'Inhabited Pasts: Monuments, Authority and People in Delhi, 1912 – 1970s'

Abstract

This article considers the relationship between the official, legislated claims of heritage conservation in India and the wide range of episodic and transitory inhabitations which have animated and transformed the monumental remains of the city, or rather cities, of Delhi. Delhi presents a spectrum of monumental structures that appear variously to either exist in splendid isolation from the rush of every day urban life or to peek out amidst a palimpsest of unplanned, urban fabric. The repeated attempts of the state archaeological authorities to disambiguate heritage from the quotidian life of the city was frustrated by bureaucratic lapse, casual social occupations and deliberate challenges. The monuments offered structural and spatial canvases for lives within the city; providing shelter, solitude and the possibility of privacy, devotional and commercial opportunity. The dominant comportment of the city's monuments during the twentieth century has been a hybrid monumentality, in which the jealous, legislated custody of the state has become anxious, ossified and ineffectual. An acknowledgement and acceptance of the hybridity of Delhi's monuments offers an opportunity to re-orientate understandings of urban heritage.

Key words: heritage, bureaucracy, Delhi, India, monuments, AMPA 1905, urbanism, urban biography, Archaeological Survey of India.

In September 2001, the Archaeological Survey of India in Delhi ruled against displays of romantic affection between couples at three large, landscaped monuments under its custody: Safdarjung's Tomb, the Purana Qila and Lodhi Gardens. Without specifying quite how the ban would be enforced, A. C. Grover, the Survey's media officer, warned against what he described as the 'abuse' of national

heritage by romantically demonstrative couples.[1] This desire to impose codes of public conduct at Delhi's monuments was not unprecedented. In 1973, two young lovers, Faqir Chand and Gita Rani, were evicted from the central tomb of Safdarjung's Tomb and shamed by the *chowkidar* (guard) who took their names and the names and addresses of their parents. The Assistant Superintending Archaeologist at the time complained that Delhi's monuments were visited more often by 'couples than the real tourists' and asked for a police constable to patrol the precincts of Safdarjang's Tomb to 'check the obscene acts of the visitors'.[2]

This moral policing, however impotent, offers an aperture into the two central concerns of this article: the pervasive shortfalls evident in the bureaucratic culture of the Archaeological Survey of India, before and after independence, and the social animation that characterises the everyday life of India's physical past. This article is concerned with the creation and maintenance of Delhi's registered monuments during the twentieth century, in particular it looks through a local context to address broader questions about the disambiguation of 'heritage' by political, legislative and bureaucratic cultures and the transgression of that disambiguation in the everyday lives of an Asian city.

Reflecting on heritage management in India, architect and conservationist A. G. K. Menon elegantly described 'the routine compromises so typical of Indian bureaucracy' (Menon, 2008). Scholarly histories tend to avoid any discussion of the bureaucratic inadequacies and occasional paralysis that

[1] Methil Renuka, 'No Date with the Past', *India Today,* 17 September 2001, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/archaeological-survey-of-india-plays-moral-police/1/233983.html [accessed 26 September 2016].
[2] Assist. Superg. Archaeological Engineer, to DGA, 1/9/1973, Assist. Superg. Arch. Engineer, to Amar Singh, Caretaker, Safdarjang's Tomb, 20 May 1974. Tomb of Sardarjang (Mirza Mugim-Mansur Ali Khan) with all its enclosures walls, gateways and gardens and the mosque on the east side of the gardens. ASI, Delhi, file no. 57/69. NAI.

characterise state conservation work (Basak 2007, Chakrabarti 1988, Ray 2008).[3] Histories of the

colonial Archaeological Department chronicle bureaucratic development and scholarly discoveries

with little consideration of either the very particular epistemologies that lay behind the imperial

ordering of India's physical past or the friction that developed between official and popular uses of

designated heritage sites. Instead, commentaries on India's archaeological heritage tend to lament a

diffuse inadequacy of preservation. 'Why is it', asks artist Debasish Mukherjee, 'that there is such

little appreciation or respect for heritage in India?'[4] The legislative template for heritage, derived

from concepts and practises developed in nineteenth century Europe and adapted to be more

authoritarian by Imperial States, created an ill-fit between monuments that were imagined as

representing the boundaries of power and the complex rushes of urban life around them in India

and elsewhere (Swenson 2013, Sengupta 2015).

The twentieth century history of Delhi's physical past offers an opportunity to re-order our

understandings of the relationship between cities and their physical pasts. This article traces out a

history in which bureaucratic definitions of heritage encountered a range of social and political

orders of urbanism in the capital city of Delhi. The idea of two urban orders of 'Old' (around the

Mughal urban fort of Shajahanabad) and 'New' (which denotes the Imperial capital built between

1911 and 1931) is significant in terms of the creation and custody of the city's monuments. However,

throughout the article, the city at large is referred to as Delhi, designating an urban landscape that

exceeds the definitions of planners or municipalities. The city's monuments formed a hinge between

the state and the people of the city; small spaces in which the bureaucratic culture of state

archaeologists encountered a range of social, religious, economic and cultural expressions of Delhi's

urban population. Regardless of the strict and possessive terms of monumentality set out in British

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[3] A notable exception is Sayantani Jafa's work, 'Heritage Oversight: Key themes in the Governance Frameworks of Heritage Administration in Contemporary India with specific reference to the Archaeological Survey of India', paper presented at the Heritage and History Conference, SOAS, London, 5 September 2016.
[4] 'In Delhi, an art exhibition invites the viewer to reimagine architecture and archaeology', *Scroll*, Tuesday, September 27th 2016. http://scroll.in/article/817499/in-delhi-an-art-exhibition-invites-the-viewer-to-reimagine-architecture-and-archaeology [accessed 27 September 2016].

India by the Ancient Monument Protection Act in 1904, under which the majority of the city's

monuments were notified, the normative experience of the monument in Delhi has been to offer a

space of possibility to the urban poor: shelter, isolation, romantic privacy, social congregation,

enjoyment and occasionally death. All these possibilities transgressed the bureaucratic rules set in

place to arbitrate the meaning of the monument. These inhabitations are not exceptional within the

lives of the city's monuments but instead reflect the quotidian history and personality of

monuments as one, conspicuous, expression of the city' biography.[5] Some occupations

overwhelmed the monument, resulting in the removal of remains from the registers of monumental

architecture in the city. Others, in particular the wholesale appropriation of larger monuments as

refugee camps after the Partition in 1947, have receded and modifications have been repaired

leaving no trace of the occupied life of the monument. This article examines the, often tense and

terse, but nevertheless constant interactions between different state bureaucracies and publics at

these monumental sites and traces the compromises through which inhabited pasts emerged. These

hybrid lives refused the neat categories of legislation and were characterised by fragmented and

shared custodies. Monuments became sites at which a range of social, devotional and economic

custodies co-existed either despite or in collusion with the claims asserted by state-run

bureaucracies. A number of recent studies have highlighted the variations that characterise the lives

of the physical monuments in the city. Hilal Ahmed has explored the custodies expressed over the

Jama Masjid in the old city by emergent Muslim political discourses in the twentieth century (Ahmed

2014). The changing biographies of a set of monuments with the colonial and post-colonial city has

been described by Mrinalini Rajagopalan, charting their changing meanings both politically and

socially within the fabric of the capital. Anand Vivek Taneja has described the dissonance between

the culturally monotonal bureaucratic definitions of monuments and the variety of meanings that

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[5] The notion of an urban landscape's biography is taken from W.M.H. Hupperetz, 'The cultural biography of a street: Memory, cultural heritage and historical notion of the Visserstraat in Breda, the Netherlands (1200-2000)', in eds. Jan Kolen, et al., Landscape biographies: Geographical, historical and archaeological perspectives on the production and transmission of landscapes. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015.

animate those same spaces for marginalised communities. The archaeological authorities in Delhi

are ill at ease with the host of rival narratives, claims and custodies that co-exist with their own

bureaucratic definition of monuments within the city (Taneja 2013). In fact, this sense of incomplete

and besieged custody has characterised the claims of the archaeological authorities since they were

first established at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Fewer than half a million people lived in the city in 1912 when Edwin Lutyens, the architect

commissioned to design the new city, complained that 'the whole country [near Delhi] is larded with

shrines, temples and mosques and wherever you take a line across it, some, several, tombs, shrines

are in the way – and will have to be moved'.[6] Since then, Delhi's urbanism has been characterised as

'crippled' and 'chaotic' as exponential demographic growth consistently out-stripped the

expectations and capacity of the city's planners.[7] The city remains richly endowed by its physical

past, with 172 registered monuments, three UNESCO World Heritage Sites and hundreds of smaller

monuments listed and often lost during the last one hundred years. The continuation of the

discordance between different agencies that will be discussed in this article is indicated by the Indian

State's recent postponement, without explanation, of the bid made by the non-governmental

organisation The Indian National Trust for Art and Culture Heritage for Delhi to be notified as

UNESCO World Heritage City.[8] Whatever the reason for the postponement, initially understood as

complete withdrawal of the bid, it arguably highlights the complexity of matching globalised

heritage, defined and arbitrated by Western trajectories of historicism, to the intricacies of politics in

non-Western contexts.

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[6] Edwin Lutyens to Emily Lutyens, 5 May 1912, LuE/12/9/1-7, Lutyen's Family Papers. Royal Institute of British Architects Archive.
[7] The population of Delhi almost doubled between 1941 and 1951, following war and the Partition migrations. The growth of the city since the 1980s, as neoliberalism transformed capital in the city, has been exponential. Delhi is now inhabited by 19 million people.
[8] The Imperial Capital Cities nomination and withdrawal is mentioned on the INTACH webpages: http://www.intachdelhichapter.org/DELHIS-IMPERIAL-CAPITAL-CITIES-NOMINATION-TO-UNESCOS-LIST-OF-WORLD-HERITAGE-CITIES.php

Throughout the twentieth century, the intention of the officers of the Archaeological Department was to set Delhi's registered monuments apart from the city both for their own protection and as salubrious places of leisure and education. However, while the bureaucracy of the archaeological authorities imagined the monument as a physical shell (to be acquired, restored and subject to annual inspection and occasional tending) the dominant comportment of Delhi's physical heritage during the twentieth century was transformation. The re-working and re-use of objects in South Asia has been subject to extensive scholarly work by historians and art historians who have explored the means by which objects, places and structures were subject to adaptations which both encompassed and adapted aspects of their pasts in the medieval and early modern periods (Mathur 2007, Flood 2009, Cherry 2013, Wagoner and Eaton 2014, Rao 2016). The invention of the modern monument in the nineteenth century was the next, novel enactment of repurposing the fabric of the past. However, it was the first legislated adaptation of those materials that demanded both exclusivity and permanence. The 1904 Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, which appropriated selected Indian material pasts in order to cultivate a legitimating heritage for the colonial state, was not the first attempt by the colonial state to legislate its custody of an Indian monumental heritage according to British precedents. However, the Act coincided with Viceroy Curzon's reorganisation of the Department of Archaeology and provided the means by which hundreds of monuments in India were created until its replacement in 1956 of a, slightly, recalibrated Act passed by the independent Indian state.[9] That the Act lacked cultural traction and was stymied by its own bureaucratic culture has been well-established (Sengupta 2015, 2009; Sutton 2013). This article is less concerned with the specifics of the legislation than the range of deliberate and indifferent defiance encountered by state-curated heritage during the twentieth century.

This article begins with a description of the assumptions under which the monumental legacy of the city was claimed and created by the colonial state in the second decade of the twentieth century. It goes on to explore the many compromises and transgressions of archaeological custody by

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[9] Legislative Department, Papers relating to the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904, (VII of 1904). NAI.

alternative claims and occupations in the period before 1947. Finally, it explores the realities of the social occupation of the city's monuments as spaces of ritual, leisure, commerce and romance in the period after independence when the strictures inherited from the colonial bureaucracy faced the rapid tides of demographic and urban growth in the second half of the twentieth century to create a near perpetual outrage of the city's monumental order.

Colonial Archaeology and the making of monuments in New Delhi

The intention to create a new imperial capital for British India was announced in 1911 during the *durbar* held to mark the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary; an extravagant and elaborate attempt to ritually enact and secure British Imperial authority. The indulgent exhibition of power was sustained in the violence of the land expropriations which preceded the creation of the city. The majority of the lands desired for the Imperial city - for the central arteries, bureaucratic, residential and commercial areas and the provision of adequate hinterlands for potential enlargement - were *nazul* land; land cultivated by peasants but owned and taxed by the colonial state. Almost 200 villages were entirely appropriated, a project of brutal settlement in which compensation was swiftly calculated and soon followed by destruction and displacement. From the city's inception, monuments were anticipated to provide an essential aspect of the character, form and meaning of the new capital (Rajagopalan 2017, 75). In contrast to the sweeping aside of existing occupation, selected structures were chosen as monuments around which New Delhi was to be articulated; sites that were simultaneously set apart from the city and integral to it.

While the land for the capital was cleared and structures selected as monuments, two sets of remains were delineated. In 1910, the Archaeological department had divided the jurisdiction of its officers in the Northern Circle between 'Hindu and Buddhist' and 'Muhammadan and British'; a re-designation which reflected an earlier division between archaeological and architectural fields of

work.[10] Broadly speaking, Hindu and Buddhist remains were to be the provenance of archaeological enquiry; Muhammadan and British remains were a standing, monumental corpus of architectures. The 'List of Religious Buildings under notified acquisition area' compiled in 1912 merged the categories of the 'religious' and 'historical', marking Hindu and Muslim 'monuments' in blue and red respectively.[11] In subsequent lists the category of 'historic monument' and 'religious building' were gradually separated and 'Hindu' monuments were assigned almost exclusively to the latter. The recognised heritage of the new city was, therefore, predominantly Islamic and was cultivated to offer a material continuity between Mughal and British authority (Metcalf 1989). The Imperial city would self-consciously cradle the stately remains of the Mughal nobility and inherit, by suggestion, the grandeur of scale, vision and legitimacy of the Mughals who had been removed from power during the horrific violence of counter-insurgency that had taken place a mere 53 years before plans for the new capital were announced. Thereafter, the money and effort expended on 'Muhammadan' monuments in Northern India, including New Delhi, were vast and unprecedented.[12] In the 1910s and 1920s, great pains were taken to evict residents of monuments and to clear space around them and release what was described as their 'vast educative influence'.[13] Monuments in the city received substantial renovation in preparation for the *darburs* of 1903 and 1911 (Guha 2010). Director General of Archaeology, John Marshall was adamant in defending the cost as a necessary part of the Imperial project:

> I maintain that such expenditure is justifiable from every point of view. We now spend vast sums of money on scholastic and academic education; but we do little for the education of those who have left school or have never been to school. We ought to

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[10] Proposal to alter the designation of the Archaeological Surveyor and the Superintendent...Home Procs. Arch& Epigraphy, Jan 1910, proc. no. 32. IOR.

[11] Deputy Commissioner file, 15, 1912. DSA.

[12] In 1907/8, Rs. 1,82,621 spent on conservation of Mohammadan monuments in northern circle, nearly half the amount spent in the whole of British India. Decision that Archaeological Surveyor and Superintendent, Archaeological Survey, Northern Circle, shall in future be designated... Home Department, Archaeology and Epigraphy, April 1910. proc. no. 45. NAI.

[13] Note by John Marshall on archaeological programme for Delhi Province. Proceedings of the Department of Education, Archaeology and Epigraphy, March 1914, pp. 53-61. IOR.

make accessible to Indians the vast educative influence which resides in the monuments of a great past; but we cannot hope to establish this influence unless we can convert the monuments into places of popular resort. It is not for instance enough accurately to cement the falling walls of Firozshah Kotla. We must make it accessible by some other means than leaping the city sewer; we must fence it round in order to keep out the grazing buffalo, and the contractor's donkey; we must plant the surroundings so that the eye may rest on something more attractive than brown dust and broken brickbats.[14]

Marshall describes the landscape from which the monument was to be redeemed; from sewer, buffalo and dust. The Sher Shah Fort was, 'swept bare of the squalid villages which encumbered it, its walls and gateways have been cleared of debris and repaired'.[15] Rajagopalan has described the tense negotiations that characterised the acquisition and categorisation of properties during the establishment of the city (Rajagopalan 2017, 65-71) Proper conservation required a calibration of bureaucratic authority and scientific knowledge which could first and foremost assure the boundaries of the monumental landscape, establishing the physical parameters of a domain in which scientific authority could exercise itself unencumbered by contingencies and intersections of urban life.[16] Obtaining structures as monuments was a lengthy process which involved the attempt to extricate the materials of the city from the very subaltern populations who were ultimately, according to Marshall, to benefit from access to them. The creation of the new city had created a trade in stone from disused structures and officially defined 'ancient buildings' became sources of much-needed materials. Other 'monuments' had to be redeemed through the eviction of human

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[14] Note by John Marshall on archaeological programme for Delhi Province. Proceedings of the Department of Education, Archaeology and Epigraphy, March 1914, pp. 53-61. IOR.

[15] John Marshall, 'Note on Archaeology', Department of Education (Archaeology), 22 October 1915. Nos. 353-370. NAI.

[16] I would like to thank Mahesh Rangarajan for this observation, devised for natural reserves but which is also pertinent in quarantines created for cultural heritage.

occupants or livestock by whom they had been adapted to provide shelter.[17] When the registration

of the capital's monuments began in the second decade of the twentieth century, it was not

anticipated that physical conservation would immediately follow the establishment of custody by

the archaeological authorities. John Marshall noted in 1913 that substantial repair work might wait

for up to 15 years and he did not, in the meantime, foresee problems beyond visitors who were

'likely to scribble their names and commit other nuisances'.[18] In Marshall's imagination, the public

that pressed in at the edges of monuments were not rivals for the space of the monument. They

were delinquent merely by virtue of their ignorance of proper conduct.

In Delhi, extensive rebuilding and re-landscaping work was carried out to define monuments

physically. The physical transformation and demarcation of monumental spaces depended not just

upon structural work but also upon the spaces which marked out and articulated the monument as a

space of urban leisure. The Superintendent of Muhammadan and British Archaeology in the first

years of the city's planning, Gordon Sanderson, conceived of a 'grand programme' through which a

chain of monuments would be created stretching from the Red Fort in the North to the Qtab Minar

in the South. Sanderson cleared away a 'large untidy village' from the Purana Qila and evicted the

people living in within the vaults of the Kila Kohna Masjid in 1913.[19]   Access roads were built into

and paths through groups of monuments. Courtyards were paved and pillars were straightened to

create passable space within and around monuments.[20] The addition of grassy lawns around

monuments was deemed essential (Sharma 2007, Singh 2010). It was, Marshall claimed, 'absurd...to

substitute the old fashioned Indian beaten earth in place of a far more beautiful lawn of grass'

(Marshall 1923). At Feroz Shah Kotla, grass replaced, 'a confused mass of crumbing ruins and an

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[17] Blakison, Supt., Muhammadan and British Monuments, Northern Circle, to Deputy Commissioner, 27 Jan. 1920. Occupation of the tomb of Adham Khan by Abdul Razzaq (1920). Deputy Commissioner's Office, no. 10, 1920. DSA.

[18] General Principles for the guidance of those entrusted with the custody and repair to Ancient Monuments. Government Printing Office, Simla. p.3, 110/1913/Education, vol. 11. DSA.

[19] Undated cutting from *The Pioneer*. 1914.

[20] A. M. Rouse, Supt. of Works, 1st Circle, Delhi, to CC, Delhi, 28 April 1915. Programme of Archaeological Works for 1915 – 1916. CCR Education Dept, 166/1915 vol. 1. DSA

even greater display of dirt, dust and debris'.[21] The garden was fundamental to the constitution of the monument as an exceptional, orderly space, set apart from the city's present. Space around monuments was considered essential in order to 'popularise the monuments and stimulate the interest of the general public'.[22] The landscape around monuments also formed barriers, insulation, from structural incursions. Only within assured physical boundaries could the anachronistic fabric of the monument be preserved. The garden and lawns created boundaries around the monument and replaced disorder and debris with order and calm.

Competing Custodies and Monumentalities

The constitution of Delhi's monuments, therefore, was directed by clear legislative and design templates and underwritten by a set of assumptions about how the nascent publics of the new city would be both inclined and disciplined to interact with the curated physical past. Monuments, once restored, were supposed to be socially sterile and physically static, subject only to maintenance of the correct degree of restoration to maintain their authentic monumentality. In practice, that expectation created fraught relationships within the bureaucracy of the archaeological department and tension with both other state agencies and the publics of the city.

In 1930, Zafar Hasan, as Superintendent of Muhammadan and British Monuments, recommended the removal of seventeen structures from the list of notified monuments in the city. Among the seventeen were monuments which were now in state of decay or which were being used as storehouses or homes. J.A. Page, as Director General of Archaeology, acerbically pointed out that 11 of 17 monuments had been recommended by Hasan himself, and twelve had been notified in the

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[21] Hailey, CC. to H. Sharp, Sec to GoI, Education Dep., Simla, 15 October, 1915.Programme of Archaeological Works for 1915 – 1916. CCR Education Dept, 166/1915 vol.II. DSA.
[22] Gordon Sanderson, Supert. Muhammadan and British Monuments, Northern Circle, to DGA, 4 November 1913. Archaeological Programme of Works in Delhi Province. Chief Commissioners Office, Education Proceedings, file 314. 1913. DSA.

last 6 years.[23] Page's censure overestimated Hasan's capacity to maintain as well as create monuments amid a city experiencing rapid change. The archaeological authorities had custody but no authority to evict inhabitants or demolish constructions added to or around any registered monument. In any case in which archaeological officers believed that the terms of a monument's custody was being breeched, they could only appeal to Deputy Commissioner's office to carry out an eviction. As the population of the city grew, the relationship between the archaeological authorities and the inhabitants of the city and, indeed, the other local government and planning agencies of the city, became increasingly fractious. The monuments that had been initially imagined as landmarks around which the urban order of the new imperial capital would articulate itself, were now regarded as inconvenient and impractical. Monuments were considered to be particularly troublesome in areas of high urban density. The Old City was associated with large and unruly urbanism threatening to monuments (Hosagrahar 2007). In 1942, the Director General of Archaeology, Kashinath Narayan Dikshit, had refused to make Turkman Gate of Shajahanabad a monument stating, 'there is no point in adding Turkman Gate to our books especially as it leads to one of the most congested parts of the city'.[24]

The ordinances put in place set the monuments beyond congestion and disorder and assumed that social occupation would be limited to orderly public visits, between prescribed hours and according to prescribed forms of movement and comportment. Visitors at protected monuments were forbidden from 'unseemly or unpleasantly noisy behaviour' and, more specifically, were to refrain from spitting pan, plucking flowers, walking on the lawns, making meals and firing guns (the ban on fire-arms was introduced in the 1920s after a party at Haus Khas opened fire on some pigeons during

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[23] J. A. Page?, Offg. DGA to Zafar Hasan, 2 July 1930. Deletion of certain monuments in Delhi from the list of Centrally Protected Monuments, ASI Delhi Monuments, 1930-1934, file no. 325-Delhi. NAI.
[24] Delhi, Ajmere and Kashmiri gates had been notified in 1927. DG of Archaeology to CC, 10 July 1942. Preservation of Kashmiri Gate and adjoining city walls and also Delhi and Ajmeri Gate, DC records, file no. 98/1927. DSA.

their picnic).[25] Tea could be prepared but only using a small spirit lamp. The rules framed in 1905

also explicitly forbad visitors from entering or remaining in the monument's grounds after 10pm.[26]

Allowances were made for the continuation of religious practice at several large sites. The existence

of eight mosques in the grounds of centrally protected monuments was assured by the terms of

their registration and visitors were required to either remove their shoes or to wear the overshoes

that were provided.[27] In 1915, the Chief Commissioner ordered a public monument notice be

removed from within the mosque, 'a place of worship', at Purana Qila and instead placed on a

building outside it.[28] These accommodations, however, did not delimit or curtail the use of the city's

monuments for devotional purposes. In the administration of smaller monuments, overlapping

custodies muddied the legislative clarity of 'the monument'. The Pir Ghaib, near Hindu Rao Hospital

on the Ridge, had been acquired and registered as a protected monument in 1913 and was

described in various accounts as an observatory, hunting lodge and mosque (Hasan vol. II, 2007,

p.278; INTACH vol. II, 1999, p.35). Two years after its acquisition and official notification, a row

erupted about ceremonies being conducted each Thursday by Barashat Ali who claimed the

structure as a tomb and himself the hereditary *mujawar* or guardian. Barashat Ali and the devotees

who now came to the site had made the Pir Ghaib into a site of memory and meaning for local

Muslims, an understanding that was entirely at odds with the singular, vacant purpose of the secular

monument. Three sources of authority were drawn into the dispute: the Archaeological Department,

the Delhi Notified Area Committee (which oversaw the development of what became the Delhi

Municipality) and the office of the Chief Commissioner who was responsible for civil authority across

the new capital. The Superintendent of Archaeology strenuously objected to the occupation and

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[25] Shooting at and Around the Protected Monuments in Delhi, DC Office, 22/1928. DSA.

[26] Rules for the guidance of visitors to certain protected monuments in the Delhi Province. CCO, Education, 1(20)/1935. DSA.

[27] These were: Khairul Manazil Mosque, Purana Qila Mosque, Safdarjung's Mosque, Shah Alam's Mosque, Qudsia Garden Mosque, Jamali Kamali Mosque, Moth-ki-Masjid and Khirki Masjid. Rules for the guidance of visitors to certain protected monuments in the Delhi Province. CCO, Education, 1(20)/1935. DSA.

[28] W. H. Hailey, CC, to Supt. of Works, Delhi, 8 July 1915, Programme of Archaeological Works for 1915 – 1916. CCR Education Dept, 166/1915 vol.II. DSA.

insisted that the whitewash that had been applied by devotees to portions of the building be removed, the rights claimed by Ali be scrutinised and ideally that all the ceremonies at the monument end. The Delhi Notified Area Committee had provided information of the activity in the tomb but refused to prosecute for lack of clear accountability – how could the specific identity of the whitewasher be established? - and reminded the Superintendent of Archaeology that the monument was entirely under his purview. The Chief Commissioner registered his displeasure that an old door in the upper story of the tomb had been painted. However, he did not regard the custody of the Archaeological Department to be exclusive and saw no reason why the ceremonies should not continue or the interiors whitewashed and lamps lit within. To the Chief Commissioner, the Pir Ghaib was a visual resource, significant only as a façade within the urban landscape. The appearance of, and any activities within, the interior were irrelevant. The dispute illustrates the complex and informal accommodations of custody that were reached despite the singularity of the monument's legislated purpose. Although the Delhi Notified Area Committee refused to prosecute, a letter was sent to Barashat Ali warning him of the (potential) legal ramifications of any alterations of the monument's fabric. His occupation of the site was left undisturbed and the Chief Commissioner warned that any written agreement reached between Ali and the Archaeological Department for the removal of the whitewash by Ali would be tantamount to giving formal recognition to his claim at the site.[29] Ali's occupation of the tomb continued and two years later, apparently mindful of the jurisdiction of the archaeological department, he approached the authorities to have the interior of the tomb whitewashed. The Commissioner's office again warned against giving permission, not because of any fundamental objection to the whitewashing but because permission would recognise Ali's claim to custody at the tomb, a position Ali appears to have exercised anyway with little if any sense of transgression.[30] These exchanges epitomise the colonial tendency to rule by consistency in principle and widely variant practice. The colonial bureaucracy accommodated transgressions as inevitable to the point of necessity. Sunil Kumar has

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[29] Protection of the Pir Ghaib monument at Delhi. CCR, 211/1915. DSA.
[30] Notes on back of file, September 1917. Protection of the Pir Ghaib monument at Delhi. CCR, 211/1915. DSA.

described, with exceptional knowledge and insight, the generation and transformation of Sufi shrine sites in Delhi. The attentions paid to particular sites varied over time, as did the self-identification of the individuals and institutions claiming custody, creating dramatic structural and cultural transformations (Kumar 2011). Custody under the 1904 Ancient Monuments Preservation Act could only be expressed through the suspension of physical change of the monument after the department's supposedly definitive restorative intervention. The archaeological authorities, therefore, enjoyed only a surrogate authority; their role was to set aside and preserve the past for the future amidst a rapidly changing present. That surrogacy – in deliberate defiance of the fluidities of urbanism – could do nothing to challenge the socio-economic and divine dynamics of a shrine site. Publics at these sites were regarded as repeatedly delinquent yet the archaeological authorities had no legislative means, or recourse, to enforce their exclusive claim to arbitrate the meaning of monuments.

Bureaucratic amnesia compounded the department's struggle to assert its custody over monuments. In the mid-1920s, at the tomb of Atgah Khan in Nizamuddin a series of archaeological inspection reports complained that the tomb was occupied by a household. The courtyard around the tomb was 'littered with debris and all sorts of domestic furniture' limiting, if not preventing, public access. The initial censure of the tomb's guardian, Mirza Bulaqi, was tempered when the archaeological department's attention was drawn to the terms under which the tomb was protected. The agreement was reached in 1905, under the terms of AMPA, divided custody between the archaeological department and the tomb's hereditary guardians. The agreement required that physical conservation of the site be directed by archaeologists. The cost of all repairs was to be met by government and, in return, public access was permitted to the enclosure around the tomb, with the exception of closure for *urs* (ceremonies to mark the *Pir's* death anniversary). The central tomb was closed to the public at all times.[31] Although the tomb was not included in the centre piece monuments Sanderson imagined for the imperial city, the agreement predated and did not

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[31] Tomb of Shahab-ud-Din Atgah Khan at Nizamuddin occupied by certain families, DC corr., 13/1924, DSA.

anticipate the scale of 'public access' that was created by the expansion of the city as an imperial

capital. In another case, when the Superintending Archaeologist asked for the mullah of Abdul

Nabi's mosque to be evicted in 1928, he was reminded that, only two years before, the Secretary of

State had agreed to hand custody of the mosque to the Muhammadan Cemetery Committee. The

agreement created a joint custody shared between the Cemetery Committee and the Archaeological

Department whereby the mosque would be repaired by archaeologists at the expense of the

Committee and would remain open to the public as a monument.[32] These divided custodies assumed

that two different functions could be accommodated and that the interests of two, very different,

publics could be reconciled at the site by virtue of the presence, and in theory complimentary

responsibility, of two agencies. The regulation of agreed occupation of monuments was also

exacerbated by the problem of invigilation. In 1936, after the Deputy Commissioner assured the

Superintendent of Archaeology that structural changes made at the mosque at Mubarakpur in South

Delhi has been removed, the Conservation Assistant reported that they were still standing.[33] An

inhabitation at Chauburj ('four domes') monument on the Ridge, described in January 1943, was

reported as having been removed in February by the City Magistrate but was back by March. In

1946, the Archaeological Department complained to the police about the occupation of Tripolia Gate

by Ghosis, traditionally a herding community. However, the Police Constable charged with removing

them claimed that their occupation had taken place with the permission of the Archaeological

Department's own chowkidar at the site.[34]

These compromises and inconsistencies were not out of place in the bureaucratic culture of the new

capital. Indeed, it echoed the tendency in Delhi for split jurisdictions over particular spaces. During

the planning process, from the second decade of the twentieth century, control over budgets,

planning and authority was divided between different agencies causing friction, delay and allowing

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[32] Eviction of certain mullas from mosques and ancient monuments in Delhi, DC Records, 74/1928. DSA.
[33] Papers regarding the certain additions to the mosque attached to the tomb of Mubarak Shah at Mubarakpur Kotla. DC Records 22/1935. DSA.
[34] Reports from Archaeological Survey Department for removal of persons from the precincts of Centrally Protected Monuments. DC records, 9/1941. DSA.

ample opportunity to non-official, and officially transgressive, activity and inhabitation (Sharan 2015). The civil authorities, faced with a spectrum of budget short-falls and challenges to their authority, were reluctant to press the claims of the Archaeological Department. At the inception of the new city, Chief Commissioner Hailey advised accommodation in cases of either residential or ritual occupation (or both) of monuments, reminding officers that 'we don't want to add to our religious difficulties at present'.[35] When Shah Fayuz-ud-din pressed his claim as *mutwalli* of the tomb of Makhdum Shah Alam at Wazirabad in North Delhi, therefore, an agreement was made for the continuation of annual *urs* ceremonies, despite the tomb being on government land and despite Fayuz-ud-din having provided a government *mafi* (agreement) for another tomb, that of Shah Sadar Jahan, as proof of his claim.[36] At the same shrine in 1928, a new grave was dug for the father of Azimuddin who claimed a long-standing right to bury within the mosque's precincts. The archaeological authorities had initially insisted that the tomb would have to be destroyed. Ultimately, however, neither the Deputy Commissioner nor the archaeological department were prepared to take action against the family.[37]

The Archaeology Department was beholden not only to its own, often forgotten or mislaid, agreements but to the rapidly changing urban fabric of the city. In 1943, an imam moved into the Chaurburj ('four domes') monument on the Ridge and claimed it as a mosque. Students from the newly relocated St Stephen's college attended prayers there and handbills and posters circulated locally inviting a congregation to pray there. The mosque emerged from the changing locality regardless of the Superintendent of Archaeology's insistence that the Chaurburj monument was 'at best a mausoleum'.[38] The dispute escalated beyond its locality when politician and advocate K.B. Haji

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[35] W. M. Hailey, CC, to S. M. Jacob, Offg. DC, Delhi. 4 June 1913. Bringing the Tomb, the Mosque and the Bridge at Wazirabad in the Delhi District under the Protected Monuments Act. 36/1913, CCR, Education Dept. DSA.
[36] Bringing the Tomb, the Mosque and the Bridge at Wazirabad in the Delhi District under the Protected Monuments Act. 36/1913, CCR, Education Dept. DSA.
[37] Complaint of the Archaeological Department against Abdul Hakim who encroached upon the Wazirabad Mosque, DC Records, fil. 26/1928. DSA.
[38] Dr K N Puri, Assist. Super., Arch. Survey, to Deputy Commissioner, 19 January 1943. Reports from Archaeological Survey Department for removal of persons from the precincts of Centrally Protected Monuments. DC records, 9/1941, DSA.

Rashid Ahmed became involved in negotiations and an agreement was reached that no overnight occupation of the Chauburj, now defined as a mosque, would take place. The archaeological authorities were entirely isolated in their claim that the structure never was, and therefore could not be, a mosque. The determination, and credibility, of the archaeologists to maintain the function of the structure as an empty monument was not helped by the civil authorities; a note added to the correspondence, possibly by the Deputy Commissioner Evans, stated: 'Actually I do think it is a mosque, whatever the Arch. Dept may say'.[39]

The involvement of *anjumans* (councils) in the regulation of Islamic shrines, mosques and madrasas was cultivated by the civic authorities from the 1920s as were Hindu organisations that offered, though did not achieve, the same system of regulation of Hindu shrines.[40] In an attempt to create uniform regulations for Muslims sites in the city, in 1943, the Sunni Majlis-e-Auqaf was created under the terms of the Delhi Waqf Act. The Auquf was to take control of all Muslim religious sites in the city, overseeing the appointment of religious functionaries at mosques and provide the management of *waqf* property.

 In the context of disputed custodies, the anjumans and auquf became redoubtable advocates for the sacred inhabitation of monuments. Their participation in a dispute consistently increased the chances of contested monumentality. Given the desire of the civil authorities to deal with recognised, centralised authority in the city, the archaeological authorities were in no position to limit or challenge the anjumans' claims to regulate the social and sacred function of religious sites. From the 1920s onwards, these organisations not only challenged the exclusive custody claimed by the archaeological department, they assimilated and trumped it.

In the mid-1920s, custody of the tomb and mosque at Kotla Mubarakpur was taken by an anjuman which had repaired the mosque and appointed an imam. After the Archaeological Department

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[39] note on file (D.C.?) 5/3/1943. Reports from the Archaeological Survey Department for removal of persons from the precincts of Centrally Protected Monuments. D.C. 9/1941. DSA.
[40] The anjumans were superseded by the Delhi Waqf Act in 1943. This Act placed all waqf property under a single board.

objected, the anjuman offered custody of the site on condition that the department compensated

the amount spent on repairs, agreed to supply water to the site for devotees' ablutions and deputed

a Muslim chowkidar who would act both guard and imam.[41] These compromises established the

sacred function of monument and the authority of the anjumans. The assimilation of the chowkidar

as imam represented the most significant compromise in the department's jurisdiction and yet was

passed in the correspondence without remark or protest. At Wazirabad in North Delhi in the same

year, the local anjuman removed an imam from the mosque after the Public Works Department

appointed a Muslim chowkidar who would act as Mouezzin.[42] The anjumans could accommodate

compromise and, in setting the terms of the agreement, made the religious use of the site pre-

eminent. As far as the anjuman was concerned, any claim the Archaeological Department may have

had was made obsolete by its own, more recent, investment. Rather than full custody under the

1904 Act, archaeological oversight was made one of several, overlapping and potentially competing

jurisdictions.

By the 1930s, the colonial state was rapidly losing credibility across British India. In Delhi, political

actors seeking chinks and weaknesses in the governance of the city questioned state custody of the

monuments by presenting them as sacred spaces in which the colonial state was failing to protect

communal, and sensitised, identities. In 1931 the *Al Aman* newspaper complained that Hindu

chowkidar*s* posted at 'Muslim protected monuments…use these sacred places as dens for sinful

deeds.'[43] The Deputy Commissioner, without challenging the *Al Aman's* re-designation of the

monuments as 'Muslim', ordered a report from the Superintending Archaeologist. The Public Works

Department, responsible for employing chowkidars for the monuments, assured the Deputy

Commissioner that it had a policy of employing, 'Muslim chaukidars in Muhammadan Monuments.'

The matter attracted modest, if telling, attention when pleader Abdul Rahman petitioned the Chief

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[41] Eviction of certain mullas from mosques and ancient monuments in Delhi, DC Records, 74/1928. DSA.
[42] Complaint of the Archaeological Department against Abdul Hakim who encroached upon the Wazirabad Mosque, DC Records, fil. 26/1928. DSA.
[43] Posting of non-Muslim Chowkidars in Mohammadan Protected Monuments. DC Records, 148/1931. DSA.

Commissioner, claiming to have the signatures of hundreds of 'respectable and responsible Muhamedans of city':

 'In the vicinity of this ancient city there are many tombs of distinguished Mohamedan saints and emperors. They are regarded by the Muslim community as objects of great religious veneration and sanctity. And for the protection of those sanctuaries the department concerned has kept Hindu chaprasis which appointment are [sic] high objectionable from a religious point of view.'[44]

The archaeological authorities appear to have done nothing to counter the politicisation of the sites as spaces of community identity and communal sensitivity. In 1939, the Anjuman Arab Sarai supported Chanda Baker's claim to be the hereditary attendant of the mosque at Arab Sarai. Baker denied that his rights had been compensated when the whole area was acquired by Government in March 1914. Revenue records showed that Rs1221-4-10 had been sent to the District Judge as compensation for landholders, a practice in keeping with the brutal and final land acquisition proceedings of the time.[45] Times, however, had changed and by the late-1930s, the archaeological authorities were in no position to press their claim. The singular rights claimed by the archaeological authorities over monuments were those with which the civil authorities felt it could most conveniently dispense.

The difficulty in defining and limiting rights in monuments led to the archaeological authorities increasing invigilation in order to ward off the initiation of ritual activity. In 1941 Assistant Superintendent of Archaeology, Hilary Waddington, sent a police patrol to the Makhdum-ki-Masjid monument at 11.30 (after the 10pm curfew imposed on public visits to the city's monuments) to

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[44] Abdul Rahman, Pleader, to Chief Commissioner, 11 Sept. 1931. Posting of non-Muslim Chowkidars in Mohammadan Protected Monuments. DC Records, 148/1931. DSA.
[45] Correspondence regarding Arab Sarai Mosque. Deputy Commissioner Records, 85/1939. DSA.

check on inhabitation and warned Deputy Commissioner of Delhi that 'it is not wanted that this should develop into an Urs.'[46]

After two decades of oversights, compromises and occasional, small assertions of the archaeological department's authority, the city was transformed by partition. The creation of the separate sovereign states of India and Pakistan from British and Princely India in 1947 precipitated the arrival of half a million refugees in the city and the departure of 300,000 Muslim inhabitants. The city's monuments were used to provide immediate shelter for those forced to migrate out of, through and into the city.[47] The Purana Qila, Humayun's Tomb and other sites in Nizamudin were requisitioned by the Ministry for Refugees as transit camps for Muslim refugees leaving the city until the end of 1947. The following year, along with Safdarjung's Tomb, they became camps for Hindu refugees moving into or through the city.[48] Permission for the transformation was never sought by the Ministry for Refugees, a fact that grated on the archaeological authorities who lost entirely, if temporarily, their claim on the city's physical past. Occupation of the large camps continued into the early 1950s and extended to 1953 at the Purana Qila and Ferozshah Kotla.[49] The sites' use as refugee camps required substantial physical modification. Latrines, baths and, very simple, residential structures were made.[50] At Humayun's tomb, scores of latrines and baths were built and the 22 marble graves on the first floor of the tomb were encased in masonry to protect them.[51] Schools were started by refugees in the mosque at Safdarjung's tomb, at Masjid Kotla Mubarakpur and at Moth-Ki-Masjid.[52]

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[46] The shrine had received attentions from the Young Men's Shia Mission in Jarchah Village. Note on file. Hilary Waddington, Assist. Super., Arch. Survey, to S. M. Rafi, President, The Young Men Shia Mission of Jarchah, 13 Turkman Road, New Delhi. 22 May 1941. Reports from Archaeological Survey Department for removal of persons from the precincts of Centrally Protected Monuments. DC records, 9/1941, DSA.

[47] For a discussion of the experiences of refugees in the Purana Qila camp see: Kaur, Ravinder, *Since 1947: Partition Narratives among Punjabi Migrants of Delhi.* OUP, 2007.pp.106-112.

[48] Tara Chand, Sec to Govt. of India, Ministry of Education. Draft Note to Cabinet. File submitted 25/4/1951, Occupation of monuments by refugees, ASI, Delhi Monuments, 1951. file. 195. NAI.

[49] Making use of Historical Buildings of India, suggestions by Mr Tyabji. ASI, Delhi Branch. 1953, D296. NAI.

[50] Tara Chand, Sec to Govt. of India, Ministry of Education. Draft Note to Cabinet. File submitted 25/4/1951, Occupation of monuments by refugees, ASI, Delhi Monuments, 1951. file. 195, NAI.

[51] Alteration and Addition in Humayun Tomb Camp. Chief Commissioner's Office. Record and Routine Branch. file no. 3(78)N. 1948. DSA.

[52] Dr K. N. Puri, Supt., Arch. Dept., Delhi Circle, to DC, Delhi, 15 Nov. 1949; J. H. S. Waddington, Supt., Arch. Dept., Delhi Circle, to DC, Delhi, 16 July 1951, Damages caused and occupation taken of protected monuments

Archaeological officers complained incessantly about the damage inflicted by refugees at these sites. At Safdarjung's tomb, archaeological officers complained of broken *jalis* (perforated stone screens) and plinth stones being deliberately raised and broken to be used for washing clothes.[53] At the Purana Qila, Sher Shah's tomb the black marble inlay work in the walls was removed.[54] Families living in and around the tomb cut trees and plants, cooked, bathed, urinated, defecated, beat their clothes, drew and wrote on the walls of the tomb and put cow-dung cakes out to dry.[55] The lawns at all three sites, complained the Ministry of Education, had been 'ruined and altered beyond recognition'.[56] In addition to the sites appropriated as official camps, by 1948, most (according to the archaeological department) of the city's monuments had been occupied by refugees.[57] Although the Partition was an exceptional hiatus, the tone of the complaints made against refugees was distinct only in scale from those that preceded and followed them. The vast majority of monuments were restored to the custody of the newly designated Archaeological Survey of India and few physical signs remain of the monuments' lives as refugee camps or the lives of those who were forced to inhabit them.

The occupation of monuments by Partition refugees, and their subsequent clearance from the monuments, marks a turning point in the management of the city's Islamic monuments. Occupations and devotional use had been an accepted part of the lives of many registered monument, not least the eight mosques that were accommodated within larger monumental landscapes and the use of which was specified and guaranteed by the Archaeological Department's custody of the site. Despite the frequency of terse correspondence about the performance of rituals or the accommodation of

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during disturbances and thereafter. Deputy Commissioner's Office, General Branch. D.C. 21/1945. DSA; List of Irregularities at Safdarjung's tomb, Safdarjang tomb, A.S.I, Delhi Monuments, 1949. D25**.** NAI.

[53] Safdarjang tomb, A.S.I, Delhi Monuments, 1949. D25. NAI.

[54] Tara Chand, Sec to Govt. of India, Ministry of Education. Draft Note to Cabinet. File submitted 25/4/1951, Occupation of monuments by refugees, ASI, Delhi Monuments, 1951. file. 195, NAI.

[55] Safdarjang tomb, A.S.I, Delhi Monuments, 1949. D25. NAI.

[56] Tara Chand, Sec to Govt. of India, Ministry of Education. Draft Note to Cabinet. File submitted 25/4/1951, Occupation of monuments by refugees, ASI, Delhi Monuments, 1951. file. 195, NAI.

[57] Assist. Supt., Dept. Arch. Delhi Circle, to Dy Commissioner, 18/03/1948. Damages caused and occupation taken of protected monuments during disturbances and thereafter. Deputy Commissioner's Office, General Branch. D.C. 21/1945. DSA.

religious officers within the monuments' precincts, that the Islamic monuments had, and could contain, other lives was an accepted component of their existence as monuments. The Archaeological Department that had been happy to suspend the restrictions of the 1904 Act in the cases of mosques and allow the continuation of urs in registered monuments now put in place more categorical and exclusive claims (Ahmed 20**). Before independence and partition, Islamic structures were, both *de facto* and *de jure*, hybrid monuments in which devotions to God and the monumental order of national history were combined. The order of national heritage that emerged after independence was more stringent and exclusive. Living mosques within complexes of monuments were no longer permitted and religious activity in and around buildings, whilst it continued, was now view as transgressive.

This change is one manifestation of the changed position of Muslims in the city of Delhi. After Partition and independence, the city's Muslim population was dramatically reduced and spatially curtailed. Urdu, the language of all the city's inhabitants before 1947, was gradually diminished by educational policy and became singularly affixed to Muslim identity. The grandeur of the city's Islamic monuments was no longer regarded as one aspect of the city's profuse Islamic cultural heritage. As Muslims became a community marginal within the space of the city, Islamic monuments became physical marginalia within the city's present; in Taneja's words, 'dead congregations of stone' (Taneja 2015). The largely Islamicate monuments of the city have become a manifestation of the separation of the city of Delhi's Muslim past from its present.

The everyday lives of monuments in Delhi after 1947

Bureaucratically, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) emerged from the colonial archaeological department largely unchanged. The tendency of the colonial archaeological department to define transgression more effectively than the meaning and purpose of monuments continued and, if

anything, increased. After the politics and violence of Partition, the ASI withdrew from any formal agreements with religious bodies. Ahmed has charted the confrontations that took place between the Jamma Masjid Committee and the Archaeological Authorities since independence and made clear the boundaries that the Committee has succeeded in establishing around both the monument and its own religious sovereignty (Ahmed 2014). The final section of this article examines the diffuse, urban appropriations of the city's monuments in the wake of rapid, post-independence urban expansion.

As the city expanded, bureaucratic process and public discourse pitted urban planning and heritage against one another. City planners after independence echoed Lutyen's irritation with the plethora of physical remains in the city. In 1953, officials complained that in addition to around 150 registered monuments in the capital, over 1200 others were known and the archaeological authorities were constantly coming across 'fresh ones'.[58] These complaints were joined by voices which lamented the encroachment of the rapidly changing city around its most prominent monuments. In the early 1950s, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru complained about buildings erected around the Red Fort and in the area around the tomb of Tomb of Khan Abdur Rahim in Nizamuddin, the development known 'by the uncouth name of "Nizamuddin Extension East"' (now one of the most expensive and desirable residential areas in the city).[59] Soon after the Delhi Development Authority was formed to oversee the creation of new residential areas in the city, the Superintendent of Archaeology complained that the rapid pace of construction had resulted, 'not only in spoiling the setting of these monuments but also an opportunity has been lost to integrate the monument to the lay out of the colonies, so that a monument which could have enhanced the perspective of the habitations nearby

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[58] Central Advisory Board of Archaeology. CC Delhi State Secretariat, 2(64)/53 – MT&CE. 1953. DSA.
[59] Construction of buildings on the open spaces between Red Fort and Jamma Masjid. Delhi State Secretariat, Local Self Government Department, F1 (187)/1955. DSA.; Note by J. Nehru, 8/5/1954. Repairs to Dargah Hazrat Nizamuddin, Delhi State Secretariat, Medical, Transport and Charitable Endowments, 3(17), 1953. DSA.

now looks disregarded'.[60] Sixty centrally protected monuments located in vicinities where new

housing colonies were being established were found to be damaged and neglected. In order to

integrate monuments and new residential colonies, he recommended that a minimum distance of

200 feet should be allowed around the monument and that no new building should be higher than

any proximate monument. A.V. Ventatasubban, Chairman of the Delhi Improvement Trust, agreed

and suggested that the work of the newly formed Delhi Development Authority be carried out in

consultation with the Department of Archaeology.[61] This agreement did not extend beyond the

paper upon which it was printed.

During the 1960s attempts was made to enlarge and consolidate the lands around monuments as

part of one of the Government's five-year plan.[62] Mapping the area of ground associated with the

sites under the terms of their original registration was far from straight forward; frequent, and often

unresolved, queries were sent to *Patwaris* (revenue officers) to establish and settle the boundaries

of protected areas. The archaeological department was often unsuccessful in even establishing the

spatial limits of their jurisdiction, let alone enforcing it.[63] During the 1960s and 1970s, monuments

were cut off from their immediate environs by roads and construction, and even isolated on traffic

islands.

The Archaeological Survey struggled to maintain an exclusive physical claim on listed monuments as

the city experienced rapid expansion. In the late-1960s, eight householders were at an advanced

stage of constructing homes on land attached to the Sultanate remains at Bijay Mandal in

Begumpur. All of the households claimed that occupation has been established by their forefathers.

The Superintending Archaeologist expressed incredulity that construction had advanced so far and

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[60] Dr Y. D. Sharma, Supt., Dept of Arch., NW Circle, Safdarjung's Tomb, to CC, Delhi, 10 Dec. 1955. Efficient maintenance of ancient monuments in and around Delhi and their integration into the layout of various schemes. F1(168)/55-LSG. DSA.

[61] Dr Y. D. Sharma, Supt., Dept of Arch., NW Circle, Safdarjung's Tomb, to CC, Delhi, 10 Dec. 1955. Efficient maintenance of ancient monuments in and around Delhi and their integration into the layout of various schemes. F1(168)/55-LSG. DSA.

[62] Implementation of Five Year Plan schemes in the Circle, ASI, Delhi Branch, No. D47/67-M. NAI.

[63] In 2010 the Delhi Monument Authority was set up in order to clarify, with little success so far, the extent of regulated spaces around monuments.

squarely laid the blame for the encroachment on the Conservation Assistant, Thomas Koshy, whose

responsibility it was to inspect the protected sites regularly. However, the homes were paying

corporation tax and had been allotted house numbers. In other words, their occupation had been

affirmed by other, municipal, authority.[64] Shared and overlapping jurisdictions were unresolved and

sometimes fractious. A request from the New Delhi Municipal Corporation to the Superintending

Archaeologist to remove rubble from the carpark outside Safdarjung's Tomb, earned the terse

response that the Municipal Engineer should first prevent his sweepers from throwing rubbish into

the cells which surrounded the tombs grounds.[65]

As the city transformed around them, the archaeological authorities struggled to control the

precincts of larger, delineated monuments. Occupation within the grounds of monuments was a

constant bugbear, not least because very often it was employees of the archaeological department

who took up unofficial residence. In 1958, Pahlwan Singh Bahadur, a peon in the office of the

Director General, along with three of his male relatives and their families were evicted from the first

floor of the southern gateway of Humayun's tomb.[66] In the late 1960s, Shyam Raj, a night chowkidar,

moved his family into the cells behind Safdarjung's tomb and opened a tea stall.[67] By the early

1970s, the monuments and the spaces around them could also be condemned as vessels for the

incursions of the poor. The Residents Association in Green Park complained that the spaces around

ASI protected monuments on Mehrauli Road were 'an eye sore in a posh locality' and demanded

that those sleeping there should be evicted and the enclosures cleared and secured.[68] Monuments

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[64] Naunihal Singh, Inspector, Hauz Khas, 'Report on Encroachment of Survey Land between Begumpuri Masjid and Vijay Mandal', 21/7/1967, Bijai Mandal, Neighbouring Domes, Buildings and Dalans, Kalusarai. ASI, Delhi Branch, file no. DLH – 78/67-M. NAI.

[65] Supt. Arch., Delhi Circle, to Municipal Engineer, South, NDMC, Civil Engineering Dept., Dec? 1978. Tomb of Sardarjang (Mirza Mugim-Mansur Ali Khan) with all its enclosures walls, gateways and gardens and the mosque on the east side of the gardens. ASI, Delhi, file no. 57/69. NAI.

[66] memo. 22 August 58. Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi, ASI Delhi monuments branch, DLH-12/1958. NAI.

[67] Tomb of Sardarjang (Mirza Mugim-Mansur Ali Khan) with all its enclosures walls, gateways and gardens and the mosque on the east side of the gardens. ASI, Delhi, file no. 57/69. NAI.

[68] R. B. Mathur, Gen. Sec., Green Park Association, to DGA, 1 Dec. 1969; R. B. Mathur, Gen. Sec., Green Park Association, to DGA, 22 Sept. 1972, Committee on 'Project Delhi' for development programme. ASI, Delhi. file no. 2/7/69. NAI.

were, and continue to be, spaces in which the urban poor - with the rights connections - could find ad hoc shelter.

The presence of a delinquent visiting public at the monuments became a recurring theme in correspondence and inspection reports. The gentile, improvable publics of the imperial imagination were replaced with people who flocked to the monuments. In the early 1950s, in order to deter 'the rough element who crowd out the place', the department appealed for an increase to the entrance fee charged at the Red Fort, the only monument for which an entry fee was levied until the late 1960s (when entry tickets were introduced to Safdarjung and Humayun's tombs).[69] The ticket cost of 2 annas had been set in 1904 and the department hoped that an increase to 8 annas would reduce the very large number of visitors to the site: 36,000 a month and up to 2,000 at the weekend.[70] Officers of the Archaeological Department did not embrace their role in managing or facilitating public access to heritage, for example ensuring the presence of lavatories, tea and photo stalls and coolers in ventilated spaces. The need to manage the archaeological monument as spaces of public leisure, albeit supposedly a regulated and didactic one, was regarded as an unnecessary burden on officers who regarded themselves as scholars and inspectors. Repeated requests for a public lavatory at the Qutab Minar in 1950 caused the Superintendent to observe laconically 'that the public bladder seems to be getting less retentive than here to fore'.[71]

The reports of the archaeological department create an impression of monuments under besiegement. Copper lightening conductors, iron chains and flowers were constantly stolen from monument precincts.[72] At Humayun's tomb, in 1954, barbed wire fencing was erected to 'discourage the miscreants'.[73] The gateway on south east corner, leading to the Nila Gumbad monument, was

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[69] J. H. S. Waddington, to DGA, 26 May 1953, Visitors to Monuments, ASI, Delhi Branch, 1953, file: 1953. NAI.
[70] Monthly visitor figures, 36,551 every month between Nov. 1953 and Oct. 1954, Parliamentary Questions, ASI, Delhi Branch, 1954, file no. 13. NAI.
[71] Note on file: HW 4/1/1951, Qutab and Mehrauli, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Branch. 1951. file no. D9. NAI.
[72] Humayun's tomb. ASI, Delhi Monuments branch. D16/18. 1954. NAI.
[73] Inspection note on Humayun's tomb, Nov. 1954. Humayun's tomb. ASI, Delhi Monuments branch. D16/18. 1954. NAI.

strengthened with metal sheets to prevent it from being used as a thoroughfare by people from

Nizamuddin, who had broken the locks in an assertion of there right of way, a right the department

disputed.[74] At Hauz Khas in the early 1950s, walls were heightened and gates repaired in order to

prevent the through access of villagers and to block out 'ugly view at the back ground' on the North

East side.[75]

Perhaps inevitably, given both the restricted nature of what was officially acceptable behaviour,

delinquencies were commonplace. Inspection reports on Delhi's monuments written in the 1950s

and 1960s identify a huge range of transgressive activities: posters were repeatedly torn from walls,

wickets were removed from lawns, 'well-to-do ladies and their children' were told to stop picking

flowers, and the local police station was appealed to for help in preventing students from singing,

dancing and playing musical instruments on the lawns.[76] A Secretary from the Ministry of Tourism

and Aviation complained at the end of the 1960s that the Moti Masjid, Red Fort and Humayun's

tomb 'resound with the blare of transistor radios.'[77] In 1958, attempts were made to remove a group

of boys who would sit on the roof of Humayun's tomb and occasionally throw stones onto other

visitors.[78]

Appropriations of the monuments extended to tragedy; ten people, five women and five men,

committed suicide by jumping from the Qutab minar between 1947 and 1953.[79] The archaeological

department was expected to prevent these suicides on behalf of the state. Rajeshwar Prasad

Bhatnagar jumped to his death after failing his examinations in June 1950. As a result, a rule was

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[74] Inspection note on Humayun's tomb, Nov. 1954. Humayun's tomb. ASI, Delhi Monuments branch. D16/18. 1954. NAI.

[75] Delhi Monuments Inspection Notes, ASI, Delhi Branch, 1953. file. 172. NAI.

[76] Consv. Assist. to Supt., Dept. of Arch., NW Circle, 12 Jan. 1959, Buildings at Qutb, ASI, Delhi, 1959, file no: DLH50, NAI; J. H. (Hilary) S. Waddington, Supt. to Maj. Gen. T. B. Henderson Brooks, Flag Staff House, New Delhi, 13 Feb. 1953, Visitors to Monuments, ASI, Delhi Branch, 1953, file: 1953. NAI.

[77] A. Mitra, Tourism and Civil Aviation Secretary, to Dr. A N Jha, Lieutenant Governor, Delhi, 22 March 1969. Suggestions for improvement of monuments Ref Fort, Humayun's Tomb and Qutab. ASI, Delhi Monuments, 2/5/69-M. NAI.

[78] Supt., to In charge Police Post Nizamuddin, 16 Jan 1958. Humayun's Tomb, New Delhi, ASI Delhi monuments branch, DLH-12/1958. NAI.

[79] Answer provided by Waddington, 26 May 1953, to Question proposed to be asked by Shri Jag Parvesh Chandra in Delhi Leg. Assembly, Parliamentary Questions, 1953, file: D108, NAI.

introduced under which only parties of three persons or more could ascend the minar.[80] Suicide

attempts continued. On the morning of 19 July 1959 a young woman was handed over to the police

(attempted suicide was illegal in India until 2014) after attempting twice to mix with crowds of

visitors in order to climb and jump from the minar. Das Ram, an unfortunate monument attendant,

having once been beaten up in July 1959 by a young man after stopping him from ascending the

minar was struck as another, unidentified, man fell to his death in December of the same year.[81]

The tone of dissatisfaction about monuments was directed both at the unruly publics who visited

them but also at the inadequacies of the ASI's management of these sites. The Ministry of Tourism

directed its complaints about the social and physical environs at Delhi's monuments in the late-

1960s and 1970s at the ASI: 'No effective steps are taken to prevent scribbling on the walls, littering

of the grounds and floors by visitors,…to prevent bare-faced begging by persons young as well as

old, who obviously do not need to beg, to prevent the depredations of pimps and unauthorised

money changers.'[82] The ASI was to address and correct, 'the way knots of young men lounge about

places of tourist interest and close round foreigners whenever they come along and jeer at them

most impudently causing extreme annoyance and embarrassment.'[83] By the 1960s, appeals to

improve the monuments hinged on 'the impression carried by foreign tourists', whose own

behaviour was presumed to be unimpeachable, who visited these sites. The emphasis on a foreign

gaze arguably underlines the remote discordance which existed between the regulated and real lives

of the city's largest monuments. Tellingly, the authoritarian excess of the Emergency, when Prime

Minister Indira Gandhi suspended democracy and introduced draconian suppression of political

opponents after she lost the elections of 1975, effected an immediate, but temporary, improvement

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[80] Madho Sarup Vats, Jt. Director General, 15 June 1950. Qutab and Mehrauli, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Branch. 1951. file no. D9. NAI.

[81] Das Ram, Monument Attendant to Consv. Assist, 25/7/1959; Memo by Supt. 7/12/59, Buildings at Qutb, ASI, Delhi, 1959, file no: DLH50, NAI.

[82] A. Mitra, Tourism and Civil Aviation Secretary, to Dr. A N Jha, Lieutenant Governor, Delhi, 22 March 1969. Suggestions for improvement of monuments Ref Fort, Humayun's Tomb and Qutab. ASI, Delhi Monuments, 2/5/69-M. NAI.

[83] A. Mitra, Tourism and Civil Aviation Secretary, to Dr. A N Jha, Lieutenant Governor, Delhi, 22 March 1969. Suggestions for improvement of monuments Ref Fort, Humayun's Tomb and Qutab. ASI, Delhi Monuments, 2/5/69-M. NAI.

in the maintenance of monuments in Delhi.[84] Only in the context of an excessive and unsustainable

enforcement of state authority could the archaeological department, briefly, exercise its authority as

it had been imagined in 1904. By the second half of the twentieth-century, the archaeological

authorities had reached an uncomfortable equilibrium in which both public and bureaucratic

transgressions were a part of the monuments' and the ASI's quotidian existence.

Conclusion

There is considerable disparity between the dominant version of Delhi's heritage and the dynamic

realities of how heritage lives in the city. Memory of the city's past in exhibitions, coffee table books

and lectures, repeat and re-inscribe with very little deviation the spatially-confined triumvirate of (i)

Shahjahanabad, the 17th walled city of the Mughals; (ii) the Mutiny city of the mid-nineteenth

century, finally, (iii) Lutyen's Delhi, the modern, Imperial city built in the first half of the twentieth

century. Through these fabrics and themes, the dominant history of the city becomes that of the

assertion, disruption and restitution of state authority across a reductive axis of an old city in the

north and the new to the south. In fact, the physical pasts of the city extend far beyond these realms

and far exceed the narratives of state control and organised rebellion. The everyday lives of the

city's physical pasts bear little if any relation to this scheme. Created in order to signify the colonial

state's relationship with India's dynastic past and urban future, the monuments became sites in

which state custody was singularly asserted and repeatedly challenged. During the colonial period, a

clear dogma of appropriated and curation was articulated for the proper care and appearance of

monuments. This aesthetic and bureaucratic dogma, when tested, was quick to compromise and

tended to create a living heritage articulated by the continuation of religious practise, if by accident

rather than design. After independence, the Archaeological Survey of India provided less latitude in

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[84] Mrs S Panigrahi, Dy Director General, The Chief Secretaries of all State Governments, 26 Nov. 1975. Suggestions for improvement of monuments Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb and Qutab. ASI, Delhi Monuments, 2/5/69-M. NAI.

the enforcement of state custody and failed to extend protection to physical remains as the city rapidly extended and population density increased in the post-independence period. Arguably, the Indian state heritage regime has found itself at an impasse, having failed to generate a new, post-colonial philosophy of archaeological custody but simultaneously unable or unwilling to regenerate or enforce older aesthetic conventions.

Throughout the twentieth century, the archaeological authorities regarded its custody of Delhi's monuments of being frustrated and undermined both by unruly publics and its own compromised jurisdiction. The biographies of the city's monuments have always depended upon hybridity; animated by the plural lives of the city that lay beyond the reach and relevance of the Archaeological Survey of India but which operated within the physical and bureaucratic regime of conservation. Hybrid monumentality, a heritage that combines living engagements and aloof guardianship, has formed the history of the city's monuments, from the initiation of the colonial state's appropriations to the present day.

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