

Urban Jungles: Wilderness, Parks and their Publics in Delhi

Amita Baviskar

Abstract

The seemingly self-evident value of green spaces in cities is a relatively new construct. Using the idea of 'socio-nature', this essay examines how parks and urban publics are mutually constituted in Delhi. Social change has led to a re-imagination of cultural meanings and modes of ecological management. Ecological change, in turn, has created new social relations around the use and protection of nature. I argue that the move to create and preserve certain forms of urban nature is related to the shifting sensibilities of elites, especially that section which acts as a self-appointed vanguard of environmental causes. However, the far-reaching effects of this 'bourgeois environmentalism' are challenged and undermined by other users of public green areas.