

# The Idea of Delhi

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The year 1911 marked an important point in the history of Britain's rule over India. It was when the colonial state took the important decision to shift the capital from Calcutta to Delhi, a move that was seen as "a bold stroke of statesmanship".<sup>1</sup> A recent study of the official correspondence through which this resolution was finally adopted, reveals the complex motivations that led to it, the most important being to craft an image of an empire that would be more acceptable to the Indians themselves, and thus help to counter the rising national movement.<sup>2</sup>

The move to Delhi, and the creation there of a new imperial capital city, was designed to place the British Empire at the end of the long line of empires that had ruled from this historic city. The symbolism of the gesture was immense. The Viceroy, Hardinge, justified it mainly in terms of what the city meant to Indians themselves, saying, "Delhi is still a name to conjure with. It is intimately associated in the minds of the Hindus with sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history. .... To the Mohammedans it would be a source of unbounded gratification to see the ancient capital of the Moguls restored to its proud position as the seat of the Empire."<sup>3</sup>

When it came to choosing a site for the new capital that was to be built in Delhi, historical associations proved equally important. The town planning committee was explicitly told "that the new site must be Delhi – that is an area in close physical and general association with the present city of Delhi [by which they meant Shahjahanabad, or what we today call Old Delhi] and the Delhis of the past."<sup>4</sup> It was for this reason that an otherwise suitable site – the Naraina plain, was rejected. The latter comprised the area to the west of the Central Ridge – the tail end of the Aravali hills, an important natural feature. Though it was in many ways an ideal site, in the eyes of the Town Planning Committee, it suffered from one serious defect,

"That is that this could not be considered to be Delhi. The plain is destitute of historical associations."<sup>5</sup> The Ridge, which flanked it, obstructed "all views of the older Delhis of the past."<sup>6</sup>

The site that was eventually picked was east of the Central Ridge, and an important consideration here was precisely that it was on the edge of, and overlooked, a number of Delhi's historic sites. It was pointed out that if one stood on the rocky eminence known as Raisina Hill and looked eastwards towards the Yamuna, from left to right in one sweep, one could see the seventeenth century city of Shahjahanabad; the fourteenth century city of Firozabad; the fifteenth century fortress known as Purana Qila, which was believed to be the site of the ancient city of Indraprastha; the massive fourteenth century fortress of Tughlaqabad; the cities of Jahanpanah and Siri, also of the fourteenth century; and finally the oldest extant Delhi – the eleventh century fortress of Lal Kot/Qila Rai Pithora. Apart from these historic 'cities of Delhi', there were a number of other monuments scattered between them – the shrine of Nizamuddin Auliya, Safdar Jung's mausoleum, the tombs of the Lodi dynasty, and the astronomical observatory known as Jantar Mantar.<sup>7</sup>

To those familiar with the geography of Delhi, this list of the sites that New Delhi would overlook, is clearly symbolic rather than realistic. It would be far-fetched to imagine that Tughlaqabad, over thirteen kilometers away as the crow flies, or even Lal Kot, nearly ten kilometers away, were exactly 'overlooked' by the new city. Moreover, in the early twentieth century, the site of Indraprastha was notional rather than real. A village called Indarpat was located in and around the Purana Qila – the villagers living in houses within the fort and cultivating the lands outside it. It was name and tradition rather than archaeological remains that linked this Indarpat to the Indraprastha of the ancient scriptures. Ancient texts spoke of a location beside the river Yamuna, where Indra, the king of the Gods, had performed sacrifices and worshiped Vishnu. It thus came to be known as Indraparastha. There was an another name

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linked with Indraprastha; it was said that this spot on the bank of the Yamuna was blessed by Vishnu, who called it 'Nigambodhak', where a knowledge of the Vedas could be gained simply by taking a dip in the waters. The sacred significance of Indraprastha was enhanced by accounts in the ancient epic, the *Mahabharata*, which told of the setting up of a city here by the Pandavas.<sup>8</sup> The specific identification of these locations with Delhi was strong in popular memory. Not only the village of Indarpat, but also the Nigambodh Ghat – the steps leading down to the waters of the Yamuna, which adjoined Shahjahanabad, strongly identified the neighbourhood of Delhi with the mythical past. British observers in the nineteenth century noted that the popular name for Purana Qila was *Indra ka khera*, literally, 'the plain of Indra'.<sup>9</sup>

The colonial rulers of the early twentieth century saw a linear connection between the seat of the epic heroes to modern times, a trajectory of history that underlined the aura of Delhi as a centre of power. This, after all, had been the centre of power for many centuries, successively the seat of the Rajput and Tomar dynasties, followed by the Delhi Sultanate, which made it the capital of a vast empire. Finally, the Mughals too had made it their capital, particularly since the founding in 1648 of Shahjahanabad. In fact, the development of the aura of Delhi had been a long and often uneven historic process, the evidence of which can be found in a series of literary, epigraphic and numismatic sources.

For the British, an interesting aspect of the problem of identifying a site as Delhi, was the issue of the name itself. Even as the city of New Delhi was being planned, it had been pointed out by an old India hand that the spelling commonly used by the British, 'Delhi', and its consequent pronunciation, was wrong. The correct form was Dilli or Dehli. The government decided that it would continue to use Delhi, not only because there seemed to be no great public opinion against it, but also because having to make a choice between Dilli and Dehli might lead to controversy. This was because it was felt that though Persian writers invariably spelt it as Dehli, the older Indian texts and inscriptions spelt it Dilli. It was assumed that the former was a 'Muslim' preference and the latter a 'Hindu' one.<sup>10</sup>

The name Dilli, or actually its earlier form, 'Dhilli', is indeed older, but there is no evidence for any considerable antiquity associated with it. The suggestion that Ptolemy meant it, when he mentioned a place called 'Daidala', is nebulous. Equally so are the claims based on later traditions with unclear chronologies, that it was named after a Raja Dilip or a Raja Dhilu, during very ancient times.<sup>11</sup> Most sources attribute the founding of Dhilli to the Tomars, notably a Sanskrit inscription from 1328 CE (the Sarban inscription), which will be referred to later.

Exactly when during the long rule of the Tomars this may be, is not clear. There are traditions that associate the founding of Dhilli with the Tomar ruler Anangpal I in the eighth century CE, but it is probable that the name specifically may not have been associated with the place till much later. Certainly the Jain texts, the earliest that deal with Delhi, often refers to it as 'Yoginipur'.<sup>12</sup>

The possible earliest reference to Dhilli is to be found in a Sanskrit inscription on the iron pillar of Mehrauli. This artefact, though dating from the Gupta period, has several later inscriptions. One of these is a short line, which is generally translated as "In Samvat 1109 [1052 CE], Anang Pal peopled Dilli".<sup>13</sup> The date is relevant, because it is generally believed that it coincides with the founding of what is taken to be the earliest fortified city of Delhi, that of Lal Kot, in Mehrauli. From this point onwards we are on firmer ground when associating the place with the name Dilli. One reason for this is the *Dilliwal* coins that are believed to have been in circulation in the twelfth century.<sup>14</sup>

Be that as it may, Dilli in the eleventh and twelfth centuries seems to have been politically a fairly minor town, associated with the Tomar dynasty. It had some additional importance for its connection with Jain religious teachers and patrons, since some of the Tomars and their prominent courtiers were themselves Jain patrons. One such was the rich merchant named Nattal Sahu, who may have also held an important position at the Tomar ruler's court. He is said to have commissioned a lavish temple around 1132 CE, the same time as the poet Shridhar composed a text called *Parshvanath Charit*, under his patronage. The importance of Delhi as a Jain centre increased later in the twelfth century, when the Jain preacher Jinachandra Suri's visit and death in the year 1165-66 CE, resulted in the founding of a noted shrine, known today as the Dadabari Jain temple.<sup>15</sup> Sometime around this time, that is, the mid-twelfth century, Delhi seems to have come under the overlordship of the Chauhan rulers, who had their capital at Ajmer.

But Delhi's rise to prominence as a centre of power can be dated from after the Turks conquered it in the last decade of the century, and then too it was a gradual process. The forces of Mohammad Ghuri, led by his general Qutbuddin Aibak, conquered Delhi in 1193 CE, sometime after the defeat of the Chauhan king Prithviraj, who had his capital at Ajmer. Both at Delhi and Ajmer, the conquering power marked its presence by the construction of monumental buildings, notably a large congregational mosque at either site. In the case of Delhi, an inscription over one of the doorways of the mosque proclaimed that it had been built partly out of the remains of a number of temples that had been destroyed in the immediate aftermath of the conquest. This mosque

was located at Mehrauli, within Anangpal's fortified city, Dhilli, which the Turks began to refer to as Dehli. They also built here another monumental structure – a large tower, more than seventy metres tall, similar to others built not long before by the Ghurids at Ghazni and Jam, in Afghanistan. Though nominally a *maznah*, a tower attached to a mosque to provide a height for the muezzin to give the call to prayer, it was in fact more by way of being a victory tower. Soon Dehli became the main headquarters of the Turk forces.

With the establishment of the Delhi Sultanate, Delhi was transformed into the capital of a growing empire, particularly with the accession of Iltutmish in 1210 CE. This increased significance is quite clearly indicated by a very important epigraphic source, the so-called Palam Baoli inscription. This Sanskrit inscription, dating to August 1276 CE, was originally installed in a step well at Palam, close to Delhi's present-day airport. It commemorates the construction of the well by a local notable, and in the process, gives us some very interesting information.<sup>16</sup>

For one, it refers to the region as Haryana, literally, 'the land of Hariyanaka'. It informs us that this land was first ruled by the Tomars, then the Chauhans, and now is ruled by the Turks, whom it refers to as 'Sakas'. It lists some of the Sultanate rulers, and showers particular praise on the current one, Ghiyasuddin Balban (1266-1287 CE). The extent and influence of his empire is expressed in hyperbole – as encompassing territories from Afghanistan to Bengal to the far south of the subcontinent. Though these are fictitious claims, the idea simply is to suggest a mighty empire. The inscription then goes on to comment about Delhi, saying, "The metropolis of the lord of many hundred cities, the charming great city called Dhilli flourishes like a crescent-headed arrow on the side of his enemies. Like the earth, it is the storehouse of innumerable jewels; like the sky, a source of delight, ...like maya herself, the most bewitching. In that city of Dhilli renowned under the name Yoganipura..."<sup>17</sup>

Several conclusions can be drawn from these statements. Firstly, Delhi was simply the city, and had not yet given its name to the surrounding area, in contrast, say, to Mughal times, when there was a subah, or province, by the name too. Secondly, it hints that the significance of Delhi comes from it being the seat of an empire with great territorial extent. It is the "metropolis of the lord (the ruler, Balban) of many hundred cities"<sup>18</sup>(presumably in the vast territories controlled by, him as enumerated earlier in the inscription). Lastly, though the city is described in suitably glowing terms, the author of the inscriptions feels the need to add that Dhilli is better known as Yoganipura. We can infer from this that the city that was growing in importance was the Delhi, which was the capital, the seat of power. Yet, this

political importance was relatively new, and the place itself was probably still better known in its avatar as a Jain pilgrimage site and possibly a trade centre, Yoganipura. The Palam Baoli inscription also gives us some idea about the rather limited geographical extent of the Dhilli of its time. It informs us that Palam is five *kos* from Dhilli. This would suggest that Dhilli was viewed basically as being co-terminus with the Tomar fortification, known as Lal Kot, and the extension to it, which today goes by the name of Qila Rai Pithora (after Prithviraj Chauhan), but was probably built during early Sultanate times.

Another important Sanskrit inscription comes to us from the year 1327 CE and was originally found in Naraina, in the northwest part of modern day Delhi. Like the one at Palam, it too commemorates the construction of a well, by a prominent local merchant. In many of its details it is similar to the Palam Baoli inscription. Its preamble praises 'Dhilli' (again described as being in Hariyana) extravagantly, describing it as "covered with innumerable jewels, whence sin is expelled through the chanting of the Vedas by those who know the sacred lore which appears lovely with the tinkling of anklets of beautiful damsels."<sup>19</sup>Immediately after this description, the true significance of the city is emphasized, for it is said, "there is the famous king Mahammud Sahi, the crest jewel of all the rulers of the earth."<sup>20</sup>Clearly it is as the capital of a strong imperial ruler, in this case Muhammad Tughlaq, that Dhilli derives its importance. An interesting detail of the Naraina inscription is that it locates Naraina with respect to Indraprastha, saying that the former lies to the west of the latter.

The last of the relevant Sanskrit inscriptions dates from 1328 CE and is famous as the Sarban stone inscription, having been found in the village of Sarban Sarai, the area now covered by Rajpath in central Delhi. It again refers to the region being Hariyana, which is described as being "like heaven on earth".<sup>21</sup>It talks of Sarban as being located in the *pratigana* (or division) of Indraprastha. In addition, it affirms that the Tomars built the city of Dhilli.<sup>22</sup>It is not without interest that the references to Indraprastha in the Sarban and Naraina inscriptions are in terms that suggest that it was a relatively minor territorial/revenue division. There is certainly never any mention of its connections to the mythic past, or any indulgence of hyperbole such as is employed in the context of Delhi. It was relevant to mention Indraprastha only as a referant for locations that lay within its jurisdiction – Sarban and Naraina. It is probably for that reason that the Palam Baoli inscription does not mention Indraprastha. Neither is it mentioned in an inscription of 1291 CE from Sonapat, which nevertheless also mentions Hariyana as the region, and Dhillika' (another variation of Dilli/Dhilli) as the capital.<sup>23</sup>



While Dilli or Dehli was growing in importance as a seat of power, its spiritual significance was being given a new dimension. During the early years of the Delhi Sultanate, it became the centre for the charismatic Chishti Sufis, starting with Qutubuddin Bakhtiyar Kaki, the spiritual successor of Muinuddin Chisti, the founder of the order in India, who made Ajmer his base. The Chishti sources inform us that Muinuddin Chishti ordered his disciple Qutubuddin to settle himself in Delhi and minister to the people there. Incidentally, this itself gives us a clue as to growing relative importance of Delhi vis a vis Ajmer. Though the latter had been the capital of the Chauhans, and early on had merited a Jami Masjid on the same scale as that of Delhi, it was soon superseded by Delhi, which the Turks adopted as their centre of power.

Qutubuddin Kaki settled himself in Delhi in the early thirteenth century, in the neighbourhood of the capital at Mehrauli, the site of Anangpal Tomar's 'Dhilli', which had become the Turk headquarters. Over the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Sufi aura over the city grew, with spiritual descendants of Qutubuddin, viz. Nizamuddin Auliya and Nasiruddin Mahmud continuing the tradition in Delhi. The spiritual charisma of the Sufis, the Chistis and in time other orders as well, would gradually grow to the extent that the city began to be referred to by the epithet, *Hazrat e Dehli*, the 'revered' Delhi. The other term that we know of that refers to the spiritual status of Delhi is that of *Qubba e Islam*, literally, the 'sanctuary of Islam'. This was partly in view of the changes in Central and West Asia, where Mongol incursions had led to the destruction of older centres of Islamic spirituality, scholarship, and political power.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, Delhi's significance as a centre for Jain scholarship and worship continued, and curiously, the Jain texts, even up to the sixteenth century, continued to use the name Yoginipura in preference to Dilli.<sup>25</sup>

From the late thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, the concept of Delhi as capital underwent one further modification. There was an erosion of the exclusive association of 'Delhi', in the sense of the capital, with Anangpal's city at Mehrauli. An early step in this process was the founding of a new settlement around a palace built by the young ruler Qaiqubad (reigned 1287-90 CE), and his moving to this location from Mehrauli. This palace was on the banks of the Yamuna, at Kilugarhi (today the village of Kilokari). Kilugarhi's connection with imperial power was further strengthened when Jalaluddin Khilji, who was vary of opposing factions in the city, chose to be crowned at Kilugarhi and made it his capital for a while. With the ruler establishing himself there, it was not surprising that his own nobles, important personages, traders etc. were also prompted to settle here, and it began to be popularly called *sheher e nau*, the 'new city'.<sup>26</sup>

Jalaluddin's successor Alauddin founded another centre, Siri, where he not only quartered his army but soon made it his own capital as well. Following this, we have further cities that were founded in the course of the fourteenth century and became the capitals of successive rulers – Tughlaqabad by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq, Jahanpanah by Mohammad Tughlaq, and Firozabad by Firoz Shah Tughlaq. Each of these was located in the vicinity of the original Delhi, within the geographic area known to us as the Delhi triangle – bounded on the east by the Yamuna, and on the west and the south by two distinct sections of the Ridge. Though each of these cities bore a distinct name, the original Dehli soon began, certainly by the mid-fourteenth century, to be called *Dehli e Kuhna*, i.e., 'Old Delhi'.<sup>27</sup> Implicit in this change of name was the idea that the name Dehli itself moved to each of these new cities, in turn as each became the capital of the empire.

The first two centuries of the Delhi Sultanate consolidated the idea of Delhi as a source of imperial power. This aura of political and spiritual potency proved to be remarkably long lasting, persisting even though the capital would shift away from Delhi for a long period in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Sikandar Lodi (reigned 1489-1517) moved the capital to Agra, but was buried in Delhi in the garden known to us today as Lodi Garden. The Lodis were soon to be replaced by a new power, the Mughals, who were to found a new, long-lived dynasty. The founder of the dynasty, Babur, wrote in his memoir soon after he had defeated Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat in 1526 CE – "the capital of all Hindustan is Delhi."<sup>28</sup> It is telling that soon after the decisive battle, before moving on to Ibrahim's capital, Agra, Babur visited Delhi. Here, he tells us, he paid visits to the tombs of several previous rulers – Sikandar and Bahlol Lodi, Balban, Alauddin Khilji, and it appears, those of the Tughlaq rulers, since he visited both Tughlaqabad and Hauz Khas, where they are buried. In addition to these visits, which seem like pilgrimages to political shrines, he also visited the *dargah* of Nizamuddin Auliya, and the Qutub Minar. His short stay in Delhi was concluded with an important ritual sealing his new sovereign status in north India – the inclusion of his name in the *khutba*, or sermon at the Friday prayer in the Jami Masjid, the congregational mosque.<sup>29</sup>

Though Babur moved on to Agra, his son and successor, Humayun, would soon base himself in Delhi, founding a new city, called Dinpanah (at the core of which was what is now called Purana Qila), in 1533 CE. For the next three decades or so Delhi would again be a capital, under Humayun, the Suri rulers, and Akbar, until the last moved the capital once again to Agra. There is important evidence that shows that Delhi's association

with imperial power did not diminish, despite the capital moving away. A Sanskrit inscription from Central India dating to 1607 CE, the reign of Jahangir, attests to this fact. This refers to the emperor's father, Akbar, as *Dillishvara*, the 'lord of Delhi', even though it had been many decades since Akbar had moved the capital away from Delhi.<sup>30</sup> Jahangir himself, who never reigned from Delhi, was described as *Shahanshah e Dehli*, that is, the emperor of Delhi, in a Persian inscription on the Salimgarh bridge in Delhi, dated 1621 CE.<sup>31</sup>

Cynthia Talbot, in a recent work tracing the origins of the dominant narrative of Prithviraj Chauhan as the 'last Hindu king' of Delhi, says, "In the Indic world, royal cities were often thought to be imbued with a special spiritual potency that conferred political strength on their ruling dynasties – accordingly, the Sisodiya kings called themselves the lords of Chittor, the centuries-old political centre of the Mewar region, long after its destruction and their relocation to the city of Udaipur."<sup>32</sup> This was no doubt the case in Delhi, which by Akbar's time had attained the status of the undisputed source of political legitimacy. Talbot has shown how, by the sixteenth century, Delhi was being projected as the capital of Prithviraj Chauhan, as evident in Abul Fazl's *Ain e Akbari* and the oldest extant manuscript of the *Prithviraj Raso*, the well-known epic narrative of the life of Prithviraj. This was despite the fact that the Chauhans may at best have exercised dominion over Delhi for a while, and it is certain that Ajmer was their capital.<sup>33</sup>

There was a reason for retrospectively substituting Delhi for Ajmer as the capital of a king who was famous for his heroic resistance to the Turk conquerors in the late twelfth century. No doubt, by the sixteenth century, such was the aura of Delhi, that it was inconceivable that any other city could have been the capital of the kingdom that was seen as the immediate predecessor of the Delhi Sultanate. Abul Fazl went one step further; not only linking Delhi to Prithviraj, but further back in time to Indraprastha. According to Talbot, this was not simply an idiosyncrasy of Abul Fazl's *Ain*. It was an integral part of the Mughals', particularly Akbar's, strategy for imperial rule over India – "The origins of the city were represented as lying in the mists of mythic time, while its modern history was traced via the king-lists up to the contemporary Mughal era. By virtue of their control over India's oldest political center, the Mughal emperor could thus be depicted as standing at the end of a long continuum of power in the Indian subcontinent."<sup>34</sup> In fact, probably for this very reason it is not hard to understand why Jahangir's son Shahjahan, when he wished to make a truly grand imperial gesture, chose to found a new city at Delhi and make it his capital.

Abul Fazl's understanding of the history of Delhi was to have a long legacy, one that has influenced many other later writers down to the present. Two important texts of the first half of the nineteenth century, were Sangin Beg's *Sair ul Manazil*, and Syed Ahmad Khan's *Asar us sanadid*, which were accounts of the history, and monuments of Delhi. Both began the story of Delhi's rulers with Indraprastha of the Panadavas. Syed Ahmad Khan also used the traditional respectful epithet for the city – "*khak e pak hazrat e Dehli*" – literally, 'sacred ground, the revered Delhi'.<sup>35</sup>

By the early nineteenth century the British East India Company was in control over Delhi as well as large parts of north India. Though the Mughal Empire had long lost any practical meaning, its symbolic significance as the source from which legitimacy to rule India flowed, was still remarkably intact. Akbar and his successors had ensured that Mughal Empire had established itself to a remarkable extent as the legitimate rulers of India, in large parts of the country, in the eyes of the people. The Company was only one among the many powers in India that continued to issue coins in the name of the Mughal emperor well into the early decades of the century. British observers noted that part of the importance of Delhi lay in it being the seat of the Mughal emperor, but it was not the only reason for it. There was an "importance attached to the name of Delhi from the estimation in which the city is held".<sup>36</sup>

It must of course be noted, that for the nineteenth century person, whether someone born in Delhi like Syed Ahmad Khan, or the recently arrived British, the name Delhi meant more or less the area demarcated by the walls of Shahjahan's mid-seventeenth century city, Shahjahanabad. Syed Ahmad wrote in *Asarussanadid*, '*jis jagah ke ab Dilli shahar Shahjahan ka basaya hua abaad hai*', which can be translated as, 'where now the city of Delhi, founded by Shahjahan, is located.'<sup>37</sup> Clearly in this sense Delhi meant the last effective capital, Shahjahanabad.

It is also worth noting that geographically speaking, the old city founded by Anangpal was not referred to by nineteenth century writers such as Syed Ahmad Khan or Sangin Beg as 'Dehli', or even *Dehli e Kuhna*, but simply as Mehrauli, the name of the locality. The implication long had been that the location of Delhi itself moved, with each new capital that was established. In addition, it seems that the idea of 'Old Delhi' was also a fluid one. In many nineteenth century British sources we find the area around Purana Qila being referred to as 'Old Delhi'. Purana Qila of course was the popular name for Humayun's fort of Dinpanah. *Purana Qila*, literally, 'Old Fort', was simply a reference to the fact that this was the fort immediately preceding the city of Shahjahanabad.

For many centuries, the conception of 'Delhi' had been different depending on context. In the ordinary sense, Delhi referred to the city, which was the current seat of power. On the other hand, as soon as one spoke of the city in a historical context, its lineage even beyond the Tomars, back to the mythical Indraprastha, was invoked. Thus, at one level, Syed Ahmad's idea of Delhi was one that included all of the 'older Delhis', even while he identified the Delhi current in his time with Shahjahanabad. This situation was the result of several factors, which have been mentioned above. In addition, there was the fact that the historic layers of the city were spread out over a fairly extensive area of the Delhi triangle. Each new era of construction began afresh in a new location, rather than adding a new layer to the existing, as is common in most other historic cities.

It was this complex legacy that the British inherited, when they first sought in the early twentieth century to move their capital in India to what was seen by many as 'the' capital of Hindustan. They knew they were building one in a long line of cities of Delhi, and therefore, chose to pragmatically name it New Delhi, in preference to 'Raisina' and 'Delhi South', which had also been suggested. It is also no surprise that as soon as the British capital in Delhi was built, Shahjahanabad, which even in maps as recent as the early twentieth century, was being referred to as 'Modern Delhi', was immediately relegated to the status of 'Old Delhi', the name by which it is known today. Even today, an ambiguity in the popular mind with regard to nomenclature exists. While we know what Old Delhi is, what exactly are the limits of New Delhi? It is ironic that listed addresses of even an official body such as the office of the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Mehrauli, refers to its location as 'Mehrauli, New Delhi'.

## NOTES

1. Memorandum by John Jenkins, Home Member of the Viceroy's Council; quoted in David A. Johnson, *New Delhi: The Last Imperial City*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 27.
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4. 'Report of the Delhi Town Planning Committee on its choice of site for the new imperial capital at Delhi, 13 July 1912', Mushirul Hasan and Dinyar Patel eds., *From Ghalib's Dilli to New Delhi: A Documentary Record*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013, 131.
5. *Ibid*, 38.
6. *Ibid*, 38.
7. *Ibid*, 138-41.
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10. Letter from A.H. Benton, *Laying-out, &c, of the new Capital of India, Delhi*, (printed, unpublished documents, Rashtrapati Bhavan) Vol. 2, 208a-b; 347-48.
11. Alexander Cunningham, *Four Reports Made During the Years 1862-63-64-65*, Simla: Government Central Press, 1871, 137-38.
12. Jyotiprasad Jain, *Pramukh Aitihāsik Jain Purush aur Mahilayen*, New Delhi: Bhartiya Gyanpith Prakashan, 1975, 228.
13. Cynthia Talbot, *The Last Hindu Emperor: Prithviraj Chauhan and the Indian Past, 1200-2000*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, 79.
14. *Ibid*, 97.
15. *Ibid*, 81; Jain, *Pramukh Aitihāsik Jain*, 228-29.
16. The information on the Palam Baoli inscription is taken from Pushpa Prasad, *Sanskrit Inscriptions of the Delhi Sultanate: 1191-1526*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990, 3-15.
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18. *Ibid.*, 13.
19. *Ibid.*, 25.
20. *Ibid.*, 25.
21. *Ibid.*, 27-31; *Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I* (1892), New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1983 (Reprint), 93-5.
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23. *Ibid.*, 15-6.
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26. M. Athar Ali, 'Capitals of the Sultans: Delhi during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', *ibid.*, 24-5.
27. *Ibid*.
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29. *Ibid*, 327.
30. Talbot, *The Last Hindu Emperor*, 83.
31. *Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement (In continuation of Epigraphia Indo Moslemica) 1959-61*, New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1987 (Reprint), 11-2
32. Talbot, *The Last Hindu Emperor*, 89.
33. *Ibid*, 69.
34. *Ibid*, 98.
35. Syed Ahmad Khan, *Asarussanadid*, Delhi: Urdu Academy, 2000, 514.
36. Archibald Seton, *Agent to the Governor General, Foreign Department Proceedings, (Political)*, New Delhi: National Archives of India, 9.8.1811 no. 34.
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