# Feature Articles

# Architecture and Urbanism in *Slumdog Millionaire*: From Bombay to Mumbai

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This article proposes that the film *Slumdog Millionaire* depicts a key moment in the history of India — the transformation during the 1990s of Bombay into Mumbai.  In the film, the life trajectories of Jamal Malik (its Muslim protagonist), his Hindu love Latika, and his older brother Salim play out against the metamorphosis of the city from conditions of modernity to postmodernity.  Recent scholarship has suggested this transformation involves the erasure of Bombay's former cosmopolitanism.  The article argues that *Slumdog Millionaire* constructs an urban narrative that spatializes and critiques this change, and that is built on two tropes.  First is the erasure of Bombay's complex local histories to facilitate its reinvention as monocultural, neoliberal Mumbai.  This is expressed through the use of settings where the city's former architectural palimpsest is being razed to create homogenized redevelopment areas.  Second is the increasing exclusion of the poor from public space — a point the film makes through its selective use (and avoidance) of traditionally emblematic public spaces.  Overall, the film narrates Bombay/Mumbai's recent urban history as a class war between what Rahul Mehrotra has called the "kinetic" and the "static" cities.  The article also builds on Nezar AlSayyad's argument that cinematic representations frequently draw on urban discourses in narrative construction — and, conversely, that cinema may serve as a lens through which to examine the cultural foundations upon which these discourses are built.  In this regard, *Slumdog Millionaire* refers to three urban/architectural spaces invested with specific ideological meaning: Dharavi, an organic settlement of vernacular architectures used to represent old Bombay; Lake Castle, an apartment building used to depict Bombay's neoliberal transformation into Mumbai; and Victoria Terminus, the Gothic Revival train station which serves as a site of contestation between those who would preserve the city's multiple histories and those who would overwrite them.

"Bombay had turned into Mumbai," pronounces Jamal Malik, the protagonist of *Slumdog Millionaire*, as he introduces the sequence in the film where he returns to the city.[1]  As he and his brother Salim walk along the top of giant sewer pipes, presumably Mumbai's newly acquired public-private infrastructure, the view includes a highrise building under construction, and the camera slowly and deliberately pans down the building's dense structure of reinforcing bars, emphasizing its verticality.  The film then presents a series of aerial shots expressing the city's transformation in the years they were away.  In this new topography, highrise buildings are displacing slums such as that where the brothers used to live.  Indeed, the place of their birth has been turned into a giant construction site, with new buildings rising everywhere in various stages of completion.

The film's presentation of Jamal and Salim dwarfed by the scale of new construction narrates the transition from Bombay to Mumbai in terms of large-scale redevelopment.  "Bombay" has been subject to massive urban renewal, its diverse vernacular architectures and informal neighborhoods bulldozed to make way for "Mumbai's" engineered buildings and formal, market-driven urbanism.  In the mise-en-scène of the film, this trope of displacement is used to express both an increased intolerance for the poor and the erasure of the city's former layered palimpsest to facilitate its reinvention in cleansed, monocultural form.

This article describes how *Slumdog Millionaire* narrates a key event in the history of India: the transformation of Bombay into Mumbai.  Before the city was renamed Mumbai in 1995 it went by a number of names.  To most of the world it was known by its English designation, Bombay, but people also referred to it as Bambai in Hindi and Mumbai when conversing in Marathi, Guajarati or Konkani.  Against this former ambiguity, the official change of name from Bombay to Mumbai represented a populist ideological coup intended to purge the city of colonial associations and tie it instead to the vision of an idealized pre-Islamic Maharashtrian-Hindu past.[2]

Recent scholarship has suggested that the drive to remake Bombay as Mumbai has involved far more than a change of name.  A variety of authors have described how it was conceived by right-wing Hindu fundamentalists and neo-liberal ideologues as a way to compromise the city's former cosmopolitanism.[3]  In urban spatial terms, the city's transformation may also be seen as an outcome of its metamorphosis from conditions of modernity to postmodernity.  This article argues that *Slumdog Millionaire* constructs an urban narrative that spatializes and critiques these changes at the same time that it chronicles the lives of its Muslim protagonist Jamal Malik, his Hindu love Latika, and his older brother Salim.

In depicting the transition between two distinctly different urban conditions in Bombay/Mumbai the film refers to three urban/architectural sites invested with specific ideological meaning: Dharavi, Lake Castle, and Victoria Terminus.  Located on prime real estate in the center of the city, Dharavi has long been one of Asia's largest slums (**FIG.1**).  The film uses images of it to illustrate Bombay's former cosmopolitanism.[4]  By contrast, Lake Castle is a highrise residential building designed in 1989 by the architect Hafeez Contractor as part of the Hiranandani Gardens gated community in suburban Powai (**FIG.2**).  It symbolizes urban renewal on a massive scale, as proposed in market-driven millennial manifestoes for the city, including the influential 2003 McKinsey report "Vision Mumbai: Transforming Mumbai into a World-Class City: A Summary of Recommendations."[5]  The



**FIGURE 1.** *Dharavi made recognizable by its sewer.  Photo by author.*

third site, Victoria Terminus, is a railway station designed in the Gothic Revival style in 1888 by the architect Frederick Stevens (**FIG.3**). During the high noon of the British Empire it was one of the most robust symbols of the British Raj in India, but in the film it serves as a site of contestation between those who would preserve the city's complex histories and those who would rewrite them through urban renewal, place-name changes, and the reinvention of urban landmarks.

In the film, the key spatial registers of the city's transformation are large-scale urban renewal projects, massive

infrastructure redevelopment, class conflict, and an increasing inaccessibility of public spaces to the poor. As the film depicts the changing fortunes of its main characters, it thus also depicts the demolition of the neighborhood where they grew up (typologized by Dharavi), and its transformation into a series of highrise blocks (exemplified by Hiranandani Gardens). In this way, the film fictionalizes the very discourse outlined in reports such as McKinsey's "Vision Mumbai." Bombay/Mumbai was once a place of complex and contrasting urban conditions. Slums made up of vernacular *zopad-patti* (shacks) existed in close proximity to cooperative housing societies, *chawls* (midrise, single-room tenements), Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) buildings, midrise blocks, and highrise buildings. However, in the film, the horizontal landscape of the slum is being replaced by a new vertical world of air-conditioned shopping malls, office towers, and luxury condominiums — and this building boom is being controlled by corrupt contractors, local gangs, and agents of global capital.

The film thus narrates a class conflict between two kinds of urbanism — formal and informal — what Rahul Mehrotra has called the "static" and the "kinetic" city. According to Mehrotra, the static city consists of mapped and named streets, legal infrastructure, and planned, typologically identifiable buildings. It thrives according to formal and lawful apparatuses sanctioned and operated by the state.[6] The kinetic city, on the other hand, represents a fluid urbanism and a more transient architecture, which is not always legal, knowable, designed or mappable. This informal city operates within institutions, networks and frameworks of shadow modernities.[7]

Tension over ownership and use of public space is the second recurrent trope in *Slumdog Millionaire*, used to register the city's diminishing tolerance for the poor, for Muslims, and for migrants. The film expresses the increasing unavailability of public space to the poor by avoiding reference to emblematic areas within its public domain — in particular, symbolic spaces on the city's waterfront. Hindi films set in Bombay/Mumbai have traditionally made the city recognizable through these waterfront spaces, which constitute a normative "Bollywood" mise-en-scène.[8] To borrow a term from Charlotte Brunsdon's work on London, Hindi cinema has used these waterfronts — Marine Drive, Worli Seaface, the Gateway of India, Haji Ali, Juhu Beach, Chowpatty, and Bandra Bandstand — to constitute a "landmark iconography."[9] By contrast, the main public space that appears in *Slumdog Millionaire* — indeed, the setting where its lovers are ultimately reconciled — is Victoria Terminus. Typically, Hindi films have used this place for very different effect. Far from being a destination for lovers, it has served as a landmark of arrival — the place where migrants first encounter the city. *Slumdog Millionaire* overturns these representational conventions and draws instead on recent and colonial histories. By concluding the love story of Jamal and Latika at Victoria Ter-

minus, it critiques attempts to associate both the station and the city with a mythical Maharashtrian-Hindu past.

In making these arguments about the film's urban narrative, this article draws on several recent works that examine the relationship between cinematic and urban spaces. David Clarke has claimed that the cinematic representation of urban space provides a rich cultural lens through which urban discourses can be critiqued.[10] Mark Shiel and Tony Fitzmaurice have investigated how cinematic space — as a simulation of social space — may provide a cultural foil against which to investigate sociological and cultural phenomenon operating at the urban level.[11] And Barbara Mennel has proposed that cities and films generate mutually dependent societal and spatial formations that are produced and reproduced through socio-spatial mechanisms.[12] Finally, Nezar AlSayyad has asserted that film and urbanism exist in constant cultural dialogue. According to AlSayyad, urban cinema is not just a genre representative of space, but also "a powerful analytical tool of urban discourse," while, conversely, urban discourses are crucial in the construction of cinematic narratives.[13]

This article builds particularly on AlSayyad's call to explore the mutually dependent relationship between urban histories and their cinematic constructs. In this light, it examines how the urban history of Bombay/Mumbai drives *Slumdog Millionaire*'s narrative, and how the film constructs and critiques an urban historical narrative of the city through socio-spatial transformations.

## FROM BOMBAY TO MUMBAI

To understand the urban narrative expressed in *Slumdog Millionaire* requires some background on the origins of Bombay as an archipelago of fishing villages and recent efforts to reinvent it as Mumbai. The city, as it is known today, came into being in the nineteenth century when a fortified trading post of the East India Company was transformed into a global hub of the British Empire. Bombay's nineteenth-century economic growth then led to large-scale infrastructure and urban design initiatives that were contemporaneous with and similar in scale to those in Vienna, London and Paris. Throughout this period the land area of the city, originally comprising a series of small islands, was also continuously expanded through reclamation, an effort that continued well into the twentieth century.

An important event propelling the growth of the city was the outbreak of the American Civil War in 1861. The war disrupted the supply of American cotton to Britain and led to the establishment of a new Indian supply chain, which created a cotton boom in the city. The economic surge accelerated a building program initiated by Sir Bartle Frere, Bombay's governor, who had ordered the demolition of walls surrounding the settlement in 1862. The razing of Bombay's walls freed up a large tract of land on which Frere formulated an urban

**FIGURE 4.** *Historical view of Bombay, looking northwards, with the University buildings and High Court in center and the Maidan beyond. Victoria Terminus can just be seen in the extreme top right-hand corner of the print. The Prince of Wales Museum is shown in the right foreground. Photo 91/(10). Photograph G70026-37. © The British Library Board. Used by permission.*

and architectural plan that included fourteen large-scale public buildings.[14] Altogether, the Victorian colonial building campaign resulted in the construction of army barracks, a European general hospital, a high court, a small court, a police magistrate's court, a post and telegraph office, a customs house, a secretariat, quarters for government officers, a railway station, a treasury, a record office, government offices, university buildings, a school of art, and school rooms.[15]

At the center of the Frere plan was the Maidan (Esplanade), a large open area. It was bordered on its east by monumental Gothic Revival style buildings — the Secretariat, University Library and Convocation Hall, the High Court, Public Works Department Offices, and the Central Telegraph Office — while it was open on the west to the Arabian Sea (**FIG.4**). In 1878 the Great Indian Peninsula Railway began construction of Victoria Terminus north of the Maidan. It commissioned the design from Frederick William Stevens (1848–1900), an architect trained in Bath who had been employed in the city's Public Works Department since 1867. When the building was completed in 1888, it became the most important symbol of Bombay's status as *urbs prima* of British India.

Not only was Victoria Terminus the most celebrated monument in colonial Bombay, but it held an important position in the city's design (**FIG.5**). The Frere plan established two intersecting axes that defined the monumental core of the city. An east-west axis connected the Town Hall on the eastern

periphery to Churchgate Street on the west, passing through Elphinstone Circle. Meanwhile, Victoria Terminus closed a north-south axis which connected to the Gateway of India.[16]

In the twentieth century, as the city grew, its Neo-Gothic core around the Maidan was eventually displaced by a new center. This was Marine Drive, a curving boulevard on the Arabian Sea between Nariman Point on the south and Malabar Hill on the north. A product of the Back Bay reclamation project, Marine Drive comprised a retaining wall that marked a sharp land-sea boundary, a promenade next to the retaining wall, and a vehicular boulevard east of the promenade. But Marine Drive also became identifiable on account of the Miami Beach-style Art Deco buildings that were built along its eastern edge. Upon completion in 1940, Marine Drive also changed the relationship between the city's Victorian center and the Arabian Sea: after its completion the Neo-Gothic building complex on the Maidan no longer enjoyed direct views of the sea (**FIG.6**).

After independence, Bombay continued as the cosmopolitan, commercial capital of India and home of its stock market. It also became the production center for the Hindi film industry, popularly known as Bollywood. But it also became a place of increasing ethnic and political tension. In 1960 the Marathi-speaking state of Maharashtra, containing the city, was created on the basis of its ethno-linguistic Marathi identity.[17] And since the 1950s the views of Marathi nationalists have

A) MALABAR HILL

VICTORIA TERMINUS

ARABIAN SEA

MAIDAN

GOTHIC BUILDINGS

GATEWAY OF INDIA

B) Bombay 1914

ARABIAN SEA

ESPLANADE

Victoria Terminus

Central Telegraph Office

Public Works Offices

High Court

University Library

Convocation Hall

Secretariat

C)

ARABIAN SEA

Azad Maidan

Chhatrapati Shivaji Railway Terminus (Formerly Victoria Terminus)

Cross Maidan

FORT

Marine Drive

Horniman Circle

Flora Fountain

East West Axis

Asiatic Society (Town Hall)

Oval Maidan

Nariman Point

North South Axis

Cooperage Maidan

Gateway of India

BOMBAY HARBOUR

0        1 Mile

0     1 Km

clashed with those of people who value the city for its inclusive cosmopolitanism.[18]  The conflict ultimately led to the city's renaming in 1995 as part of an effort by nativists to decolonize, renationalize, de-Islamicize, and reterritorialize it as part of a Maharashtrian-Hindu cultural sphere, cleansed of Muslims, slums, colonial histories, and non-Marathi "outsiders."[19]

Throughout history the archipelago that became Bombay has had a variety of names.  When the Portuguese first established it as a trading post in the sixteenth century they called it *A ilha da boa vida* [The island of good life].  The city that subsequently grew up was referred to by a variety of names: Mumbai, Mumbaim, Mombaim, Bombaim, Born Bahia, and Bombay.[20]  The variety reflected a diverse linguistic heritage that typified the city's cosmopolitanism.  For years the difference between Bombay and Mumbai could be understood as akin to that between Florence and Firenze or Munich and München.[21]  People referred to the city as Bombay in English, Mumbai in Marathi/Guajarati/Konkani, and Bambai in Hindi.

Against this background, the official renaming may be seen as more than just the privileging of Marathi over English.  Indeed, it marked the ascendance of a nativist political agenda that has sought to erase colonial history and establish the city as a site of Maharashtrian nationalism.  For this project, the names Bombay and Mumbai carry distinct ideological meanings.  "Mumbai" is derived from Mumbadevi, the patron goddess of the archipelago before it was colonized, who is featured in several foundational myths.[22]  The driving forces behind the Bombay-to-Mumbai change have been the

Shiv Sena (a nativist Maharashtrian party) and the nationwide Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP).  These parties have attempted to rename other important features of the city so they too would align symbolically with Maharashtrian nationalist views.  And rival political parties, such as the Congress, have continued this populist name-changing agenda.  For example, at a state ceremony on March 4, 1996, the Union Minister of Railways, Suresh Kalamdi, officially changed the name of Victoria Terminus to Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.[23]  The change reflected an attempt to fabricate Victoria Terminus as a site related to the nationalistic narrative of the Maratha King Shivaji and obscure memory of its colonial origins.

## *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE*: THE NARRATIVE

The film tells the story of its Muslim protagonist Jamal, an unlikely contestant on the TV show "Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC)," an Indian version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?"  Based on the novel *Q&A*, by Vikas Swarup, it portrays Jamal's life through flashbacks that explain how he knows the answers to a series of questions on the show.[24]  In the film, the protagonist has a clearly defined Muslim identity.  By contrast, the protagonist in *Q&A* is an orphan whose religious and ethnic origins are unknown (his name, Ram Mohammad Thomas, signifies a multireligious and multiethnic identity that is a product of "composite culture.")[25]  The film's depiction of

events in its protagonist's life is also clearly meant to represent the rise of Hindu-Muslim intolerance in the city in the 1990s.

The film begins with scenes of Jamal's childhood in an unspecified slum, represented primarily by images of Dharavi and the airport slums close to Juhu. In the film, Jamal and his brother Salim lose their mother, community and home in an anti-Muslim riot. The riot is a fictionalization of those that followed the demolition of the Babri Masjid in the north-Indian city of Ayodhya. On December 6, 1992, in an effort to restore the site to its supposed original, pre-Islamic past, right-wing Hindu groups demolished this mosque, which had been constructed in 1527 by the Mughal emperor Babur. This event triggered communal riots the next day in Bombay; however, it was later rumored that the riots had actually been instigated by greedy developers and a local real estate mafia hoping to clear the land occupied by slums for redevelopment.[26] In the history of the transition from Bombay to Mumbai, the riot emblemizes the larger project of cleansing the city of Muslims, poor people, and migrants. Jamal's story is thus closely tied to the planned transformation of the city, including a rewriting of its history through the violent marginalization of Muslims and other non-Marathi people.

After the riot, against all communal barriers, an orphaned Jamal befriends the homeless Hindu girl Latika, with whom he later falls in love. But in the absence of home, family, or the social network of their former slum, the trio — Jamal, Salim and Latika — become trapped in a child crime syndicate. Eventually, after Salim refuses to cooperate with a plan by the gang's adult boss to blind Jamal, the brothers escape. But by jumping a train and leaving the city, they also become separated from Latika.

In Agra, identifiable by images of the Taj Mahal, the brothers grow into precocious teenagers, surviving by their wits and a variety of petty scams. But Jamal is haunted by the memory of Latika, and the brothers agree to return to Bombay to rescue her. By then, however, the city is being transformed into Mumbai.

The brothers find Latika in a brothel where their former gang boss has installed her in hopes of a huge payoff. Following a violent confrontation during which Salim murders the boss, the three escape. Subsequently, however, Salim rapes Latika and hands her over to the mafia leader Javed. In the process, Salim becomes part of Javed's gang and severs ties with Jamal.

After a number of years the brothers again meet as young men. The site is a highrise building under construction in Powai, understood in film to be the site of their former slum. By this time Jamal has found work as a *chaiwallah* [tea-server] in a call center, signifying Mumbai's integration into the global service economy. Salim has risen to become a successful lieutenant in Javed's crime syndicate, which controls a large portion of Mumbai's real estate market.

After their reunion Jamal spies on Salim in order to find Latika, who has become Javed's captive mistress. To find her,

he tails Salim's SUV in an auto-rickshaw to Javed's luxurious bungalow. The backdrop of Lake Castle clearly determines the site as being in Powai. Disguised as a newly hired servant, he then gains entry into the house, where he appeals to Latika to run away with him. Latika refuses, knowing he has no money and that Javed would find them. However, before Jamal is fired for incompetence, he discovers that Latika is addicted to the TV show "Kaun Banega Crorepati." Knowing that she will be watching, he manages to become a contestant. And despite being tortured by police who refuse to believe a "slumdog" could win without cheating, he ends up winning the top prize.

Though ultimately a love story, the film dramatizes the decline of the city's cosmopolitanism through depictions of a deepening of Hindu-Muslim fault lines, the rise of local crime syndicates, the corruption of urban renewal efforts, the emergence of world-class city discourse, and the rise of gated communities. All these factors create spatial hurdles for Jamal as he seeks to reunite with Latika. Eventually, he transcends them all, and the two lovers are reunited at Victoria Terminus.

## BOMBAY IN *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE*

*Slumdog Millionaire* constructs Bombay and Mumbai as two distinct urban paradigms that produce different social conditions. The film depicts Bombay as the metropolis that captured the imagination of Bollywood, what Arjun Appadurai called the "cosmopolis of commerce."[27] Meanwhile, it depicts Mumbai as a regional neonativist construct that attempts to erase Bombay's colonial histories and marginalize "outsiders" — Muslims and non-Marathis.

The ease with which diverse migrants assimilated to life in Bombay once helped define the city's identity. Prior to the 1990s, the lack of socio-spatial polarization along class, ethno-linguistic, or religious lines secured its status as the most cosmopolitan city in India. Against this background, *Slumdog Millionaire* fictionalizes the making of Mumbai through reference to two spatial transformations. The first involves a razing of the city's layered architectural palimpsest; the second involves a class struggle over access to public spaces.

The film shows the Bombay of Jamal's childhood to have been a city where different religions, multiple ethnicities, class differences, slums, and diverse architectures were all tolerated, despite deep inequalities. The Mumbai of Jamal's young adulthood, however, is a city sharply divided along religious and class lines. It is also a place cleansed of slums — the site of gated communities, where a rising middle class enjoys a privatized infrastructure that allows them to avoid interacting with the poor. The film thus depicts the transformation of Bombay into Mumbai through the spatialization of class difference, as registered through urban fragmentation.

The film represents Jamal's slum childhood as typical of old Bombay. In addition to Dharavi, the scenes that depict it

were shot at the Juhu airport slum and on a film set. However, as both the popular press and film scholars have pointed out, it is the scenes shot in Dharavi that best establish Jamal's imagination of Bombay as his home. Jamal's slum birthplace is shown to be a site of Dickensian squalor where an architecture of *zopadpatti* coexists with heaps of rotting trash. In reality, Dharavi is located on a 525-acre site between Nariman Point (Mumbai's central business district), the Bandra-Kurla complex (its emerging midtown financial center), and the historic Worli district.[28] Three train stations — Mahim, Matunga and Sion, from which trains of the Western, Central and Harbour lines connect to Mumbai's suburbs — roughly mark the corners of its triangular site (**FIG.7**). Indeed, Dharavi's location within the city's transportation network and proximity to its business districts and to Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in some ways make it Mumbai's "golden triangle." As a result, it has become extremely attractive as a redevelopment site for predatory global capital investors, local real estate interests, and the state.

Dharavi was originally the site of a swamp, a largely uninhabitable area that supported only a small fishing hamlet. However, as the southern parts of Bombay developed in the nineteenth century, Dharavi was transformed into a squatter settlement for migrants. At the time its northern location was marginal to patterns of settlement in the city. But in the twentieth century, as greater Bombay expanded northward through the formation of suburbs such as Andheri, Jogeshwari, Kandivli, Juhu, Versova, Powai and Malad, Dharavi came to occupy a location almost at the city's center.

Today Dharavi is an extremely complex, vibrant area that combines a variety of land uses, including housing, retail, services (laundry, tailoring, and shoe repair), wholesaling, and manufacturing (textiles, leather, pottery, food processing, and recycling).[29] Yet, as an organic settlement, it has evolved largely without government planning. It also lacks modern infrastructure and amenities such as hygienic waste disposal or an adequate supply of clean, piped drinking water. Meanwhile, its *zopadpatti* housing stock, though spatially inventive and adaptive, is materially and structurally unsound.

By contemporary standards, Dharavi is also extremely overcrowded. The median floor area per house is 108 square feet (10 square meters), which represents 24 square feet (2.2 square meters) per capita.[30] Yet, because the majority of houses are one-floor, single-room structures, it also has a very low floor space index (FSI). FSI is the ratio of constructed area on all floors of a building to lot size. Typically, it is a measure used in government planning to control population densities based on the carrying capacity of infrastructure.[31] However, in the case of Dharavi, the aggregate low FSI (equal to or less than 1.0) is a sign to developers that the land it occupies is underused and ripe for redevelopment.

Despite such appraisals, Dharavi has been estimated to include as many as 15,000 single-room factories, to provide employment for around a quarter of a million people, and to
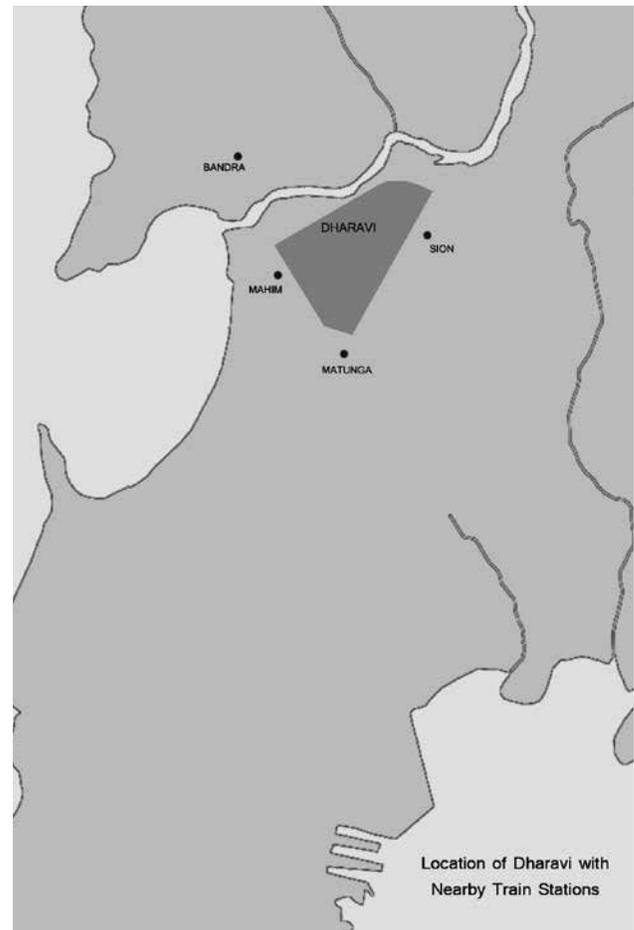
**FIGURE 7.** *Dharavi on Mumbai's map. Drawing by Nicholas Swank.*

generate an annual economic output of between $660 million to $1 billion.[32] Indeed, Ananya Roy has critiqued *Slumdog Millionaire*'s portrayal of Dharavi as a housing ghetto as overly simplistic; the reality of activity there is much more complex in both cultural and socioeconomic terms.[33] Historically, Dharavi has also constituted a melting pot for migrants from the Indian hinterland, whose religions, ethnicities, and economic interests have intersected in complex ways to generate diverse spatial practices.[34] However, the residents of Dharavi often lack substantiated proof of land tenure, making them vulnerable to dispossession.

To address Dharavi's slum conditions and capitalize on its redevelopment potential, the Dharavi Redevelopment Project (DRP) was launched in 2004. Conceived as a public-private alliance between the Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (MHADA) and global corporations, the DRP was informed by the market-driven urban paradigm described in the McKinsey report. In June 2007 the government of Maharashtra advertised the DRP as a five-billion-euro project that would divide Dharavi into five sectors. These would be developed by separate international companies,

selected through competitive bidding. According to the plan, each developer would pay a premium to the government, rehouse the slum dwellers, and provide amenities and infrastructure. In exchange, each company would be granted an "incentivized" FSI, allowing it to build additional commercial and residential space for sale on the open market.

Elsewhere in the city where the market-driven, incentivized-FSI model of slum rehabilitation has been employed, developers have typically been allowed an FSI of 2.5. In other words, they might build 2.5 times as much space as the original lot area, on condition they rehouse the original residents of the area for free in space equal to 1.0 FSI. They might thus sell the additional 1.5 FSI of built space on the open market, with the understanding that part of their profit would subsidize the cost of building new units for the original slum inhabitants. In the case of Dharavi, however, the slum-rehabilitation rules have been relaxed. To make the project more economically competitive and increase potential profits, the government has agreed to allow developers to build to an FSI of 4.0.

With the opening of the housing market to private capital, allowable FSI has become a constant source of conflict between the state, developers, and urban activists. In theory, allowing an increased FSI should provide existing residents with materially upgraded modern highrise housing, piped water, sanitary waste disposal, drainage, and green parks. Yet Dharavi residents have rejected the DRP as predatory and hubristic, claiming it is primarily designed to evict and disenfranchise them.[35] Dharavi has thus emerged as the most contested site in an epic class battle to reshape Mumbai. Existing residents are today actively resisting the paradigm of market-driven urban renewal promoted by the McKinsey report.[36] And it is this urban narrative that *Slumdog Millionaire* seeks to express. In the class war between the kinetic and static cities, Dharavi not only epitomizes kinetic urbanism, but it represents the antithesis of the paradigm embodied by the Lake Castle project designed by the architect Hafeez Contractor.

DHARAVI AS THE URBAN MISE-EN-SCÈNE IN BOMBAY

In *Slumdog Millionaire*, Dharavi's dystopian urban environment is the mise-en-scène of Jamal's childhood. But these conditions are not without a certain *joie de vivre*. Two episodes, in particular, lend these sections of the film a positive and comedic tone. In one, a police constable chases Jamal and his friends; in the other, Jamal is able to obtain the signature of the Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan.

The morphology of Dharavi as a slum settlement is best shown during the sequence in which Jamal and his friends are chased by the constable. To the soundtrack of A.R. Rahman and M.I.A.'s "O . . . Saya," it is composed of ground-level and aerial shots that show its densely packed one-story *zopad-patti* and fetid waterways. Jamal and his brother Salim, however, are complete masters of this labyrinth. They navigate its

low roofs, streets and alleys with élan, making the constable look comically inadequate. In the process, Jamal and the other children assert themselves as citizens of the kinetic city. They claim it as home through their superior navigational knowledge of its complex topography.[37]

The second episode illustrating Bombay's character is that in which Jamal meets the Bollywood superstar Bachchan. At its beginning, Jamal is squatting in a shanty outhouse at the end of a dilapidated wooden pier. While there, Bachchan's helicopter is spotted approaching. Because Jamal has taken too long, losing Salim the fee he wanted to charge another user, Salim locks Jamal in the latrine before joining the crowd running to see Bachchan. Unable to get out by way of the door, Jamal realizes he must jump into the swampy sewage. Covered in feces, he pushes his way through the crowd however. And after Jamal gets the movie star's autograph the camera zooms out to show Bombay at sunset, its slums intermingling with its other building types.

In *Bombay: The Cities Within*, Sharda Dwivedi and Rahul Mehrotra have described Bombay's former building stock as comprising "a skyline that presents a medley of architectural silhouettes where chimney mill stacks, skillfully crafted Gothic towers, skyscrapers, shanty settlements, and vernacular dwellings all coalesce to form the many layered palimpsest that is Bombay" (FIG.8).[38] The skyline shot at the end of the autograph sequence seems to define this vision of Bombay's former cosmopolitanism — its diversity of building types, its histories, the multiplicity of people who inhabit them, and their proximity to one another. In the Bombay of Jamal's childhood class differences do not correspond to sharp spatial segregation. It is by no means an equitable place, but the proximity of slums to privileged neighborhoods seems to underscore its resilience.

The autograph sequence acknowledges the city's extreme stratification. The slumdog Jamal does not have access to the most basic amenities such as a private toilet, but Bachchan, an icon of Bollywood royalty, may arrive by helicopter, bypassing the city's inadequate infrastructure. Nevertheless, Bombay presents Jamal with the opportunity to meet India's most famous man in person — it allows the paths of very different people to intersect. And Jamal is able to assert his right to be there, even if this means defecating in a public latrine and inhabiting a slum. The film thus establishes Bombay as a city with a certain acceptance of class, religious and ethnic differences. But it then shows the brothers being driven from their home by Hindu rioters. And it dramatizes the event as a violent form of urban renewal and ethnic cleansing. Arjun Appadurai has referred to such events as "urban cleansing."[39] Indeed, the riot is presented as the trigger for the purging of Bombay's varied histories. It is meant to drive out Muslims, displace poor people, free up slum land for redevelopment, and erase existing vernacular architectures.

When Amitabh Bachchan descended on Jamal's slum by helicopter, the crowd was shown as an undifferentiated

**FIGURE 8.** *Mumbai's Skyline as viewed from Planet Godrej in Mahalaxmi. Photo by author.*

mass of slum dwellers, whose ethnic, religious and linguistic identities were assimilated into their identity as cosmopolitan Bombaywallahs [Bombay residents]. At this point in the narrative, the film has yet to depict anyone as having a specifically Hindu or Muslim identity. But during the riot sequence, the difference between Hindus and Muslims is easily discernable by means of classifiable styles of dress, headgear and beards. After the riot, without their mother and deprived of their *habitus* and community, the brothers are forced to seek shelter wherever they can find it. They turn to scavenging and then a life of petty crime to support themselves, before finally being forced out of the city. But when they return, the city is no longer Bombay, but Mumbai.

## MUMBAI: URBAN RENEWAL AND PRIVATIZATION OF HOUSING SUPPLY

After several years of separation, the reunion between Jamal and Salim is shown to take place on an empty floor in a high-rise under construction on the site of the slum in which they lived as children.[40] In the film, the suburban enclave of Powai is used to represent the forces of neoliberal urbanism behind these changes **(FIG.9)**. The film dwells on a shot of Jamal

slowly rising in a construction elevator to meet Salim on one of the building's unfinished upper floors. As the camera rises with the elevator, the shot emphasizes the verticality, mechanized construction, and modern engineering of this generic building. It represents the complete opposite of the environment the brothers grew up in. As Jamal and Salim then sit and talk the scale of urban renewal around them, Salim remarks: "We used to live right there, man. Now, it's all business. India is at the center of the world now, *bhai* [brother]. And I, . . . I am at the center of the center. This is all Javed-*bhai*'s."[41]

Through this scene the film implies that the city is undergoing a massive gentrification process, whereby the poor are being uprooted to make way for the affluent. The privatization of Mumbai's housing sector is thus a key element of its urban narrative. Prior to the 1990s, the state had assumed responsibility for providing housing as a public good. But with the liberalization of India's markets starting in 1991, the state withdrew from this role. The rise of neoliberal urban policies also led to the privatization of infrastructure services that were formerly the province of the state, to the implementation of large-scale development through public-private partnerships, and to the demolition of slums to free up land for the middle class and the rich.[42] In Mumbai, through slum clearance, the Maharashtra state government and the Brihanmumbai Mu-

**FIGURE 9.** *Powai.*
*Photo by author.*

nicipal Corporation (BMC) demolished 360,326 housing units between 1994 and 1998, and another 300,000 in 2004–5.[43]

Several government policies have been instrumental in promoting private-sector control of the housing supply chain in Mumbai. They include FSI-incentivized slum rehabilitation (discussed earlier), a repeal of the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act (ULCRA) in 1999, and the introduction of Transferrable Development Rights (TDR) in 1991.

The ULCRA was a housing act passed in 1976 during Indira Gandhi's emergency rule. Its intent was to provide a fair distribution of land to promote housing for the urban poor. Through the ULCRA, the state set a ceiling on the amount of vacant urban land an individual or financial entity could hold and created provisions by which "surplus" land might be acquired by the state to build housing for the poor at affordable prices. In theory the act was designed to prevent speculation and improve access to housing for the poor, but in practice the ULCRA contained legal and structural loopholes that became barriers to achieving its objective on a wide scale.[44] No matter how flawed, however, its repeal symbolized a decision by the state to back away from its previous responsibility to serve as a dominant actor in housing the poor.

The introduction of TDR, another instrumental government policy change, enables the trade of development rights in the free market. It separates a parcel of land from these rights, and then allows their transfer to other locations if the original parcel is unbuildable to its full FSI or if it is valued for other purposes. The privatization of housing supply and the introduction of such new mechanisms was supposed to increase the supply of housing in Mumbai to match high demand. In practice, however, it has helped create an inflated housing market and a fragmented cityscape, deeply fissured along class lines.[45]

## LAKE CASTLE AS A METAPHOR FOR MUMBAI

In its later segments, *Slumdog Millionaire* constructs Mumbai as the consequence of these new policies of neoliberal urbanism — a city in which lines of demarcation between classes have obtained clear expression through architectural barriers. After Jamal manages to relocate Latika, the film emphasizes the spatial quality of these social divisions. The two are now separated not only by class and religion, but by the physical outcomes of Mumbai's parallel black and white economies. While Jamal works as a *chaiwallah* within the white globalized economy, Latika lives a privileged life in Javed's luxury bungalow, supported by cash from the black economy.

Jamal is only able to navigate this new spatial segregation by following Salim's SUV in an auto-rickshaw. And the suburban gated community where Latika is being held as Javed's captive mistress is not only difficult to access via public transport, but it is enclosed by a boundary wall through which access is controlled by a wrought-iron gate under the constant surveillance of a security guard. In the film, the bungalow and its many architectural boundaries, such as gates, security devices, gatehouses, and grills, emphasize the establishment of a new landscape of class difference intended to prevent intrusion by outsiders.

The scene in which Jamal is reunited with Latika is also immediately preceded by one in which he is framed against the backdrop of one of the most famous icons of postmodern Mumbai — Lake Castle, a highrise housing block designed by the architect Hafeez Contractor and built in 1989 (**FIG.10A**). To gain access to Javed's house, Jamal pretends to be seeking employment as a domestic servant. As he approaches the gated complex, however, he is framed in ex-

treme close-up through its massive wrought-iron gate against the backdrop of Lake Castle (**FIG.10B**).  The use of the building in the film is a deliberate gesture.  Its postmodern facade is composed of circular windows, projecting semicircular balconies, and segmental arches.  Indeed, at 183 meters long, it evokes the image of an ocean liner on the banks of Powai Lake.[46]  The camera emphasizes this enormous scale, squeezing Jamal's face into the frame to show it as the absolute opposite of Dharavi in the discourse of the city's transformation.

In reality, Lake Castle is part of the Hiranandani Gardens gated community in Powai.  The complex is a self-contained enclave on a 300-acre site and includes schools, business parks, manicured green spaces, shopping complexes, hotels, supermarkets, clubs, gardens, and swimming pools.  Its postmodern architecture, many layers of security, new spaces of consumption (such as a mall, bowling alley, go-kart track, and fast-food outlets), and deliberately foreign nomenclature are all exercises in generic global place-making that deny local history and specificity.[47]  Hiranandani Gardens turns its back on the city's history, slums, pollution, overcrowding and poverty to instead promise class homogeneity, and it has built its brand value on the politics of exclusion.[48]  It is designed to reflect the new identity of Mumbai's urban middle class as consumer-citizens on a par with the middle classes elsewhere in the developed world.[49]

Architectural design is an essential element of this vision.  The kitsch, postmodern projects of Hafeez Contractor represent a complete rejection of the canon of modernism.  Indeed, architectural critics in India regard his work as embodying a populism of architectural pastiche that lends itself to easy consumption.[50]  Meanwhile, his corporatized architectural practice is known for delivering market-driven projects without social or intellectual concern.[51]  Contractor himself has laid claim to the maxim "Form follows FSI."[52]  And he has become a vocal public advocate of higher FSIs as the only solution to the shortage of housing in Mumbai.

Contractor's position on market-driven slum rehabilitation and higher FSIs closely aligns with the tenets of the 2003 McKinsey report.[53]  "Vision Mumbai" proposed the transformation of Mumbai into a "world-class city" through large-scale infrastructure development and a massive program of urban renewal to increase its supply of housing.  As of 2013

the aggregate FSI for the older, island-city portions of Mumbai was 1.33, and it was 1.00 for the city's suburbs (**FIG.11**).[54]  The report contended that the current government-specified allowable FSIs of 1.0, 1.33, and 2.5 were inadequate.  It projected that only a block-by-block demolition and rebuilding of Mumbai to an FSI of 3.0 to 4.0, supported by construction of a new, world-class transport infrastructure, would be needed to create an adequate housing supply.[55]  The report projected that the rebuilding of the city would also reduce its slum population from the existing 50–60 percent to 10–20 percent, and it made a strong case for emulating Shanghai as a model for Mumbai's transformation.[56]

The McKinsey proposals were based on the creation of a public-private alliance and a campaign of foreign direct investment to attract the enormous amount of capital needed for new housing and infrastructure.  This market-driven paradigm assumed that rebuilding the city to higher FSIs would generate profits through the sale of surplus built area.  But the report came under heavy criticism from several constituencies for failing to address the realities of Mumbai.  For example, the McKinsey recommendations, if implemented, would completely annihilate Mumbai's existing building stock — a symbol of the city's diversity, layered histories, and cosmopolitanism.[57]

As a reflection of the class war between informal and formal urbanism, the film's depiction of Lake Castle fictionalizes the successful implementation of the McKinsey paradigm.  In the imagination of the film, the violent transformation of Mumbai is akin to the checkerboard of tall buildings proposed for central Paris in Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse — with Lake Castle being its most potent symbol.

Through the life trajectories of Jamal, Salim and Latika the film fictionalizes the social costs and consequences of this gentrification project.  These include the damage to the lives of the people displaced (the three children become homeless and exploited); the breakup of historic communities (Jamal and Salim's neighborhood is lost forever); the growth of crime (after committing murder and rape, Salim is welcomed into Javed's gang); and the creation of a "free" real estate market controlled by developers in collusion with crime syndicates.  The transformation of Bombay into Mumbai through urban renewal is thus shown as annihilating the city's very identity.

**FIGURE 10A AND B.**  *Film stills from* Slumdog Millionaire *showing Jamal in front of Lake Castle complex and in close-up through a wrought-iron gate.  Screen captures by author.*
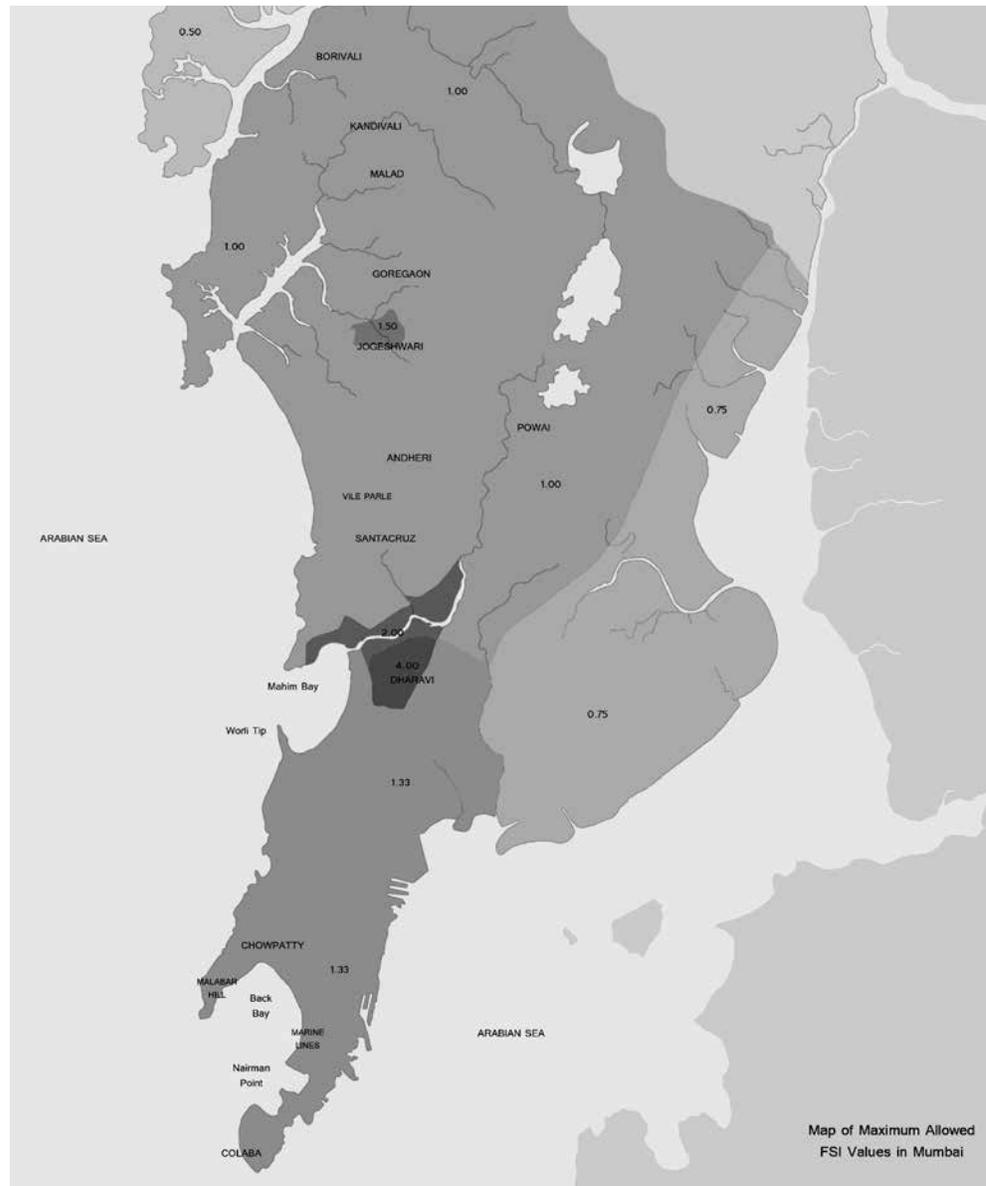
## PUBLIC SPACES

Hindi films set in Bombay/Mumbai have typically engaged
with what Charlotte Brunsdon has called a "hegemonic loca-
tion discourse."[58]  As part of this discourse, the city's water-
fronts — Marine Drive, Worli Seaface, the Gateway of India,
Haji Ali, Juhu Beach, Chowpatty, and Bandra Bandstand
— have constituted a landmark iconography that functions as
an important mise-en-scène.[59]  Because the city's waterfronts
were typically accessible across social divisions, their filmic
depictions as spaces populated with heterogeneous crowds
reinforces their availability as spaces of liberation from social
stratification.  And in reality the waterfront has served as a
social leveler, facilitating the coming together of people from
diverse religious, ethno-linguistic, and social origins.

Hindi cinema has also established certain norms for the
use of these spaces so that they function as a metaphor for
the city's cosmopolitanism.  In these films, the waterfronts
enable social phenomena that are only possible in Bombay,
including social mobility, as typically signified through the
union of lovers from different social and religious back-
grounds.  Bombay's waterfronts have thus played an impor-
tant role in the representation of urban subjectivities.[60]

In *Deewar* (1975), Vijay — played by Amitabh Bachchan
— views Marine Drive through a highrise hotel window as
an aspirational urban space.  As a homeless migrant, he first
walked Marine Drive with his mother and brother.  However,
after rising in a Bombay crime syndicate, he is able to view
the same space from the privileged vantage of one who has
crossed class barriers, as signified by the gaze from a window

on an upper floor of an expensive highrise hotel in a prime location in the city. In *Don* (1978) Bachchan first plays a street entertainer who sings "Yeh hai Bambai nagaria" ["This is the City of Bombay] (a tribute to Bombay's diversity and mobility) to diverse crowds on the waterfront (most prominently at Gateway of India). But after he is recruited to impersonate his look-alike, Don, an underworld leader, he assumes a new urban persona and crosses several social boundaries — a transformation only possible in Bombay. In *Manzil* (1979), lovers from vastly different social strata (played by Bachchan and Moushmi Chatterji) meet at the Gateway of India. Without this space, the film implies, their rendezvous would never have been possible. And in *Wake Up Sid* (2009), Ayesha Banerjee (Konkona Sen-Sharma), an independent middle-class Bengali woman, and Sid (Ranbir Kapoor), an affluent Punjabi Bombaywallah, overcome their ethno-linguistic and class differences to fall in love. The film concludes at Marine Drive, where Ayesha and Sid embrace.

Gyan Prakash has noted that Marine Drive in particular is the "classic Bombay mise-en-scène."[61] The definitive song from the film *C.I.D.* (1955), "Ae dil hai mushkil jeena yahan, zara hat ke zara bach key eh Bambai meri jaan" ["Dear, it is difficult to survive in Bombay, be careful, watch out, this is Bombay, my love"] is a notable example. Here, the song sequence, shot largely with Marine Drive's Art Deco architecture as a backdrop, constructs a montage contrasting the new architecture of this open, sea-facing space with the Neo-Gothic world of its old, crowded, hustling-bustling Victorian center. But Marine Drive has also figured in other films — such as the aforementioned *Deewar* (1975), *Muqaddar Ka Sikandar* (1978), *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* (2003), *Dhoom* (2004), *Bluffmaster* (2005), and *Talaash* (2012), as the most celebrated landmark image of Bombay/Mumbai.

In a deliberate break with all these portrayals, *Slumdog Millionaire* refuses to depict any of the city's conventional assimilatory waterfront spaces. The absence of Marine Drive is particularly evident as a normative landmark and metaphor for the city's cosmopolitanism. But *Slumdog Millionaire* defies established cinematic norms precisely to signal the increasing inaccessibility of such spaces as part of the transformation of Bombay into Mumbai.

In reality, all the city's well-known waterfronts are under strain due to overcrowding, poor waste management, encroachment by squatters, privatization, gentrification, and terrorism. Particularly lacking has been a master plan treating them as a public asset to be protected from environmental degradation.[62] Mumbai's waterfronts once provided an important recreational resource, offering relief from urban life to people from all social strata. But unchecked pollution has led the affluent to congregate elsewhere, and simultaneously generated middle-class cleansing drives that frequently cause restrictions on access by the poor.

The creation of restricted, air-conditioned semipublic spaces has reinforced this condition. The redevelopment of the city as Mumbai has produced malls, multiplexes, fast-food outlets, bowling alleys, and coffee shops that offer an alternative to the city's older public areas. These globally generic interiorized places of consumption are the new middle-class social hubs. Moreover, while a bazaar typically allows unrestricted access, malls are gated spaces, protected by metal detectors and security guards who are empowered to deny entry to people who do not look affluent enough to shop there. The situation was made worse by terrorist attacks in Mumbai in 1993, 2006, 2008 and 2011, which boosted the demand for policing and led to the treatment of Muslims with suspicion.[63] The result of all these trends is that social engagement is now increasingly associated with new forms of class-based consumption within enclosed, generic spaces.

Acting somewhat synergistically with neoliberal urbanism, middle-class environmentalism has also provided a catalyst for the gentrification of public spaces. In the last two decades Indian cities have become sites for forms of middle-class activism that have helped reconfigure urban spaces for elite consumption. This new middle-class political power is frequently expressed through voluntary neighborhood organizations with wide-ranging agendas, including neighborhood security, cleanliness, beautification, slum clearance, the banning of hawking, and urban greening.[64] Through such efforts, the middle classes and the elite now exert tremendous political influence, claiming public areas for themselves and imposing class-based segragation of urban spaces, creating what Mike Davis has likened to "spatial apartheid."[65]

Class struggle over public space is a recurring trope in *Slumdog Millionaire*. The narrative of Jamal's childhood in Bombay begins with a battle over what constitutes urban public space. The scene where he is chased by the constable begins when he and his slum friends are playing *galli kirkit* [street cricket] close to an airport runway. To do so, they have reconfigured airport-owned private space as their public play area. Then, when the police chase the children with a *dunda* [wooden stick] — a symbol of state authority — they scream aloud, "*Private ka land . . . private ka land* [privately owned land]."[66]

The episode inaugurates the film's narration of the conflict between kinetic and static urbanisms. This tension is later understood to provoke the riot in Jamal's slum, but its most vivid depiction may come right before the film's climax. As the whole nation is gripped with speculation over whether Jamal will win the final prize in "Kaun Banega Crorepati," homeless people gather on the street outside a glass-fronted electronics store to watch the show. The store provides a vivid architectural symbol of Mumbai's absorption into globalized consumer society. Inside, the people are middle-class consumers and store employees; outside, they are the homeless poor who encroach on the pavement. The glass wall of the store acts as a sharp, transparent, and visually stunning class divider.

*Slumdog Millionaire* also represents the increasing exclusion of the underprivileged from public areas and the increased privatization of social life through Jamal's inability to meet Latika and Salim at any of Mumbai's conventional public spaces. *Slumdog Millionaire* depicts Mumbai as being without the *chowks* (squares), *maidans*, parks, beaches, and waterfront promenades that once defined Bombay. Two scenes emphasize this new reality. First, when Jamal is reunited with Salim after their years apart, they meet at a private construction site, not a public place. Second, when Jamal imagines a public place that Latika can run away to to meet him, he chooses Victoria Terminus. Based on the spatial logic and conventions of Hindi cinema, a much more suitable location would have been one of the city's waterfront spaces.

Jamal and Latika actually meet twice at the train station. The first time is when Latika tries to escape Javed's bungalow in Powai. But on this occasion, Salim seizes her and hands her back to Javed. The second time comes at the end of the film, after Salim has killed Javed and it is understood that Jamal and Latika may now live happily ever after. As a commentary on the state of the city, the film deliberately chooses to set this scene in the old public train station. The only contemporary alternative, it seems to imply, might be a coffee shop, mall, multiplex, or bowling alley.

## VICTORIA TERMINUS: CONTESTING THE ERASURE OF THE CITY'S HISTORIES

In Hindi cinema, Victoria Terminus represents linkages with the hinterland. One such film, *Bunty aur Babli* (2005), tells the story of two provincial con artists who come to Mumbai to realize their career ambitions. Their arrival in the city is expressed through a montage that includes Victoria Terminus. Typically, Hindi films have used the station in this manner as a landmark urban image.

*Slumdog Millionaire*, however, deliberately disrupts these conventions. Victoria Terminus is no mere landmark image; it is an important urban and architectural mise-en-scène used to comment on the city's recent history. In particular, it is intended to critique the ideology that led to Bombay's name change and that led to the renaming of the station as Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus. The representation is significant because those behind the station's renaming have represented it as essential to a rewriting of the city's colonial history, the station's significance in that history, and the overall urban schema of the Frere plan.

Since the 1990s, however, heritage agencies and preservation architects have been working not only to conserve Victoria Terminus as a building, but to restore it as a node in the urban geography of the city. This has involved efforts by the conservation lobby in Bombay to restore and modernize the station and reinforce its axial significance within the colonial-era Frere plan. One important initiative in this regard was the design of a new system of exterior illumination. As a philanthropic gesture, this effort was inaugurated by Ratan Tata, then chairman of the Tata Group, on June 21, 1993.[67] With the new lighting, Rahul Mehrotra has noted, Victoria Terminus was transformed into an "urban stage."[68]

As a result of these and other efforts, the station was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004. World Heritage status has now created a system of protections that seems to have put the brakes on further right-wing revisions to its architecture and symbolism. *Slumdog Millionaire* grasps the significance of Victoria Terminus in the ideological contest over the future of the city, and uses it to complete its urban narrative. Not only do the lovers Jamal and Latika refuse to call it Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, but as the film moves towards its conclusion, it presents nighttime shots of the dramatically illuminated, restored, and UNESCO-protected train station as the city's definitive urban mise-en-scène. As a metaphor, the scene seems to indicate an end to a trajectory of ideologically driven events inaugurated by the city's name change.

Furthermore, when Jamal waits for Latika on a train platform at Victoria Terminus, he is framed under a statue of Frederick Stevens, the building's architect. The shots containing the statue not only assert the city's genealogy in the networks of the British Empire, but reinforce the value of the building in the realization of the Frere plan and the making of cosmopolitan Bombay. In reality, there is no statue of Stevens on a train platform in the building. It is a prop the film uses to critique the reimagination of the city as Mumbai, the fictionalization of its past, and the attempted association of the city and its station to a new system of Maharashtrian-Hindu foundational myths.

All these narrative elements challenging Bombay's nativist reinvention as Mumbai come together in the film's grand finale, a song-and-dance number titled "Jai ho" ["Be Victorious"]. In the filmic imagination of *Slumdog Millionaire*, Victoria Terminus thus legitimizes a discourse of the city's real origin as a colonial port city. After Jamal and Latika overcome all the challenges to their love presented by the new fault lines transforming Bombay into Mumbai, they are united at Victoria Terminus, the most powerful remaining symbol of the city's cosmopolitan past.

REFERENCE NOTES

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