

# In Search of Home

*In Search of Home* explores a new yet less explored space of urban poverty – rehabilitation housing for the displaced poor, which increasingly dots the peripheries of Indian cities. This longitudinal ethnography examines these new liminal zones suspended between a slum and the legal city, producing ‘citizenship in-limbo’ and relegating the poor to perpetual dependence on the state albeit legal residence. It examines how the flexible governance of such housing produces illegalities, and how state institutions and actors stand to gain through systemic corruption that co-opts urban poor groups, pre-empting radical resistance. This book makes central the gendered nature of such politics, detailing the everyday political work of women, vital to the development of poor neighbourhoods and political struggles for housing. This analysis of rehabilitation housing policies and their implementation chronicles the myriad strategies employed by the urban poor, from documenting to political performances, in their struggles for a home.

**Kaveri Haritas** is Associate Professor at the Jindal School of Government and Public Policy, at the OP Jindal Global University, Haryana. Her research focuses on urban poverty; housing, land and property rights; gender; and law and citizenship in India. She is an anthropologist and draws inspiration from legal and political anthropology. Her past research has included solidarity economy practices of women in India and technology and its impacts on employment in India. She has been a north–south mobility fellow at the Institute for Research on Development, Paris.

## SOUTH ASIA IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

South Asia has become a laboratory for devising new institutions and practices of modern social life. Forms of capitalist enterprise, providing welfare and social services, the public role of religion, the management of ethnic conflict, popular culture and mass democracy in the countries of the region have shown a marked divergence from known patterns in other parts of the world. South Asia is now being studied for its relevance to the general theoretical understanding of modernity itself.

*South Asia in the Social Sciences* will feature books that offer innovative research on contemporary South Asia. It will focus on the place of the region in the various global disciplines of the social sciences and highlight research that uses unconventional sources of information and novel research methods. While recognising that most current research is focused on the larger countries, the series will attempt to showcase research on the smaller countries of the region.

General Editor  
Partha Chatterjee  
*Columbia University*

Editorial Board  
Pranab Bardhan  
*University of California at Berkeley*

Stuart Corbridge  
*Durham University*

Satish Deshpande  
*University of Delhi*

Christophe Jaffrelot  
*Centre d'études et de recherches internationales, Paris*

Nivedita Menon  
*Jawaharlal Nehru University*

Other books in the series:

*Government as Practice: Democratic Left in a Transforming India*  
Dwaipayan Bhattacharyya

*Courting the People: Public Interest Litigation in Post-Emergency India*  
Anuj Bhuwania

*Development after Statism: Industrial Firms and the Political Economy of South Asia*  
Adnan Naseemullah

*Politics of the Poor: Negotiating Democracy in Contemporary India*  
Indrajit Roy

*South Asian Governmentalities: Michel Foucault and the Question of Postcolonial Orderings*  
Stephen Legg and Deana Heath (eds.)

*Nationalism, Development and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*  
Rajesh Venugopal

*Adivasis and the State: Subalternity and Citizenship in India's Bhil Heartland*  
Alf Gunvald Nilsen

*Maoist People's War and the Revolution of Everyday Life in Nepal*  
Ina Zharkevich

*New Perspectives on Pakistan's Political Economy: State, Class and Social Change*  
Matthew McCartney and S. Akbar Zaidi (eds.)

*Crafty Oligarchs, Savvy Voters: Democracy under Inequality in Rural Pakistan*  
Shandana Khan Mohmand

*Dynamics of Caste and Law: Dalits, Oppression and Constitutional Democracy in India*  
Dag-Erik Berg

*Simultaneous Identities: Language, Education and the Nepali Nation*  
Uma Pradhan

*Deceptive Majority: Dalits, Hinduism, and Underground Religion*  
Joel Lee

# In Search of Home

*Citizenship, Law and  
the Politics of the Poor*

Kaveri Haritas



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108834049](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108834049)

© Kaveri Haritas 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

Printed in India

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-108-83404-9 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

# Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xv
1. Introduction	I
2. In Limbo	30
3. The Informal Market in Rehabilitation Housing	67
4. Gender and Performative Politics	107
5. Paper Visibility and Proof Making	141
6. Conclusion	175
<i>Index</i>	187