Riots, strikes, and protests broke out in the streets of Shanghai and Bombay (renamed Mumbai in 1995), with impressive frequency during the twentieth century. Many of the landmark protests and social movements had close connections with the neighborhoods, workplaces, and civic spaces of each city. By the late twentieth century, as the political geography of each city changed rapidly with the commodification of urban land, so too did the patterns of political contention. Using a comparative historical lens, Mark W. Frazier chronicles the political biographies of these two metropolises and leading centers of manufacturing and finance. Debates over ideology, citizenship, and political representation took material form through clashes over housing, jobs, police violence, and public space, among much else in the lived experience of urban residents. Frazier puts contemporary debates over informal housing, eviction of inner city residents, scarcities of manufacturing jobs, and questions of unequal citizenship in illuminating historical context.

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The Power of Place

Contentious Politics in Twentieth-Century Shanghai and Bombay

Mark W. Frazier

The New School, New York City
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Preface

In the twenty-first century, several China scholars have taken a turn “outward” from China studies by placing the Chinese case and the topical areas they know well about China (political economy, law and society, foreign policy, labor studies, etc.) within a comparative framework. In some ways these scholars are following in the footsteps of a handful of China scholars in the 1960s and 1970s who complemented their knowledge of modern China with investigations of comparable phenomena in the former Soviet Union, Japan, the Koreas, Vietnam, and other East and Southeast Asian cases. Today, comparisons with China more often than not assume that it shares similar developmental trajectories and challenges with large economies of the sort found in Brazil, India, South Africa, Indonesia, and others. But as was the case in the past, the decision to compare, and the object of comparison with China, raise questions about comparability and the point of the comparative enterprise.

This book represents an attempt to learn more about China by examining comparable cases outside of China, but it does so by scaling down the unit of analysis to the level of the city. The purpose of comparison is to shed light on historical patterns of contentious politics in Shanghai by examining similar phenomena in Mumbai. As a scholar of labor studies and social policy in China, I have worked in Chinese cities for two decades. But in recent years my attention has turned to research on Chinese cities as the geographic forms that produce physical patterns of uneven and unequal citizenship, as well as contestations over jobs and social programs within the city.

In addition to the comparative turn in this book, an equally crucial dimension is the historical. To understand urban contentious politics in present-day Shanghai and Mumbai, the past provides more than just illuminating precedents; it reveals pathways to the present. Close inspection of the city’s geography and changes to it over time offer clues to understanding patterns of popular protest, including grievances and claims made to public authorities. In this respect, the political geographies inform our understanding of contentious politics and the contentious character of these two port cities as much as the institutions and ideologies particular to (and distinct across) the two cities. Among the intended audiences for this book are specialists in urban studies,
history, and politics for whom Shanghai is familiar but Mumbai is not, and for whom Mumbai is familiar but Shanghai is not. It is also my hope that the historical narrative and comparative discussion will offer experts on housing, work, and contentious politics in contemporary Shanghai or Mumbai some historical context for their work on present-day conflicts and policy debates over questions of urban citizenship and the allocation of housing and jobs. Beyond this segment of readers who have conducted research on one of the two cities, those encountering both cities for the first time might draw insights into the ways in which their pasts inform their present-day political life.

This project would not have been possible without wide-ranging support from colleagues with whom I have had the privilege to engage in comparative discussions on this book and a range of other topics at the India China Institute (ICI) at The New School. ICI’s network of intellectual collaborators has provided me access to make possible my education on Mumbai’s rich urban history and political life. For the Mumbai research, my greatest and sincerest thanks go to: Amita Bhide, Neera Adarkar, Babasaheb Kimbale, Rusheed Wadia, and the staff of the Maharashtra State Archives. Highly informative discussions with Mumbai researchers and, in some cases, following them on their fieldwork helped greatly with my thinking about twenty-first-century Mumbai housing policies and slum rehabilitation and resettlement policies. Dutta Iswalkar gave generously of his time in educating me about the political influence of textile workers in contemporary Mumbai. While I never had the fortune to meet the late Rajnayaran Chandravarkar, his numerous works and his keen insights into Bombay’s labor history are gratefully acknowledged here. At ICI in New York City, thanks go to Jonathan Bach, Ashok Gurung, Victoria Hattam, Aseem Inam, Brian McGrath, Shagun Mehrotra, Lei Ping, Vyjayanthi Rao, Sanjay Ruparelia, and Vamsi Vakulabharanam for bringing my knowledge of urbanism and India up to speed with my knowledge of urban China. In addition, ICI’s broad network of scholars has been a rich source of rewarding conversations on Asian urbanism, including Shanghai–Mumbai comparisons and connections. My thanks for sharing their time and their insights go to Prasenjit Duara, Eesha Kunduri, Partha Mukhopadhyay, Mukta Naik, Rohit Negi, Kimberly Noronha, Mary Ann O’Donnell, and Tansen Sen.

In returning to Shanghai, and to the Shanghai Municipal Archives where I once ventured daily in the mid-1990s as a graduate student, I am especially grateful for the continuing support from the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. Conversations with urbanists and historians in Shanghai helped greatly in supplementing my knowledge of labor history and contemporary social policy. Housing is often overlooked as a central component of social policy, and my understanding of Shanghai housing and its history has benefited greatly from extended conversations with Fulong Wu, Lu Xiaowen, Tu Qiyu, Li Yihai, Anna Greenspan, Sun Zhe, Fei Chengkang, and Zhang Qixin, among
Preface

many others. Special thanks go to Xia Jiangqi for providing so many insights into Shanghai’s urban villages and governance questions. The work and influence of longtime colleagues and specialists on Shanghai are also readily apparent in the pages that follow discussing that city’s lively political life across the twentieth century: Neil Diamant, Elizabeth Perry, and Jeffrey Wasserstrom.

My thanks and acknowledgment go to the organizations that have hosted talks related to this book: ICI’s China–India Scholar Leaders’ Initiative (2017 and 2018), Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (2017), the Made in China Summer School (2018), Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (2017), Fudan University (2015), the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore (2014), the Department of Government at Cornell University (2013), and the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (2013). Thanks also to the New York Public Library Wertheim Study Room residency program for scholars, which hosted me in 2016–17. For helpful comments on earlier draft chapters, my deepest thanks go to Jonathan Bach, Vamsi Vakulabharanam, James Miller, and two anonymous readers who reviewed the manuscript for Cambridge University Press.

Research assistance is gratefully acknowledged from Andrew Kuech, Jiyoungh Cho, Yimin Li, Alix Jansen, and Wei-Lun Ko. Vaishnavi Tangella skillfully produced the maps of Shanghai and Mumbai, past and present. My sincere thanks also go to the editorial and production staff at Cambridge University Press.

Finally, for their inexhaustible love, patience, and support during this project and throughout my academic career, my deepest thanks go to Karen, Shelby, and Thomas Frazier.
Acronyms

ACFTU  All-China Federation of Trade Unions
BBR    Back Bay Reclamation (Bombay)
BDD    Bombay Development Department
BIDA   Bombay Industrial Disputes Act
BIRA   Bombay Industrial Relations Act
BIT    Bombay Improvement Trust
BMC    Bombay Municipal Corporation
BMOA   Bombay Mill Owners Association
BMRDA  Bombay Metropolitan Region Development Authority
BMRPB  Bombay Metropolitan Regional Planning Board
BTLU   Bombay Textile Labor Union
CCRG   Central Cultural Revolution Group (Shanghai)
CIDCO  City and Industrial Development Corporation (Bombay)
CPI    Communist Party of India
DCR    Development Control Regulations (Bombay)
GCC    General Chamber of Commerce (Shanghai)
GKM    Girni Kamgar Mahamandal (Bombay union, 1920s)
GKSS   Girni Kamgar Sangharsh Samiti (Bombay union, late twentieth century)
GKU    Girni Kamgar Union (Bombay union, est. 1920s)
GLU    General Labor Union (Shanghai)
GMD    Nationalist Party (Guomindang)
ICEC   Industrial Conditions Enquiry Committee (Bombay)
KHS    Kamgar Hitawdhak Sabha (Bombay union, early twentieth century)
MHADA  Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority
MSA    Maharashtra State Archives
MUIP   Mumbai Urban Improvement Project
MUTP   Mumbai Urban Transport Project
NAPM   National Alliance of People’s Movements (Mumbai)
NPM    National Products Movement (Shanghai)
NRA    National Revolutionary Army (Shanghai)
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<td>NSA</td>
<td>National Salvation Association (Shanghai)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSM</td>
<td>National Salvation Movement (Shanghai)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTC</td>
<td>National Textile Corporation (Bombay)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLA</td>
<td>People’s Liberation Army</td>
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<td>RC</td>
<td>Residents’ Committees (Shanghai)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMMS</td>
<td>Rashtriya Mill Mazdoor Sangh (textile workers’ union, Bombay)</td>
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<td>RSC</td>
<td>Reemployment Service Center (Shanghai)</td>
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<td>SMA</td>
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<td>SMC</td>
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<td>SMS</td>
<td>Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPARC</td>
<td>Society for the Promotion of Area Resource Centers (Bombay/Mumbai)</td>
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<td>SRC</td>
<td>Shanghai Revolutionary Committee</td>
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<td>WGH</td>
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