Existing research analyzes riverfront developments largely from a city-centric point of view, assuming a clear boundary between the river and the city. The research presented in this book shows that the complexity of urban environmental transformation along rivers in the megacities of the Global South requires a change of perspective, going beyond such a dichotomous view. By linking a discourse analytical approach with concepts from governance research and urban political ecology, this study introduces the theoretical framework of riverscapes as socio-ecological hybrids for a comprehensive analysis. The concept is applied to the river Yamuna.

Delhi’s riverscapes have recently seen large-scale slum demolitions and the development of urban mega-projects. These dynamic land-use changes are deeply connected to changing discursive framings of the role and function of Delhi’s riverscapes in the remaking of the megacity. The study shows how dominant discourses and their associated narratives have remained persistent over long periods of time and the influence they continue to have on urban environmental change and governance.

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