

“projective” coin. In search of “a quieter and more modest way of looking at and interpreting buildings” (5), one that would be in keeping with his own “loser” status, he unwittingly reproduces the violence of the so-called winners and then cracks up. Oedipus, eat your heart out.

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Notes

1. The debates on this topic have seen memorable passages of argument appear in the pages of this journal. See, for example, John Maass, “Where Architectural Historians Fear to Tread,” *JSAH* 28, no. 1 (Mar. 1969), 3–8; Diane Harris, “That’s Not Architectural History! Or, What’s a Discipline For?,” *JSAH* 70, no. 2 (June 2011), 149–52.
2. See Giles Harvey, “Cry Me a River: The Rise of the Failure Memoir,” *New Yorker*, 25 Mar. 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/03/25/cry-me-a-river> (accessed 1 July 2015). The classic entries in this genre in modern Anglophone literature are undoubtedly F. Scott Fitzgerald’s three essays in *The Crack-Up* (New York: New Directions Books, 1945).
3. This misstatement is indicative of a loose attitude toward fact throughout the book. Brittain-Catlin repeatedly cites archival documents and published collections of letters without quoting from them in his text or in the endnotes or providing due context; see the introduction’s note 1 for the first example (153).

Nikhil Rao

House, but No Garden: Apartment Living in Bombay’s Suburbs, 1898–1964

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013, 312 pp., 2 tables, 53 b/w illus. \$90 (cloth), ISBN 9780816678129; \$30 (paper), ISBN 9780816678136

Of all the cities founded by the British in the colonial era, Bombay (now known as Mumbai) has most captured the imagination of writers. Over the past decade or so it has served as one of the primary subjects of a rich body of scholarship that vastly expands our understanding of the complexities of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonial cities in South Asia. This scholarship shows the important role of local populations in the making, imagining, and inhabiting of the colonial city, thus not only providing compelling insights into the architecture and urbanism of this era but also adding nuance to our

understanding of colonial processes that shaped the urban environment. Nikhil Rao’s *House, but No Garden*, which focuses on the construction and inhabitation of apartments as a new residential mode of dwelling as well as on global processes of suburbanization, is an important contribution to this emerging body of research.

Rao’s book reveals that the events associated with Bombay’s suburbanization in the twentieth century are vital to our understanding of urban land management, apartment dwelling’s role in the creation of middle-class identities and meta-identities, and the contemporary city. This work is significant for several reasons. First, it spans the period from 1898 to 1964, straddling the colonial and postcolonial eras (India became independent in 1947) and thus encompassing a part of the twentieth century that is relatively understudied in Indian cities. Many urban histories end around 1918, and anthropologists and sociologists often focus on the contemporary city. Urban historians writing about colonial Bombay prior to 1918 are referring to a limited geographical area of about 22 square miles in the southern third of the island of Bombay; in that period the northern third of the island remained undeveloped. In contrast, scholars writing on the contemporary city refer to Greater Mumbai, a vast region of about 186 square miles that spills far beyond the limits of the island city. Spatially and temporally, Rao’s work on suburbanization thus helps to bridge the scholarly divide between the colonial city before 1918 and today’s Greater Mumbai.

Second, the book is significant because it offers the first substantive study of suburbanization in South Asia that attempts to challenge the commonly held assumption that suburbs populated by elites were typical only of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Anglo-America, while squatter settlements housing the underclasses were established in peripheral areas in the developing world. Rao contends that apartment living and other institutions and norms initiated in the suburbs influenced the older sections of the city of Bombay and, later, Greater Mumbai, so that they did not follow the pattern of low-rise single-family homes in suburban developments:

Rather than playing a subordinate role to the city, the suburbs *pioneered* many

fundamental elements of the modern city of Bombay, elements that then made their way back to the older parts of the city. Physical forms of dwelling such as the apartment building, institutions such as the cooperative housing society, and metacaste forms of identity such as the South Indian—now essential attributes of the city called Greater Mumbai—were all initiated and elaborated in the suburbs of Bombay before making their way back into the city. (12)

Rao shows how apartment living became the most characteristic element of Bombay’s expansion from 1918 to 1960. By the 1920s, apartment living in the suburbs rather than residence in tenement buildings in the city distinguished upper-caste, lower-middle-class identities. This work demonstrates not only how communities create ethnic institutions in neighborhoods but also how neighborhoods influence the creation of new forms of large urban community identities. The book is significant also because it enhances our understanding of the complexities of urban land in Bombay and how those complexities contributed to the shaping of the urban and suburban landscapes.

Rao’s study is based on archival and library research, supported by ethnography and oral histories. The book is organized into an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction does a good job of laying out significant themes and contributions and outlining the central arguments of individual chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on land in discussing the creation of the suburban landscape of Dadar–Matunga–Sion by the Bombay City Improvement Trust, which was founded in 1898 as a response to the 1896 Bombay plague epidemic. Initially, the Improvement Trust concentrated its activities on improvement projects within the city, where it faced significant opposition from landholders as it attempted to obtain the land necessary to execute its schemes. Land speculation, the complexity of land tenure systems and property rights, and a lack of clarity regarding how to determine the price of land also contributed to the Trust’s difficulties. Given the problems associated with land acquisition in the city, the Trust pivoted in 1909 to a strategy of “indirect attack,” taking

control of all the land in the northern part of the island before it was acquired for speculation. This land was subsequently made available through 99- and 999-year leases, strong building and planning regulations were put in place, and the northern section of the island was linked to the city through a network of roads. While the dominant trend in scholarship on Bombay has been to condemn the Improvement Trust for its inability to build housing for all the people displaced in its urban renewal efforts, Rao commends the Trust for acquiring the outlying land and for transforming the perception of that land from villages to suburbs by regularizing it through standardized leaseholds and street patterns.

“Peopling the suburbs” was as important an issue as land acquisition. Chapter 2 traces the formation of a new lower-middle class whose members would populate Matunga. Rao shows how various communities, especially those who had migrated to the city after World War I, constituted Matunga as a South Indian neighborhood through the establishment of various ethnic, cultural, educational, religious, and residential community institutions. In the 1930s Matunga emerged as a distinct political community.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on apartment living in the suburbs and the development of the building industry that designed and constructed these structures. Of particular significance was the idea of self-contained flats, which included toilets within the dwelling units. Chapter 5 shows how “South Indian” identity was constituted in Matunga; this identity came to include different caste, linguistic, and even religious groups while excluding others. Chapter 6 examines town planning in Salsette, a large island north of Bombay. In describing a process of suburbanization very different from that seen elsewhere, Rao pays close attention to the conversion of land from agrarian to urban use. In Dadar–Matunga–Sion, the Improvement Trust acquired all the land, but in Salsette landowners retained ownership.

Despite its numerous strengths, the book leaves some questions unanswered. Rao argues that the colonial/indigenous opposition is of lesser importance to our understanding of colonial cities after the Government of India Act of 1919, when

local self-government was established and the colonial state withdrew from many aspects of urban development and governance. However, from the 1920s Indian cities such as Bombay were caught up in nationalist mass movements for Indian independence and in opposition to colonial rule. Furthermore, Rao’s own work shows that despite local self-government the colonial state in Bombay continued to exert control over urban development through the Improvement Trust and town planning. In terms of opposition to the activities of the Improvement Trust and town planning, we are presented with a view that showcases various Indian groups (such as landlords, industrialists, the lower-middle class) as acting in the city based on their self-interest. At the same time, the colonial state is revealed through the Trust (which did include Indian members), and town planners are portrayed as representing disinterested technical expertise. Such an analysis simply restates the binary between the colonial and the indigenous in a different way, giving the impression that only the technical expertise of the colonial state could provide a fair, impartial, and just way of managing urban development. More important, Rao does not raise the question of how the city’s sense of itself as an urban community changed in the twentieth century with this massive expansion through suburbanization, both during the nationalist movement and after independence. Finally, one of Rao’s most exciting arguments concerns how apartment living and other norms initiated in the suburbs came back to influence the older city, but he does not tell us in any detail how this dynamic unfolded. Such an analysis would have provided concrete support for Rao’s argument that suburbanization in Bombay was both a centrifugal process and a centripetal one, with the old city revitalized by ideas channeled back from its outlying suburbs.

Even with these shortcomings, *House, but No Garden* expands our understanding of the South Asian city in the twentieth century, shows how populations adapted to apartment living even as neighborhoods contributed to community formation, and makes an important contribution to our understanding of global processes of suburbanization. Well written and richly detailed, the product of meticulous

research, this book deserves a wide readership and will be of interest to students and scholars in a number of disciplines and in many parts of the world.

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Murray Fraser and Nasser Golzari, eds.
Architecture and Globalisation in the Persian Gulf Region

Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2013, 494 pp.,
32 color and 310 b/w illus. \$147.20, ISBN
9781409443148

Architecture and Globalisation in the Persian Gulf Region is an impressive volume that deals exclusively with the architecture of a region in need of much historical analysis and scholarly attention. This book is a very timely and important contribution to our improved understanding of the region and its global impact. Such understanding is imperative not only because the region itself is, and has long been, a hotbed of debates and solutions, but also because many of the most extreme manifestations of globalism—both in breathtaking architectural works and in the most ghastly violations of human rights that make them possible—are played out here.

The text is divided into three parts: “Western Coastline of Persian Gulf,” “Eastern Coastline of Persian Gulf,” and “Contemporary Design Approaches.” In the first and second parts each chapter examines a different city in the region, while the third part comprises four thematic explorations of contemporary stylistic, ideological, and design strategies. Murray Fraser provides a comprehensive introduction, outlining the unique approach of the book to the study of the region as a cultural and historical unit. While methodological and thematic concerns—for instance, the rather controversial question regarding the name of the Gulf—are well traced in the introduction, the collection of essays would have benefited from an in-depth historical examination of the Persian Gulf’s architectural and corresponding sociopolitical history.

In part I, Tanis Hinchcliffe lays out a brief history of the region and explores the relationship between the discovery of oil and large architectural commissions in the Gulf states between 1950 and 1980.