Locating Modern Living: Charles Correa, Asia and the Third World

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Introduction

This chapter examines architect Charles Correa's interiors for housing projects in Bombay (now Mumbai), produced in the 1970s and the 1980s. It studies ideas of modern living that shaped these interior spaces and their transnational flows beyond India. The core aim of this chapter is to study how Correa imagined modern living and designed interior spaces in postcolonial India, with particular attention to socio-economic contexts and meta-geographies (from urban zones in Bombay, to Asia and the Third World) accentuating the contingencies of these interior spaces upon factors such as class and developmental ideologies.

This chapter adds to the growing critical literature on the history of modernism in India. Authors such as Vikramaditya Prakash (2002); Madhavi Desai (2004); Ravi Kalia (2004), and Peter Scriver and Amit Srivastava (2015) have begun to excavate layers of history and politics, challenging underexplored narratives, and addressing the failures of utopian modernity embedded within architectural and town planning projects. Here I will scrutinize the transnational networks of design, bringing to the fore geographies, as well as insights into the nexus of power beyond borders, their operational dynamics and instrumentality. By focusing on the nodal city, Bombay/Mumbai, which has a long history of modern housing and radical approaches to challenging colonial modernity and its inequities, this chapter develops a postcolonial analysis of housing interiors, designed along class lines. This chapter resists existing tropes in the writing of Indian postcolonial design histories that utilize modern/traditional or modern/Indian ontologies and classificatory frameworks of

knowledge (Brown 2009; Murray 2013). Often, these approaches disregard complex interactions between the designers, commissioners of design and institutions, driven by class positions and neo-colonial powers, and resort to style, or visual semantics. I draw upon other examples beyond Mumbai, also produced within the 1970s and the 1980s, however, the central focus of this chapter will be a comparative analysis of two housing interiors: Kanchanjunga Apartments (1974) and Artists' Village (1986), both formally modernist in their use of minimalist aesthetics, modularity and concrete. Amid lively, and oft-times, pressing, debates on reforming housing in the urban metropolis, these two projects incorporated design ideals, the Indian rural idyll and International Style, that became the zeitgeist.

Comparing the two housing projects further highlights that design, when studied from a transnational perspective, can reveal global flows of ideas and images that do not purely follow the oft-recognized trajectory, from the West to the East. Although the United States has been the centre of international development and has held its power in shaping development policy and economics (Escobar 1995), other geographies and cultural histories were also at play that shaped the interiors of Artists' Village and Kanchanjunga apartments. Correa was working as a global architect, formulating his networks and locating his designs for the Indian poorer classes in relation to the 'Third World' or Asia (Correa 1985; 1989). He consistently highlighted the need for particular kinds of housing in these meta-geographies in essays and lectures, presenting a cultural imaginary that went beyond the national, bound to an Indian history, or to European modernism. In order to understand this, I borrow Arjun Appadurai's apt employment of the dimensions of global cultural flows ending in the suffix 'scapes' (Appadurai 1990). Finally, this chapter critically

engages with the instrumental role of international development in the shaping of Design History in postcolonial India, an area of study that is still at its nascence.

Archival materials from the Charles Correa papers at the Royal Institute of British Architects, United Nations Habitat, Government of India's Public Safety Standards, observations from site visits, published interviews with Correa and essays written by the architect himself, reveal a complex history of modern living, inflected by class divisions and Third World development agendas. These have shown the ways in which the interiors of homes were materialized at the behest of transnational agents and ideologies.

Correa, Asia and the 'Third World'

Correa consistently foregrounded his architectural work and its underpinning concepts with the needs of people in various meta-geographies: Asia, Europe, the Third World, their cultural histories and philosophies. He located India within these, offering comparisons and similarities in human habitats. Correa, born in 1930 in Secunderabad, India, and educated in the United States (1949-55), was one of early professional architects commissioned to design public buildings, private and state housing and contributed to urban town planning. He established his architectural practice in Bombay in 1956 and was active in the drive to address urban poverty using architecture as his tool.

In several essays, but particularly, 'The New Landscape' (1985) and 'The Public, The Private, and the Sacred' (1989), Correa wrote of urban migration in the Third World, the lack of equitable housing and the living conditions of the urban poor, owing to economic disadvantages and extreme climatic conditions. He subsequently offered solutions to meet the needs of these people through his designs.

These solutions crucially engaged with how people lived in Asia and the Third World, and the ways in which vernacular architecture held answers for better housing design. For instance, in India, vernacular homes contained three types of spaces: private spaces for cooking, sleeping and storage; the second space was the doorstep; it was social, enabling conversations with neighbours, for children to play and the third was the community space (the city water tap or village well). He argued that all housing (beyond India) consisted of this system, shifting and changing according to use. He added: '[…] if you look around the Third World today, you will find countless examples of marvellously innovative habitat, from Casbah in Algiers to the paper houses of Tokyo' that employed a version of this system within their designs (Correa 1985: 35). He criticized tenement housing: 'the ugly five storey concrete tenement slums built by governmental housing agencies all over the Third World are really the work of pessimists. What they are saying is: we are not going to have any future' (Correa 1985, 36).

Correa conceptualized the Third World as a space that needed developing economically and in humanitarian terms. He identified similarities in conditions across places in this space that blighted prospects of modernizing. In particular, his essays function as exploratory and polemical, attempting to produce a set of design concepts and modernizing solutions for housing in India. The clues to solutions for improved, modern and equitable living were in the essence of cultures, spirituality that permeated everyday life, and vernacular building traditions. If, for Correa, the Third World was a space for development, Asia represented long-held traditions of spirituality intertwined with design, offering habitual and enduring tenets for a designer. He referred to the Japanese Zen philosophy of *wabi sabi*, Indian *mandalas* or *tantric* diagrams, the interconnectedness of nature and culture in Persia, (Correa

2010), and pertinently, Asian values as distinct from European capitalist modernity (Correa 1989). With colonial expansion and systematic imposition of European industrial modernity in these contexts, the new, imported architecture caused an impoverishment in the lives of people (Correa 1989: 102). Here, Correa's radical, anti-colonial and historicist perspective towards design is located within the context of India, straddling the Third World and Asia, in need of drastic improvement to tackle urban poverty, while possessing in its wealth, history and spiritual principles. Correa admired European and American modernists, in particular, Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright, but argued that their designs were suited to their particular geographical locations and cultural contexts (Correa 1989: 106). Correa's designs for housing and its interiors in Bombay in the 1970s and the 1980s emerged, partly, from the conviction of the importance of the locatedness of architecture. The other contexts, which I will turn to next, were led by policy.

Housing Design and Standardization

Housing in Bombay had been subject to critical scrutiny by reformers and politicians (colonial officials and postcolonial elected members), alike, and a reformist rhetoric consistently underpinned an urgency to improve the living conditions of those in the lowest ranks of society. From the establishing of the Bombay Improvement Trust (1898) to the New Bombay project (1960s); the latter led by The City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra (CIDCO), with Correa as one of the chief architects, the message of over-population and urban society on the brink of collapse were consistent. Class divisions produced by colonial urbanization, further exacerbated by industrialization and beginnings of a neo-liberal economy, mapped onto urban planning and housing design. In his book *Mumbai Fables* (2011), Gyan

Prakash traces the histories of urban planning in Bombay from the nineteenth century and argues that the divisions between the elite and subaltern spaces were delineated according to areas occupied by colonial officers and the mill workers. These divisions between the inner and outer city and demography of its citizens, play out in the story of housing in the city in 1907, and in the 1960s. Sanitation and hygiene management underpinned planning in colonial Bombay, with obvious racial and class prejudices at play, while in the post-colonial context, the problem of over-population was posited as an imperative for remedial planning, and housing held a central place within this discourse.

Following the bubonic plague epidemic of 1896, improvement schemes in urban planning and housing in Bombay emphasized sanitary living conditions (Kidambi 2001). These involved improvements such as constructing *chowks* (open courtyards) for improved ventilation in houses that were described as insanitary, and *chawls* (tenement housing). Increased land prices and profit-making from rents, however, meant more livable rooms were crammed into available spaces, ultimately benefiting the city's elites, but abjectly failing to reduce overcrowding. As a result, plans for the removal of poorer classes by the Bombay Development Trust out to the suburbs, were in full sway. Not only was this meant to protect the 'healthy localities' and its 'respectable' citizens (Kidambi 2001: 66), land became a scarce resource, and the poor were seen to infringe upon this. In 1913, the Bombay Development Trust marked out sections of the city that would be maintained as residential areas with greenery and permanent housing, removing any so-called slums, the overcrowded and unsanitary spaces occupied by migrant workers, in order to maintain modern housing, and 'a modern sanitary city' (Bombay Development Committee 1914: 90). The Trust's view of this plan for the three classes was that 'it was essential that they

should, as far as possible, be localized; otherwise the interest of one class will suffer

by the intrusion, into areas suitable for them, of residents of another' (Bombay

Development Committee 1914: 6). The low-income workers lived in *chawls* with one

room allocated for each household, and shared facilities such as toilets, staircases and

corridors that led to each room. Modern planning methods created class segregation.

But containment and modern planning has not meant improved living conditions. A

1960 census of Bombay revealed that 58.8% of the city's population lived in *chawls*

constructed before the Second World War (Sundaram 1989: 40-41). These were

overcrowded with an average of 6.3 individuals living in each room (Sundaram 1989:

61)

Postcolonial urban planning and measures to address an ever-growing need for

low-cost housing in Bombay involved a re-visiting of urban geographies and the

development of New Bombay in the 1960s, marking another phase of zoning and

identifying key locations for housing. New Bombay, as a 'counter-magnet' was

designed to attract new migrant workers and encourage businesses and individuals to

move away from central Bombay (Government of India 1976). A new city offered

utopian visions for modern living and the city beautiful. A Government of India

document *The India Country Report* presented at the United Nations Conference on

Human Settlements in Vancouver in 1976, described housing in New Bombay as

'catering to all income groups' and that 'the pricing policy is based on a system of

cross-subsidies and incentives for economically weaker sections to encourage self-

help and 'incremental housing' (Government of India 1976: 27). An ongoing

attraction, however, towards the affluent Central and South Bombay districts dating

back to colonial years, and parallel expansion by reclaiming the Back Bay, fueled by

market and land prices, meant this dream of producing a counter magnet was not

achieved (Prakash 2011: 272). Segregation along the lines of class created by real estate desirability, persisted.

The mention of incremental housing in the *India Country Report*, or a self-help approach, and a policy system to support this, underscored the approach to postcolonial modern living for low-income workers, more broadly, championed by international development organisations. This concept of housing was based on developmental approaches to housing design, fuelled by development economics, and shaped interiors of the homes at Artists' Village in Belapur, New Bombay (now Navi Mumbai). Development organizations at international, national and regional levels beyond India became attentive to housing in decolonizing nations in the decades after the Second World War. Arturo Escobar has scrutinized and interpreted the production of the Third World as a space of poverty by international development bodies with economic development as their central focus. Following on from the footsteps of coloniality, the project of development engaged with processes of modernization. Individuals, organizations, committees, processes of surveying rural and urban spaces, national economic situation, and devising of schemes were systematically employed to develop the Third World (Escobar 1995). The development was not merely fiscal; it had to manifest in food, shelter, health and productivity, as these were essential for industrial and economic development. The Vancouver Declaration at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in 1976 emphasized an urgent need to address the unacceptable circumstances in which vast numbers of people in developing countries lived. It projected opportunities and solutions to rectify this:

> Creating more livable, attractive and efficient settlements, which recognize human scale, the heritage and culture of people and the special needs of disadvantaged groups.
> Creating possibilities for effective participation by all people in the planning, building and management of their human settlements. (Athens Centre for Ekistics 1976: 262)

One of the general principles proposed highlighted the role of economic development:

> Economic development should lead to the satisfaction of human needs and is a necessary means towards achieving a better quality of life, provided that it contributes to a more equitable distribution of its benefits among people and nations. In this context particular attention should be paid to the accelerated transition in developing countries from primary development to secondary development activities, and particularly to industrial development. (Athens Centre for Ekistics 1976: 263)

The declaration and its principles addressed quality of homes as well as their methods of production, with attention to cultures and heritages of people. Housing was posited as one of the crucial components within economic development, insofar as its benefits were equally distributed. It was, however, conceptualized as a mechanism for industrial development and aligned with the rise of neo-liberal economics, and housing policies and regulations are closely aligned with this approach to development. In their essay, 'The Rise of Housing in International Development' Richard Harris and Godwin Arku have discussed the ways in which housing entered the development economics discourse. Sparsely present and perceived as an expense and responsibility of the State, development thinkers and the major international development institutions did not address housing as an impediment to development until the 1960s (Harris and Arku 2007: 1-11). A growing recognition of housing as an industry, an asset for investment and most obviously, its societal benefits filtered through the UN and World Bank's policies and was 'accepted wisdom' by the 1980s (Harris and Arku 2007: 6). These policies advocated the use of 'intermediate' or hybrid technologies of building, using local building materials and local labour, rather than an emulation of western technologies, which had to be imported, as the 'informal sector', namely the local building industry, was perceived as contributing to the needs of low-income households in the developing world (Harris and Arku 2007: 7).

These developmental approaches and policies align with national, state-led ones and trickled down to regional levels in terms of finance, policy and standardization in design. As such, the processes and approaches to modern housing were mirrored in the *India Country Report* presented at the Vancouver conference, emphasizing that the drive towards development and its methods were, to a large extent, shared. The report affirmed the path of development from being feudal and static, into becoming industrial and dynamic, and with this change came a need for new ways of thinking about housing. Urban housing was described as a planning mechanism, where, from informal housing (described as slum-like in clusters and made from locally sourced materials) families had to be rehoused with proper infrastructure, such as running water, while future settlements within the city had to be located in a 'planned manner' (Government of India 1976: 41). The principles were outlined in the India Country Report:

> In scrutinising building plans, emphasis is being placed on functional utility and aesthetics rather than on luxury. This approach is expected to result in discipline and economy in the use of land and building materials. In the design of mass housing, appropriate technology suits to the indigenous materials and the range of skills available in the different parts of the country is being adopted (Government of India 1976: 57).

Ironically, the building methods promoted for the production of improved homes for low-income households, the use of local materials and skills, were similar to the ones already used by those households in their self-made dwellings, permanent or impermanent, rural or urban. The added essential infrastructure, combined with a pricing framework of hire purchase, changed a temporary dwelling to a permanent one, and transformed it from shelter to a financial asset.

Nevertheless, a suitable home for a low-income family meant a vernacular home. The Indian 'poor' family and a rural family were typified as traditional,

homogenizing them to an extent, and became a subject of discourse for architects, including Correa. The idea of a traditional Indian life and suitable home that matched the lifestyle of the modern working-class Indian family came to the fore in the architecture and town planning discourse. This was formulated at the behest of developmental agendas, international and state-led, and through an ethnographic study of the 'poor' or 'rural' Indian. Arturo Escobar deconstructs development practice and discourse, and explicates the ways in which Asia, Latin America and Africa were identified as poor and backward by the United States and Western Europe, and development became a way to tackle these problems. Describing this as a mechanism of neo-coloniality, Escobar examines the ways in which the borrowers of loans, the national governments in the Third World, became a part of the system of development, repaying large loans, implementing plans and projects, involving a whole array of actors, and participating in the development discourse. I argue that Charles Correa employed a *development gaze* towards the urban poor in the process of designing the low-income home. I will now trace its effects on interior spaces of the homes at Artists' Village in Belapur, and weigh these against interiors of the modernist Kanchanjunga apartment to observe approaches to modern living in the city.

Shaping Interiors

The main design feature of Artists' Village is the cluster formation of houses. Each cluster contained approximately seven houses of different sizes, shapes and layouts, and these dictated the configuration of interior spaces. The interior of each house matched the income-brackets of residents, formulated in relation to their predicted lifestyles, from the most basic one-room house, alluding to a multi-functional space to

complex modular formatted houses with functionality built into spaces. The smallest and simplest house A contained one room, a bathroom and a toilet; house B, in addition to this, contained a kitchen; house C, in addition to all these, contained an extra room; house D, two extra rooms and house E; three rooms and an extra bathroom. The basic units A, B and C houses were incremental, while houses D and E were completed examples. While houses A, B, C and D contained private outdoor spaces at ground floor level, house E also contained terraces on the first floor (Correa 1985: 38-9).

The toilets were located in pairs in the backyard, removed from the main house. Correa stated the reason for this pairing was to save on plumbing and sanitation costs. Each pair of houses also shared an outdoor (garden) wall, yet, each house was designed for privacy, for they were detached houses and the windows did not face the living spaces of neighbouring houses. Correa has reminded that there was a feeling of community and the houses were designed on a human scale (Correa 1985: 39). This approach to design, it is worthy of note, was aligned with the human settlement agenda presented at Vancouver.

According to Correa, the adjoining outdoor space of each house was as an extension of the indoor environment, used for everyday activities such as sleeping, cooking and socializing, drawing upon the notion of a traditional lifestyle, owing to particular cultural habitats, and climate. Artists' Village, alike several other public housing projects in postcolonial nations in the 1980s, were based on similar principles of low-rise living, in clusters or close community formation, with potential for incremental development. This was identified as good housing and was written into the commissioner's brief in several cases. Therefore, notions of traditional ways of living mapped onto the design of the interior and outdoor spaces, as affordability (the

prices increased as you progressed from type A to type E), design regulation (the materials, cluster formation) and design choice (the residents could choose from the offering and develop their own spaces) became key coefficients in the process.

This had also been the case with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Proyecto Experimental de Vivienda (Previ) in Lima, Peru in 1968 where Charles Correa, along with Peruvian and other international architects, was commissioned to design houses for a community of 1500 families. The Peruvian Government and the UNDP devised the brief - each house had to suit growing families, they needed to have access to outdoor spaces and the living areas needed to be multi-functional. Christopher Alexander and Sandy Hirshen from the Centre for Environmental Structure, US, developed a plan that involved cells of approximately thirty to seventy houses (Previ/Lima. Low Cost Housing Project 1970: 193). Alexander adopted a similar settlement structure in a later project at Mexicali (Alexander et al 1985), and Egyptian architect Hassan Fathy also promoted cluster housing as an ideal form of community housing in the 1970s (Pyla 2009). The Indian Building Code included cluster Housing as a recommended style of low-cost housing in 1983, which was adopted in the Artists' Village design. Later, in 1987, United Nations Habitat, the UN agency for human settlements, emphasized the cell structure of houses or housing clusters as a recommended formation of housing in India, which was applied in a UN housing project in Madipur widow colony in Delhi (Datta 2008: 237). The concept, therefore, of a pastoral setting in clusters formed part of a design strategy, employed within public low-cost housing in the Global South.

Transnational global networks, comprised of development organizations, national governments, local urban development agencies, designers and planners, promoted and applied this idea. This period of housing development and the

employment of radical design approaches to solving the problem of insufficient and inadequate housing is referred to as pioneering and a work of Avant Garde architects (Wright 2002; McGuirk 2011). This, indeed, was radical and pioneering, but it also highlights the ways in which housing design for the poor, produced as a homogenous entity, was imagined and implemented using policy and standardization procedures across regions beyond Bombay.

Artists' Village was produced as a low-rise housing complex away from the city's economic centre, where Kanchanjunga is located. The latter was constructed as a high-rise apartment block with thirty-two split-level luxurious apartments (Figure 12.1) (Figure 12.1. here). The structure of each apartment, according to Correa, was similar to that of an Indian bungalow, or stacked villas, creating an apartment block (Correa 1996). I visited three apartments in the building in 2016. The lower level of each apartment contained reception areas, the kitchen and dining room, the servant quarters, an en-suite bedroom and a terrace garden next to the living room. The terraces and arrangement of windows allowed for cross ventilation, but they also became key features of the building and indicated the structure of the interior space. The upper floors of each apartment, accessed by a short flight of steps contained further en-suite bedrooms, with balconies overlooking the terrace garden. This design feature can be traced to the interior of Le Corbusier's Pavilion de l'Esprit Nouveau at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris in 1925, which contained a split-level formation of living spaces, and was later adopted at the Unité d'Habitation projects in Marseille and Berlin in 1952 and 1958, respectively (Sherwood 1978: 22).

Spaces in niches for safes and storage formed part of the design of each Kanchanjunga apartment. The architect's blueprints mark modularity naming the

function and use of each space: the living room, bedroom, dressing room, kitchen, servant's room. The configuration of the room in relation to others also produced a modern living ideal, creating a mechanism to achieve this, such as, steps leading from the bedroom to the dressing room and the position of the light fittings. For instance, the space where the bed would be placed, was marked out by two light fittings on either side. A set of switches to control the lights from the bedside were positioned next to the bed. While the houses in Artists' Village were designed for shelter, with potential for growth, denoting a process of economic development and lifestyle changes, the modernist apartment contained spaces for modern conveniences, privacy and the function of each of the rooms was written into the design.

Materials, Light, Texture, Colour

The colours and textures of materials were important design features in Artists' Village and Kanchanjunga Apartments. Correa admired the use of colour in Mughal interiors and vernacular interior spaces and saw in these an authentic Indian quality. This observation appears in his writings, and other means of dissemination such as in an exhibition he organized *Vistara, Architecture of India* (1986). Albeit a product of collective effort, the exhibition showed a clear interest in the lives of Indian communities, rural and urban, and, in particular, the material culture of the home and the street environment. References to colour and its inflection, colourful, were abound in the exhibition catalogue, and visually, in the exhibition. Earth colour for the floors of huts in cluster formulation in the Kutch region of Gujarat, or the colourful shrines on street corners were some of the descriptions where colour became a central focus and inspiration for the designer (Kagal 1986: 31).

Colour was an important feature in both the housing projects. The floor of each type of house in Artists Village was finished with Indian Patent Stone in red oxide or IPS red oxide, a powdered red pigment mixed with cement and laid down evenly, then polished off to create a smooth surface (Correa 1930-2015). The powdered pigment is produced in south India and is a low-cost material, but relies heavily on local skilled workmen for its application (Jain 2019). The doors and window frames were painted in primary colours, employing a modernist colour palette, minimal and bold (Correa 1930-2015).

The kitchen contained a raised worktop, with a shelf and a sink, made from another local inexpensive material, the Kota stone. Glazed white tiles were used in the bathroom and apart from glass in windows, there was minimal use of industrial materials within the interiors (Correa 1930-2015). The means of producing the houses matched the ethos of creating minimal inexpensive dwellings for incremental growth. If Artists' Village offered basic interior spaces, celebrating Indian rural living, the interiors of Kanchanjunga were designed for a cosmopolitan lifestyle. The flooring was of white marble in almost every area of the apartments, except in the terrace garden and the servants' room, where Kota stone was used on the floors. White walls and white floors offset the colour on the exterior of the building and in particular, the abstract design on the walls and ceiling of the terrace garden.

The Charles Correa archive contain detailed drawings of the Kanchanjunga terrace design complete with colour and material specification. Sandtex Matt, a type of paint developed in the UK and manufactured in India since the 1970s, is used for the yellow ceiling and white sections on the walls. Orange, red and brown glazed tiles are used to clad sections of the walls to create this modernist abstract design in three-dimension (Correa 1930-2015). The terrace is the showcase for each apartment in the

building, viewed from different interior locations. Each material produces a different texture: from a matt, to a smooth and glossy finish. Modern industrial materials such as aluminum frames for windows, plywood in the built-in modular storage furniture and modern light fittings were used in all the apartments. Many of these original features still exist.

The interiors of Artists' Village and Kanchanjunga Apartments, both, respond to ideas of modern living and materialize them through the choice of colours, materials, and spatial arrangements. While class divide is obviously present within these, displayed through the materials, their affordability and accessibility, ideas of modernization and modernity can be traced to the paradigms of development and the cosmopolitan modern. Outdoor spaces in both projects were as important as the interiors as these were implicit within the economics and experiences of modern living.

Indoor/Outdoor

The 'open-to-sky' space was a key feature of Correa's designs (Correa 2000: 17-28). He considered outdoor spaces as extensions of the indoors, in function as well as form, releasing the individual living in a low-cost home from the claustrophobic indoors. If the indoor space was vital for shelter from the rain and storms, the outdoor space would help shelter from the warm indoors. The open-to-sky space could be used for economic purposes such as keeping goats, chickens and buffalos.

Artists' Village was modelled on this concept. Each house had its own private and shared public open spaces. The private open spaces could be built upon by the residents themselves, using local skilled workmen. This feature of incrementality was described by Correa as introducing the residents to the idea of Equity. Each house was

built on the same surface area plot, but they ranged in price and depending on the earnings of the family, they could purchase a home by paying the amount in small installments. Correa argued that the principle of Equity in the Third World had political significance, implying that predetermined equal plot sizes, what he describes as Equity Plots, would produce a 'truly egalitarian urban society' (Correa 1985: 36). Poverty alleviation could happen within the market framework if initiated by the state. This neo-Keynsian model was rooted in development economics, underscoring the notion that accumulation of capital at a microeconomic level, would help with economic growth in the long run at a macro-level, and in this context, the outdoor space became an asset.

In Kanchanjunga, the double height terraces function as urban windows. The framing of the city for a scopic experience revealed the outside space here is a space for visual pleasure and leisure. Wide windows look out on to the city. Each room is configured to look out, creating uninterrupted vistas. This experience of spatially leading the eyes to an outdoor view, is built into the design of the interior space through the split-level apartment layout and in each room, where further levels are created. For instance, one part of the room had a sunken floor, used as a living space or for sleeping in. This disaggregated modulor spaces even further. The upper section is marked as a dressing room in one apartment, and as a study in another. Stepping down into the sunken space led the person out into the terrace, or stepping up, led them to a wide window (Figure12.2) (Figure. 12.2 here). The play of materials and light (particularly reflective, induced by white marble), created a visual effect of abstracted spaces. The interiors of Kanchanjunga were designed for movement within the space and to the outdoors. Correa discusses split-level accommodation within Mughal palaces, admiring the ways in which the sunken level was kept cool, retaining

the cool air at night during the summer months to be enjoyed in the afternoon. He describes the Mughal interior design as 'great spatial richness through minimalist means' (Correa 2000: 19). This feature appears in the Kanchanjunga interiors, complete with its marble floors, used in the Mughal palace, as in modernist homes. Modernist architectural language – of minimalism and abstraction – suited this adaptation of a Mughal style.

While Kanchanjunga apartments led the eyes to the outdoors, Artists' Village presents an interiority and an enclosed space, akin to an indoor space. The shared courtyards are surrounded by other houses in the cluster, and the experience of living in a shared community space is profound (Figure 12.3) (Figure 12.3 here).

Reflections on Transnational Design and Modernity

I have traced colonial approaches to planning and housing in Bombay, segregating the city along class lines in order to maintain the orderly city, and pushing the poor into the urban margins. While this segregation did not inform the planning of New Bombay, where Artists' Village is located, real estate and urban planning, both inextricably linked, produced such results. Concepts of modern living and modernizing living, as well as designs of interiors to suit the lifestyles of the different classes, were most certainly constructed along the lines of difference in the nodal city of Bombay.

Yet, the affinities and solidarities between these two communities inhabiting the low-rise rural idyll and the urban high-rise co-existing within this city in the 1970s and the 1980s, lie in the local, as well as global spheres. In order to understand these affinities, and therefore, locate transnational flows of design, I turn to Arjun Appadurai's employment of the suffix *scape*, pointing to the 'imagined worlds'

inhabited by communities, the global cultural economy, and its disjunctures. In these *scapes*, argues Appadurai, 'the individual actor is the last locus of this perspectival set of landscapes, for these landscapes are eventually navigated by agents who both experience and navigate larger formations, in part by their own sense of what these landscapes offer' (Appadurai 1990: 296). The development bodies, the architects and residents of Bombay/Mumbai could be viewed here as agents of design production, experienced by the subjects, the individual actors in distinct geographies. Crucially, these *scapes* are fluid and perspectival (not objective and homogenous) as they are shaped in relation to larger formations of 'nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as sub-national groupings and movements (whether religious, political or economic), and even intimate face-to-face groups, such as villages, neighbourhoods and families' (Appadurai 1990: 296). The experiences of the citizens of Bombay, inhabiting the two housing projects, are, therefore, varied, notwithstanding their shared location or their urban environment, as they experience different landscapes, owing to differences in their economic and cultural statuses. Here, I will focus on three: technoscape, financescape and ideoscape as these are inter-connected in this case study.

The technoscape, within which the two housing projects are located, refers to the technological advancements that enabled their production, including 'the distribution of technologies, both high and low' (Appadurai 1990: 296), their availability and value for architectural design, the construction industry and labour. The funding of the infrastructure in and around New Bombay (where Artists' Village is based), partly by global development group the World Bank (Shaw 2004: 158), locates the site as one of the several in the *Third World* that was manufactured with an international developmental vision. Kanchanjunga apartments, however, remind us of

'complex fiscal and investment flows' in a new liberal economy that linked India with other 'economies through a global grid of currency speculation and capital transfer' (Appadurai 1990: 298), affecting the price of real estate and enabling purchase power of the highly luxurious apartments. The making of these homes are all part of a wider complex transnational technoscape and financescape, that also generate, via development specialists, recommendations of employing local materials and labour.

Further to these, the ideological perspectives of the funders, designer and the consumers, to varying degrees, inflected these housing designs. Developmental ideologies circulating globally aligned with a deeply held belief by the modernist architect Correa that architecture could create an equal society within the neo-liberal economic structure of home ownership, economic growth, a trajectory towards *becoming modern*. The disjunctures here are obvious. Industrial development rendered an increase in migration from villages to Bombay. Correa criticized the class divide evident in housing in Bombay, but his training as a professional modernist architect (problem solving, being innovative, creating housing that would improve lives), meant the production of distinct kinds of housing in distinct geographies, part of a longer colonial and postcolonial history, did not cause a conflict. While Correa's conceptual approach for Artists' Village was from an egalitarian, social design perspective, he inadvertently participated in the newly emerging neo-liberal economy that was contributing towards the very conditions he meant to fighting against.

The rhetoric of an urgent need to address an increase in population in cities in the Global South emerged from transnational organizations such as the UN and the World Bank. As a result of local processes of deterritorialization, (borrowing from Appadurai), the migrant workers in Bombay were subject to similar attention and management, as those in Peru for whom Correa had also designed housing. In other

words, even if culturally different, these communities were subjected to developmental solutions based on pre-given understandings of their ways of living.

In this case study, discussing Correa's work as modernist with Indian influences, as part of the Indian architecture or design historical canon, or position his global influence as one of cosmopolitan agency, has been insufficient. Viewing his architectural practice as a praxis, as part of a wider system of production, to advance a much more critical and deeper understanding of the co-existence of different types of modern designs, modernities and modern lifestyles within the city, has been vital. By locating India within Asia as well as the Third World, Correa packaged his designs with ideas drawn from spiritual pasts, as well as development. The co-existence of varying approaches to modern interiors, I argue, is not simply a process of Indianizing Modernism or adapting principles of modern living (flushable toilets or standardized buildings) to the local context, thereby developing its citizens. It is a sign of disjunctures in the global cultural economy, where several powerful agents – organisations and individuals – coincide and collide, to ultimately produce living spaces experienced by people who inhabit these every day.

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