Malling of Urban India: Social History and Evolution in a Global and Comparative Framework

KULWINDER KAUR[†]

Department of Sociology,
Jamia Millia Islamia Central University, New Delhi-110025
E-mail: kulwinder10@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: Malls are no longer confined to the metropolitan India, malls are by now a regular feature of Indian cityscape and articulate a new urban sociality and consumer culture underway since the late 1990s. While the development and growth of malls in Europe and America has been a gradual process starting around mid-twentieth century; in India, however, the emergence of malls has literally been a revolution in the past two decades. And yet unlike the social inquiry in other parts of the world where shopping mall is an established epistemological and ontological signifier of socio-spatial and cultural change, the phenomenon of shopping malls in India has received very little scholarly attention so far. This paper fills this gap by tracing the social history and evolution of the meaning, form and function of malls in India in a comparative global framework. Further, the paper makes a critical analysis of the existing conceptual and theoretical perspectives on malls to augment mall as a subject and object of future research.

INTRODUCTION

Shopping malls mark the historic moment of India's encounter with globalisation, rise of the new middle class and a growing consumer culture. Concurrently, an irrevocable transformation in the established spatial and cultural practices that produce urban space is also underway. To a social scientist, shopping mall is thus a vital epistemological and ontological site to make sense of the complex transformations besetting everything 'urban'. It is noteworthy that the trajectory of the emergence of shopping malls in India is not the same as in the global North where it has received serious scholarly and multi-disciplinary research. The magnitude and speed of the development of malls in India, too, warrants

serious study but the phenomenon has not yet captured an adequate scholarly attention. Media and popular accounts, however, abound. In this paper, I aim to highlight the urgency of bringing shopping malls in India under critical scrutiny. The paper is based on secondary data on real estate and retail growth, consumer practices, policy documents, and newspapers. Malls and public space being a longstanding subject of my ethnographic research, I have used a few insights from my interviews with executives of mall management companies to supplement the secondary data. In addition, the paper is informed by my review, knowledge and familiarity with a wide ranging academic literature on malls, public space, consumer culture and urban development published in books and journals. I, however, deliberately do not deal directly with these

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issues of public space or consumer practices in the present paper as it is outside its scope. Using this data and literature, and my insights into the changing political economy and neoliberal urban development, the papers offers a comprehensive picture of mall boom in India. It reconstructs a discursive social history of malls as a shopping format by making comparisons of the evolution of malls in the US, Europe, Canada and some other parts of the globe such as Canada and Middle East.

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE STUDY OF MALLS

Despite its neglect in India, shopping malls is a densely-researched subject in social inquiry in other parts of the globe. It has featured prominently in the discourse on 'post-war suburbanization' and 'de-centering' of the American city (dividing practices, consumerist citizenship and end of public space (Sorokin,'92; Voyace, 2006, 2007); consumerist architecture (Chase,'91; Sklair, 2009); liminal spaces (Goss,'93; Moss, 2007); cathederals of consumption (Ritzer,'99); surveillance and control (Koskella, 2000; Staeheli and Mitchell, 2006); 'flaneuring' and new spaces of empowerment and freedom for women (Mathews *et al.*, 2000; Abaza, 2001; Erkip, 2003); and so on, Cohen,'96, Jackson,'96; capitalism and the rise of spectacle (Debord,'67; Best and Kellner,'99); privatization of public space (Sorkin,'92; Mitchell,'95; Jackson,'96; Abaza, 2001; Zukin, 2009; Low, 2010); and right to the city (Mitchell,'95).

In India, a scanty initial academic interest on malls originated from the perspective of retail and management. These perspectives view malls as formats of modern retail and are concerned with making statistical analysis of FDI in retail; perception of shoppers; shopping behavior; loyalty to stores; factors of success and failure in mall management; and so on to mention only a few (Mukherjee and Patel, 2005; Singh *et al.*, 2010; Kurruvilla and Joshi, 2010; Mullick and Khan, 2011). One of the earliest empirical studies found that malls did not have any significant impact on street vendors in the context of Mumbai (Kalhan, 2007).

Critical studies in social sciences took a much longer time to appear. Michael Voyace, an Australian visiting scholar to India was the first to have published a review paper on malls in 2007 but it was thematic rather than empirical. After the turn of the century, sociologists and geographers in India did begin to look at the macro processes of urban restructuration and slum evacuation given the preoccupation of Indian state and middle class to turn Delhi and Mumbai into world-class cities. Shopping malls were often mentioned as part of this urban transformation along with urban infrastructure and other spaces of consumerism and entertainment (Baviskar, 2003; Dupont, 2008; Banerjee-Guha, 2002, 2009). With the deepening of processes of globalisation as in the expansion of organised retail and the arrival of foreign direct investment (FDI) in India, there came a surge in the growth of malls during 2007-2008 and understandably the references to shopping malls as 'sites' of new middle class[1] consumerism became more frequent (Ganguly-Sacrase and Sacrase, 2009; Brosius, 2010; Mathur, 2014). Baviskar (2011a) further observed how our urban landscapes and ecology was under threat on account of a middle class ideology of "bourgeois environmentalism". While all these scholars, to give them due credit, enhanced our understanding of the middle class practices of consumption in its quest for modernity, cosmopolitanism, global identity, or status positions in class hierarchies, their studies did not foreground shopping mall as the subject of inquiry in itself. There was also a problem with the way the discourse on consumer culture neglected the rural consumers and failed to look beyond the middle class as pointed out by Kaur (2016: 11-31). Nor was there any attempt by any scholar to systematically document the evolution and history of malls in the Indian context. It was only recently that shopping malls received some attention in a couple of ethnographically informed accounts (Srivastava, 2010, 2014; Mathur, 2014). It becomes important therefore to address this neglect of documenting the malling of urban India from a critical scholarly perspective.

Malling Revolution in India

The first three malls came to India in 1999 with the opening up of Spencer Plaza[2] in Chennai, 'Crossroads' in Mumbai and 'Ansal Plaza' in New Delhi. In 2001, there were only three malls in India. The 'malling' of India did not begin in earnest till

2005. Since then, the malls have grown dramatically and phenomenally. As per the data from Bangalore-based ASIPAC consulting, number of malls in 2013 has doubled since 2008[3]. This phenomenon first began in metropolitan cities but the trend has rapidly spread to tier I and II cities during the past few years. According to a report in *The Hindu Baseline,* "Delhi and Mumbai lead the country in terms of highest concentration of shopping malls, accounting for 62 per cent of pan-India mall stock"[4]. According to a report by ASIPAC (2010), India's biggest operational mall is Mantri Square in Bangalore, followed by Ambience Mall, the largest mall in North India located in Gurgaon (now Gurugram)[5].

A majority of the available data on malls is compiled by marketing research companies such as McKenzie for real estate developers or retail industry. This data estimated that the size of India's middle class would have grown to 200 million in 2015 and almost 600 million by 2025 (Hiscock, 2008:2). There was also a huge growth of India's organised retail market from US$410 billion in 2008 to US$615 billion in 2013, which further estimated to grow up to US$860 billion in 2018 (ibid: 6). Hiscock further wrote, '[A]s incomes rise and the golden bird of Indian consumerism takes flight, more and more families are being tempted to switch their loyalties from local markets and stores to the new wave of air-conditioned shopping malls' *ibid*: 4). Till 2008, India saw an almost miraculous upsurge in the growth of retail space and shopping malls in particular. So much so, that the smaller malls began to face stiff competition from newly built malls which were better in design and offered a better mix of brands and services. Soon, the Indian retail industry was facing a situation of oversupply of malls, especially in the metropolitan areas. This, coupled with the aftermath of global recession, smaller malls began to shut down e.g., 'Milan Mall' and 'City Mall' in the suburbs of Mumbai and latest being the Ansal Plaza in Delhi which, too, has shut down. The smaller malls converted to office space e.g., 'Star City Mall' founded in 2006 in Delhi[6]. This is not to say that mall growth has come to a halt. On the contrary, as the saturation reaches in the metropolitan India due to escalating land prices and ever increasing competition, the developers have shifted their attention to class II and III cities.

Multiple Meanings of the Term 'Mall'

Irrespective of the enormity of the phenomenon in terms of its sheer magnitude and impact, there is no consensus on what defines a mall. So much so, that even the urban planning authorities in India do not yet officially recognize the term 'mall'. For example, there is no mention of the term in the Master Plan of Delhi, 2021[7]. The industry, however, has its own parameters, which are largely derived from international standards set by the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC). According to ICSC"…only those retail buildings which have a GLA/SBA of more than 200,000 square feet in the metros and more than 150,000 square feet in other cities, should be allowed to be called a "Mall"[8].

Although there is no official criterion to define a mall, yet the web is replete with definitions of shopping malls[9]. For example, in the context of U.S., a "shopping center" is defined as a group of stores, developed by one development group with adjacent parking space included as part of the development package. A "shopping mall" is defined as an "enclosed shopping center" (Hanchett,'96:1083). The term "mall" did not come into use until 1960s. Till then, the suburban mall was known as regional shopping center (Smiley, 2002:13).

In India, many smaller shopping complexes are also claimed to be 'malls' by their owners. Through my interviews with the managers of many malls in Delhi, I gauged that in India, a precondition of mall is that it has to house a collection of independent retail stores, services, and parking areas constructed and maintained by a management firm as a unit. There must be a minimum of 75-80 thousand square feet of enclosed built space which is fully air conditioned and centrally heated, offering completely controlled climatic conditions. It is also required to have a mixed land use in the sense that it must house some eating and entertainment places, and offices. This is what, makes a mall different from the high street retail store. The difference is not just about what defines the mall in India and other parts of the world. The historical trajectory that malls have undergone as shopping formats across the globe is quite unlike that in India. While the development and growth of malls in Europe and America has been a gradual process starting around mid-twentieth century; in India, however, the

emergence of malls has literally been a revolution in the past two decades as mentioned earlier. At this juncture, it would be in order to make a comparative analysis of the evolution of malls as a shopping format.

Social History and Evolution of Shopping Malls

The mall as a shopping format has undergone a long historical trajectory before reaching its current form. The earliest known trading and open meeting place was Greek Agora, and its Roman counterpart the Trajan's was the archetype of "the first recognized defined shop spaces" (Rubenstein,'92:19). During the medieval period, trade and business were conducted in buildings that "combined a market hall on the ground floor and town hall above… the guilds controlled craftsmanship and also operated from the market hall….By the 16th century, across Europe market halls were no longer combined with town or guild uses" (Rubenstein,'92:21-22).

Meanwhile, another kind of retail environment had evolved in the Middle East and parts of North Africa, known as the Eastern Bazaars. Peter Coleman reports that the Eastern Bazaars were "inward looking with shops facing into a covered street" (Coleman, 2006:25). Unlike market halls, they were big retails districts within a town. Later in places like Bokhara, the bazaars became a connecting link between other buildings of the city such as mosques, baths etc (Coleman, 2006:23-25). During 16th and 17th century, the trend of shops interspersed with cafes and restaurants that opened onto the streets of the city had become very common. However, by the 18th century, with increasing trade on a world scale, and the opening of banking and commerce institutions, rising urbanisation and industrialisation, "city streets became increasingly busy, hostile and crowded with horse drawn vehicles. Society developed beyond the quality of the available public spaces" (Coleman, 2006:30). And then, during the late eighteenth century, a new shopping environment called 'arcade' emerged in Paris which slowly spread to the entire Europe[10]. The Arcades were pedestrian thoroughfare and were far more than places for shopping as people used them to see and be seen, to meet others, and to enjoy the vibrancy of the city in safe, clean, noise-free and aesthetic environments (Geist,'85).

Soon after, with more advancement in building technologies, architectural innovations, and retail principles, emerged a new milestone in the history of shopping, called the 'department store'. It was a single building of many floors, having many shops, fitted with escalators for mobility between different floors, and selling large variety of goods under one roof. They also established the retail principle of fixed price (Coleman, 2006:33-36). Department store was also heralded as the beginning of the feminization of the 'flaneur'[11] as the 'ladies' did not venture out into public space un-chaperoned.

This is not to say that this evolution from agora to the shopping mall was always planned or inter-related in all parts of the world. Apart from the planned exceptions of Greek agora, Roman forum, eastern bazaars, the evolution of shops in the rest of the world was haphazard and organic. "These wonderful examples were isolated highlights, like shooting stars which came and went, with little continuing legacy of influence on the subsequent development of collection of shops" (Coleman, 2006:57). It was not till another half century that a significantly different shopping format in the form of 'shopping centres' and 'shopping malls' emerged later. Arcades and department store can, therefore, be said to be the pre-curser to the shopping centres and suburban malls which developed subsequently in the mid twentieth century America. I now, turn to a brief history of evolution of the malls and their broad types in the United States.

Sub-Urbanisation and Malling of America

It was during the early twentieth century that neighbourhood shopping centers around residential communities with off street parking came around for the well-to-do car owners. However, by 1930s, the neighbourhood shopping centres became a phenomenon in United States (Longsterth,'92). By then, the downtowns were getting increasingly congested with traffic and lack of parking space and the process of migration from inner city to suburbs had begun. After world war-II, a colossal shift in the retail built environment took place. This was the development of the regional shopping center, a 'dramatic event' and a popular subject in the American 'social history' (Clausen,'84:144). Among the

prominent factors that brought about this development was the large scale suburbanization of America, following 'inner city decay', 'rising racial tensions', 'car friendly ecology' and 'white flight' from the city. The first ever enclosed and climate controlled mall was introduced by Victor Gruen, at the Southdale Shopping Center in Edina, Minneasotta, a suburb of Minneapolis, in 1956 (Jackson,'96:1114). Gruen was a visionary architect and he attempted to redesign the suburban mall to recreate the complexity and vitality of urban experience without the noise, dirt, and confusion that had come to characterize the popular images of the city. Gruen identified shopping as a part of a larger web of human activities, arguing that merchandising would be more successful if commercial activities were integrated with cultural enrichment and relaxation (Crawford,'92:24). During this era, "[b]uying a house, at least one car, and domestic equipment integrated households into a national landscape of mass production and consumption (Zukin,'91:140). This suburban mall "proliferated across the USA to become a recognizable almost formulaic format…and influenced the early European out of town developments such as Brent Cross, London, 1976" (Coleman, 2006:42, 44).

From 'Pedestrian Precinct' to the 'Regional Shopping and Leisure Centre' in Europe

Coming to Europe, the shopping malls appeared at the same time but their trajectory and form was slightly different from that in America. Similar to USA, the post-World War-II Europe saw a sharp increase in its population and ownership and use of car. However, unlike the USA, European cities did not have so much available land to accommodate the growing population at the edge of city. According to Coleman, many war damaged cities were also to be rebuilt. In addition, the early industrial cities of Europe, by now, 150 years old were faced with decline of these industries and dilapidated housing, previously used by mill workers. There was also the challenge of historic districts to be conserved. Therefore, Europe adopted a policy of keeping its city cores free of traffic, and in doing so designed pedestrian 'precincts' in which shops were arranged in an open –air linear arrangement. This is not to say that the enclosed

American mall did not appear in Europe. "The Bull Ring in Birmingham was the first purposely built enclosed shopping centre in the UK" which came up in 1964 and soon became popular all over UK (Coleman, 2006: 49). In 1969, the enclosed suburban mall opened in Paris but it so happened that the enclosed centres did not find favour with European public. In the meanwhile, inspired by Victor Gruen, London saw the opening of its first privately developed suburban mall, 'Brent Cross' in 1976, "the only shopping centre to have been built on a previously undeveloped site outside of an established shopping area and not being part of a new town" (Miller *et.al.*, '98: 32).

Underlining its significance, Coleman notes that 'Brent Cross' established a benchmark in UK retail standards for about 20 years but later it was overtaken by a new shopping format that was developing in Canada and the USA and was to soon influence the malling of Europe in a big way. This was the 'regional shopping and leisure centre' which first emerged in Canada between 1981 and 1985 and was named the 'West Edmonton Mall'. It combined shopping with entertainment and leisure, and attracted tourists from all over the world. It was built on an area of 5.5 million square feet and included hotels, amusement park, food courts, golf course, underwater lake, waterpark, some 800 shops and six anchor stores (Coleman, 2006:78). In the meanwhile, Europe also got its regional leisure mall in 1984 at Metro Centre, Gateshead and the USA developed the 'Mall of America' in Minneapolis in 1992. Before the end of the twentieth century this prototype of mall had influenced the retail environment across all parts of the globe and had completely changed the way the world shopped and entertained itself. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, shopping malls have developed at an astonishing scale in almost all parts of globe.

Neoliberal Urban Development, Privatization and Reshaping of Urban Space in Delhi and NCR

While in the US, this Mall boom came in the post-World-War-II, in Latin America, Middle East, and other parts of the globe, this process began in the 1970s following the post-industrial shift to consumption and service economy operated through the processes of globalisation. Shopping malls were

thus part of the larger neoliberal transformations that were taking place, at first, in cities of global North and now in the global South to become world class cities.

In India, the contemporary urbanisation of Delhi dates back to the 20th century and Delhi has seen various changes in its cityscape due to different policy agendas of colonial, national and transnational actors. The earlier two eras were marked by state's (both colonial and post-colonial) almost total control in determining land use and its change[12]. Broadly speaking, the entire task of building and maintaining the city rested with Delhi's Improvement Trust and later with Delhi Development Authority (DDA). Thus one way to understand the reasons for the emergence of malls in India is to pose this question with respect to the Ansal Plaza, the first shopping mall of Delhi. So rephrased, the question arises- if the coming up of Ansal Plaza was a part of the attempt of Government of Delhi to turn Indian capital into a world class city or was it a part of the ongoing planning of the capital so as to provide more commercial and residential space? I would say that it was both. Ansal Plaza was a very ambitious plan, unlike any visualized in the country so far. The Indian economy was in its nascent phases of the liberalisation and Master Plan-2021 was mired in controversies. Yet, the plaza was a pointer to the way the retail world would change later. The mall revolution that India has subsequently witnessed is a testimony to this fact. What began at a very modest scale with Ansal Plaza has slowly spread to all the big and middle sized cities of India and transforming our cityscapes in unprecedented ways. At present, Ansal Plaza has closed down as bigger and more luxurious malls have entered the market.

Apart from state, a private real estate giant, DLF, has also been another significant actor in the post-independent building of a globalising India. While the role of DLF, in the pre-liberalisation period was indirect, since the onset of economic reforms, it has been the most significant real estate developer in the NCR, especially in Gurgaon (Srivastava, 2009, 2014). The liberalization led urban governance reforms such as the participatory model of urban citizenship under the 74th amendment and the "*Bhagidari*" scheme[13] started by the Delhi state government created an effective platform for the middle class resident welfare associations (RWAs) to join the state chorus of turning Delhi into a "world class city" (Dupont, 2011). During this period, Delhi was also preparing itself to host 'The Commonwealth Games- 2010' which further provided legitimacy and timely excuse to a "gentrified state" (Ghertner, 2014) to beautify the city by making it slum-free[14]. The evacuated land was used for creating many spaces of leisure, consumption, entertainment and sporting infrastructure for the use of Delhi's middle class. It was accompanied by the development of large scale infrastructure such as flyovers and increase in the ownership of private cars, and construction of Delhi Metro that facilitated access to malls within Delhi as well as its surrounding NCR (Siemiatycki, 2006; Tiwari, 2002). For instance, Gurugram, a part of capital's surrounding NCR, is an epitome of private transformations of urban space (Chatterji, 2013) as seen in development of malls on its famous "mall mile" (Srivastava, 2014); "gated neighbourhoods" (Brosius, 2009); for "professionals" living in "elite residential complexes" (Searle, 2013).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Malls as Jacobs (1984) says have now become a very essential and normal part of the Indian cityscape and a part of everyday life of the new Indian middle class. While malls in the US were largely a suburban feature, the Indian malls followed a more European route and were built wherever the land was available- both within and outside the city. Malls can be said to be a cause as well constituent of the reshaped urban space of NCR that is tangibly manifested in the fast moving signal free caravan of speeding cars; the visual culture marked by tall hoardings and billboards showing neon lit seductive images of an urban lifestyle aspired and sought after by the middle class. The malls in the US at times acted as alternative to town squares, or city streets and later regional mall makers became so ambitious as to conceive of everything within the mall so much so that some scholars started to conceive of these regional malls as cities in the US, Europe and Canada. Yet critics never looked at those malls as cities or public spaces. In India, malls are exclusionary and still a luxury for a vast majority of poor Indians. This poses questions about the democratization of public space, models of urban development, sustainability and future of Indian

urbanism that the future research on malls in India needs to inquire into. It is important to note that Indian builders do not want to replicate the diversity of our cities that are largely organic in character unlike their planned counterparts of American and European cities. Malls are only one reality of everyday urban life but there are many other realities right outside the mall that get neglected in our visions of urban development. It may be a Jhuggi Jhopri (JJ Cluster), a slum, an urban village or an irregular colony. The coexistence of these juxtaposing realities articulates the new 'urban' archetype of the globalising South Asian city.

NOTES

1. The middleclass is quite 'vast and amorphous' and different socioeconomic groups define themselves as middleclass as rightly noted by Srivastava (2009:338) following several key scholars. I am also using the term in the broad characterization that seem to constitute middle class identity following (Rajgopal, 2001; Mozarella, 2003; Fernandes, 2006; Ganguly-Sacrase and Sacarse, 2009; Brosius, 2010) in the context of consumer practices in urban India.

2. The historical roots of Spencer Plaza go back to British Raj, when in the year 1863-1864, the first Departmental Store in the Indian Subcontinent (comprising India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), established by Charles Durant and J. W. Spencer. After a few years, Eugene Oakshott shifted the department store to a new building, which was an example of Indian Indo-Saracenic style of architecture. The building was designed by W. N. Pogson. In the year 1985, the original building was destroyed in a fire. The present Spencer Plaza was constructed on the same site. This shopping mall is the major hangout for people of Chennai. *See http://www.indiamallsinfo.com/spencer-plaza-shopping-mall-mount-road-chennai.html*

3. See, Samidha Sharma and Anshul Dhamija " Malls more than double in five years" in Times of India, August 8, 2013 accessed at http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/Malls-more-than-double-in-five-years/articleshow/21696915.cms

4. Arvind Jayaram. The Hindu Baseline, 16th January, 2014. See *http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/shopping-malls-to-grow-in-size-numbers-in-2014-report/article5583116.ece*

5. "India's Largest Malls-2010: Research Studies on Malls in India". A Report by ASIPAC. However, currently, The 'DLF Mall of India' in Noida has superseded the Ambience Mall in Gurugram.

6. There are many reports on the web about the closing down of malls. For industry explanations of the failure of malls, see, "Evolution of Shopping Malls: Lessons from the pioneering Malls in India" by Amanpreet Banga and Harvinder Singh at *https://m2.facebook.com/notes/india-retail-news/evolution-of-shopping-malls-lessons-from-the-pioneering-malls-india/196028813771458/*

7. The Master Plan has revised the hierarchy of commercial areas along the following Five Tier System: i) Metropolitan City Centre (pertains to already developed Central business district) ii) District Centre iii) Community Centre iv) Local shopping Centre v) Convenience Shopping Centre. *Source*: "The Master Plan of Delhi-2021". See the section on Trade and Commerce that gives a detailed hierarchy of these commercial areas. Also see, Table- 5.1 for the details of Five Tier System of Commercial Areas, pp. 51-52.

8. The ICSC recognizes two broad categories of malls i.e. 'enclosed malls' and 'strip malls', the difference being that the former are closed while the latter may have a row of stores without enclosed walkways. It further recognizes eight different types of malls *viz*. Neighourhood Center, Community Center, Regional Mall, Super Mall, Fashion/Specialty mall, Power Center, and Outlet Mall.

9. 'Mall is a shaded walk serving as a promenade' generalized from *The Mall*, name of a broad, tree-lined promenade in St. James's Park, London (so called from 1670s, earlier *Maill*, 1640s), which was so called because it formerly was an open alley that was used to play *pall-mall*, a croquet-like game involving hitting a ball with a mallet through a ring. Modern sense of "enclosed shopping gallery" is from 1962 (from 1951 in reference to city streets set aside for pedestrians only). See, *Online Etymology Dictionary* at *www.etymonline.com*

10. Also See Walter Benjamin. 1999. *The Arcades Project.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

11. In her attempt to question the dialectical coding of modernity through the separation of private and public space, J. Wolff. (1995) has traced the relationship between gender, class and the urban space in her article "The Invisible Flaneuse" based on the gendering of the famous literary figure of flaneur (the wandering male) sketched by Charles Baudelaire (1985). They draw attention to the fact that flaneuse (the female counterpart of the wandering male) is either missing on the streets of Paris of 19th century or else her presence is validated through her legitimate or illegitimate relationship to men, either as a lady or a whore. They contend that opening of the department store offered a safe avenue to the bourgeois women to venture out in the otherwise male and the dangerous city.

12. For urban development in the colonial period, *see,* A.D King, 2007(1976) and for the development of Delhi and its urbanization as per its Master Plan, see A. Kundu, 2003.

13. For the impact of *Bhagidari* scheme, see Srivastava (2009) and Ghertner (2014).

14. As a result of this beautification drive, millions of poor slum dwellers and residents of JJ. colonies lost their home from across the capital. See Dupont (2008); Bhan (2009); Baviskar (2011b); and Datta (2012) for details of these evictions.

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