, Allen & Pile, 1999) The informal workers also have to give a monthly rent for the electricity they acquire by illegal means. They negotiate with the owner of the chawl from whom they have acquired. Other than these they often negotiate with the police, with the B.M.C workers.

The neighbourhood around the mill lands along with its residential, commercial area lives on informality on a daily basis where such informalities become formal and legal through daily practices. Here every day practices get supremacy over rules and norms. From the

redevelopment process to the usage of city space for various interests a parallel set of informal rules engage and influence the activities.

Conclusion

The process of gentrification in the city is very unique in nature. On one side the mill lands are going for sale one after the other as it is in loss and there is a lack of interest of the owners. Therefore they started using the land for various other purposes which can generate much more profit. On the other side the workers are also involved in the nexus of redevelopment of their chawls along with the builders. Losing their jobs for years, the money they received as VRS (Voluntary Retirement Scheme) had been allocated for different purposes. Those workers who have not received any amount through VRS are in poverty. But many of the mill workers are interested in the developmental project because only through this they are acquiring an opportunity to gain some assets. On the one hand they are living in a chawl in a prime locality at a very nominal rent. When their houses are going for redevelopment either they are receiving a flat in the tower building or huge compensation from the builders in order to vacate the chawl. In many cases since current rent of the area is very high the room owners often give their room/flat in rent and move to suburban areas in search of a larger space. As the family expands they require a larger space to live and the suburbs become the important location. But there are also certain families who get entrapped in this process. Neither they go for the redevelopment of their chawls due to the high maintenance charge nor could they live in such dilapidated condition. Individuals and different social groups are associated with the flow or movement in a very distinct manner. It is not only the differential rate of mobility of the individual or groups that determines the flow but the power determines the mobility or the control over mobility. It is always that somebody triggers the flow and others remain at the receiving end. It is not the unequal distribution that some people move more than others and that some have more control than others. It is that the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. The “power geometry of time space compression” of some groups can undermine the power of others (Massey, 1991:2; Guha Banerjee, 2010:199). At this juncture the urban built up area become a space of contradiction and contestation. These aggravated when the mill workers started demanding their houses in the mill lands as per the DC Rules which states that one third of the mill land will be used for the housing purpose of the mill workers. Eighteen mills have submitted their land till date and numbers of mill owners are in the process of submitting the one third of land. Presently 6,948 houses has been built by MHADA, therefore

people are claiming their rights to housing. These houses of 325 square feet in area have been allotted on the basis of lottery system. The mill workers from rural and urban area and their off springs are claiming to live near the city centre due to its locational advantage. As the transnational elites came into the mill land either to reside or for commercial purposes, similarly the workers from the urban and the rural are claiming their right to live in the city.

Therefore there is a formation of two different worlds within the city due to the internal contradictions. Massey, Allen & Pile (1999:53) describes as “worlds within cities” which Sassen (1993) put forward the question of existence of these different worlds, the question of presupposition regarding the co existence of the different worlds within the same city, the tying up of these different worlds. To Harvey (1998:9) this breaking of cities into parts is known as ‘microstates’. Harvey (2008:1) once cited sociologist Robert Park who conveyed, “man’s most consistent and on the whole, his most successful attempt to remake the world he lives in more after his heart’s desire. But, if the city is the world which man has created, it is the world in which he is hence forth condemned to live. Thus indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself.” Therefore the kind of city we want depends on the kind of people we want to be, the relationship we aspire, the livelihoods we desire. In an aspiring global city like Mumbai, where city space gets reoriented by the process of excessive valorisation of the corporate world and devalorisation of the ethnic world as a process of ‘creative destruction’ (Harvey, 1990:425) it is due to the uneven development and capitalist process of accumulation of surplus in the city space that is causing the bourgeoisie revanchism and it gets reflected in the everyday life of the people. The everyday life gets reconstituted in the process of gentrification where exclusion and inclusion of different things become a way of life. Studying the multiple layers of city space of Mumbai and the process of gentrification, the informal activities are also taken into account. The paper also brings out the informality that occurs in the neighbourhood on a daily basis in the process of transformation and its implication on the fragmentation of the city space.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to my guide Prof. Kushal Deb and co-guide Prof. D. Parthasarathy for their constant support and guidance. I would also like to thank my fellow researchers for all their useful comments and wonderful reviews.

References

- Adarkar, N. (2006) *The Lost Century for Workers, Mills for Sale: The Way Ahead*. Darryl D'Monte (ed), Marg Publication, 94-107.
- Atkinson, R. (2004) The Evidence on The Impact of Gentrification: New Lessons for the Urban Renaissance. *European Journal of Housing, Policy* 4(1), April, 107-131.
- Banerjee-Guha, S. (2010) Revisiting Accumulation by Dispossession: Neoliberalising Mumbai, *Accumulation by Dispossession, Transformative Cities in the New Global Order*. Swapna Banerjee- Guha (ed.), Sage Publication, 198-226.
- Bayat, A. and K. Biekart (2009) Cities of Extreme. *Development and change* 40(5), 815-825.
- Bharucha, N. (2004) How the state helped mill owners hit jackpot. *Times of India*, 19 Dec 2004.
- Bharucha, N. (2004) BMC, Mhada to get 9% of Jupiter Mill land. *Times of India*, 13 March 2005.
- Chandavarkar, R. (2005) 'Chances like this don't come often', How will Mumbai look in 2020? *Indian Express*, 13 March, 2005.
- Chatterjee, P. (2003) "Are Indian Cities Becoming Bourgeois at Last?" *Body .City: Siting Contemporary Culture in India*. Indira Chandrasekhar and Peter Steel (ed.), N.D. Tulika, 171-192.
- Census of India 1981, District Census Handbook Greater Bombay, Table 12, Compiles The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay.24-29.
- Census of India 1981, District Census Handbook Greater Bombay, Table 12, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay.80-82.
- Census of India 1981, District Census Handbook Greater Bombay, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay.45-73.
- Census of India 1991, District Census Handbook, Greater Bombay, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay, Government Central Press, Mumbai, Published by The Directorate Government Printing and Stationary, Maharashtra State, Mumbai. 15-39.

Census of India 1991, District Census Handbook, Greater Bombay, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay, Government Central Press, Mumbai, Published by The Directorate Government Printing and Stationary, Maharashtra State, Mumbai. 862-888.

Census of India 1991, District Census Handbook, Greater Bombay, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay, Government Central Press, Mumbai, Published by The Directorate Government Printing and Stationary, Maharashtra State, Mumbai.218-234.

Census of India 1991, Greater Mumbai compiled by Data Centre International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, India.

Census of India 2001, District Census Handbook, Greater Bombay, Compiled by The Maharashtra Census Directorate Bombay, Government Central Press, Mumbai, Published by The Directorate Government Printing and Stationary, Maharashtra State, Mumbai.

Choudhury, C. & Mehta, R. (2005) "I Am No Fat Cat...This Land Is Mine" *Indian Express*, 27 Feb 2005.

Choudhury, C. & Mehta, R. (2005) "Why Mill Body is a Hot Potato" *Indian Express*, 3 Feb 2005.

Mehta, R. & Choudhury, C. (2005) Turmoil, as mill body meets today. *Indian Express*, 4 Feb 2005.

D'Monte, D. (2002) Recycling Mill Land, *Ripping the Fabric: The Decline of Mumbai and its Mills*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi. 187-231.

Deb, K (2006) Role of the State in City Growth, the Case of Hyderabad City. *Urban Studies*, Sujata Patel & Kushal Deb (ed.), Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 340-352.

Gardiner, M.E (2000) Henri Lefebvre Philosopher of the ordinary. *Critiques of everyday life*. Routledge, London New York, 71-101.

Ghag, P. (2006) List of 58 Cotton Textile Mills Status as of September 2006. *Mills for Sale, The Way Ahead*. Darryl D' Monte (ed.), Marg publication, Mumbai.73-75.

Hamnett, C (2003) Gentrification and the Middle Class Remaking of Inner London, 1961-2001. *Urban Studies* 40(12), Nov, 2401-2426.

Harris, A (2008) From London to Mumbai and Back Again: Gentrification and Public Policy in Comparative Perspective. *Urban Studies* Nov, 2407-2428.

Harvey, D. (2010) The Right to the City: From Capital Surplus to Accumulation by Dispossession. *Accumulation by Dispossession: Transformative cities in the New Global Order*. Swapna Guha Banerjee (ed.), Sage Publication, 17-32.

Harvey, D. (2008) Right to the city. [http://187.45.205.122/Portals/0/Docs/right to the city.pdf](http://187.45.205.122/Portals/0/Docs/right%20to%20the%20city.pdf). Date of Accession 07.08.2012, 10.05 AM, 1-10.

Harvey, D. (1990) Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80(3), 418-434.

Krishnan, S (2000) The Murder of the Mills: A case study of Phoenix Mills, A report by the Girangoan Bachao Andolan and Lok Shahi Hakk Sanghatana, April,1-26.

Massey, D. (1991) A Global Sense of Place, Scholar. Google.co.inscholar.www.aughty.org/pdf/global_sense_place.pdf, date of accession 7.30 PM 5th Aug 2012.www.amielandmelburn.org.uk/collection/mt/index_frame.html.

Massey, D., J. Allen and S. Pile (1999) World within cities. *City Worlds*. Routledge Publication, London and New York, 53-91.

Pendse, S., N. Adarkar and Finkelstein (2011) Overview. *The Chawls of Mumbai galleries of life*. Neera Adarkar (ed.), Imprint one, Gurgaon, Haryana 1-11.

Rofe, M.W (2003) I want to be Global: Theorising the Gentrifying Class as an Emergent Elite Global Community. *Urban Studies* 40(12), Nov, 2511-2526.

Schaffer, R &N. Smith (1986) The Gentrification of Harlem? *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 176(3), Sept, 347-365.

Smith, N. (1996) Local arguments from consumer source to the rent gap. *The New Urban Frontier Gentrification and the revanchist city*, Routledge Publication, London 49-71.

Whitehand, JWR. (1978) Long- Term Changes in the Form of the City Centre: The Case of Redevelopment, *Geografiska Annaler Series B, Human Geography* 60(2), 79-96.