ASTRAGALO, 27 (2020)

ARTICLES, ISSN 2469-0503

BROWN AND BLUE, WITH LOTS OF GREEN: GURCHARAN SINGH AND MAKING A PLACE OF NEW DELHI

Annapurna Garimella

Art, Resources and Teaching Trust, Bangalore and Hyderabad

https://dx.doi.org/10.12795/astragalo.2020.i27.03

At the 1911 Coronation Durbar, a royal proclamation announced the shifting of the capital of British India from Calcutta to Delhi. Almost immediately, the ground beneath Delhi began shifting as the plans, the site and the personnel for the construction of Imperial Delhi were activated by colonial authorities. One source tells us that approximately 60,000 cubic feet of stone were accumulated in the process of demolishing many of the pre-Mughal and Mughal structures and occupied villages that were standing in various degrees of life and ruination (Liddle 2018: 36-47). In the logic of planners, the terrain was first understood partly as a wasteland even if it was occupied, to recreate it as tabula rasa which was to be remade again. The used building material was recycled into the beds on which roads were to be laid and into the concrete for making buildings. There was so much material that no living rock in Delhi had to be cut and crushed for this purpose. The people who were living there were displaced to other areas; some received new lands while others moved away.

Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker's plan was an imperial Garden City, based on an ideal city form first consolidated in 1898 in Britain by Ebenezer Howard with the aim of envisaging urbanization as one in which structures including workspaces and homes were integrated into extensive green zones which were either parks or agriculture (Bowe 2009: 68). Lutyens and Baker's plan integrated their commitment to Classical architecture as well as to the aesthetic ideal of the picturesque. The picturesque framed the many large, historic structures that were not demolished; they became important features on axial roads, roundabouts and points of termination. The planners conserved and integrated Safdarjung's and Humayun's Tomb, Nizamuddin's Dargah or the Lodi era

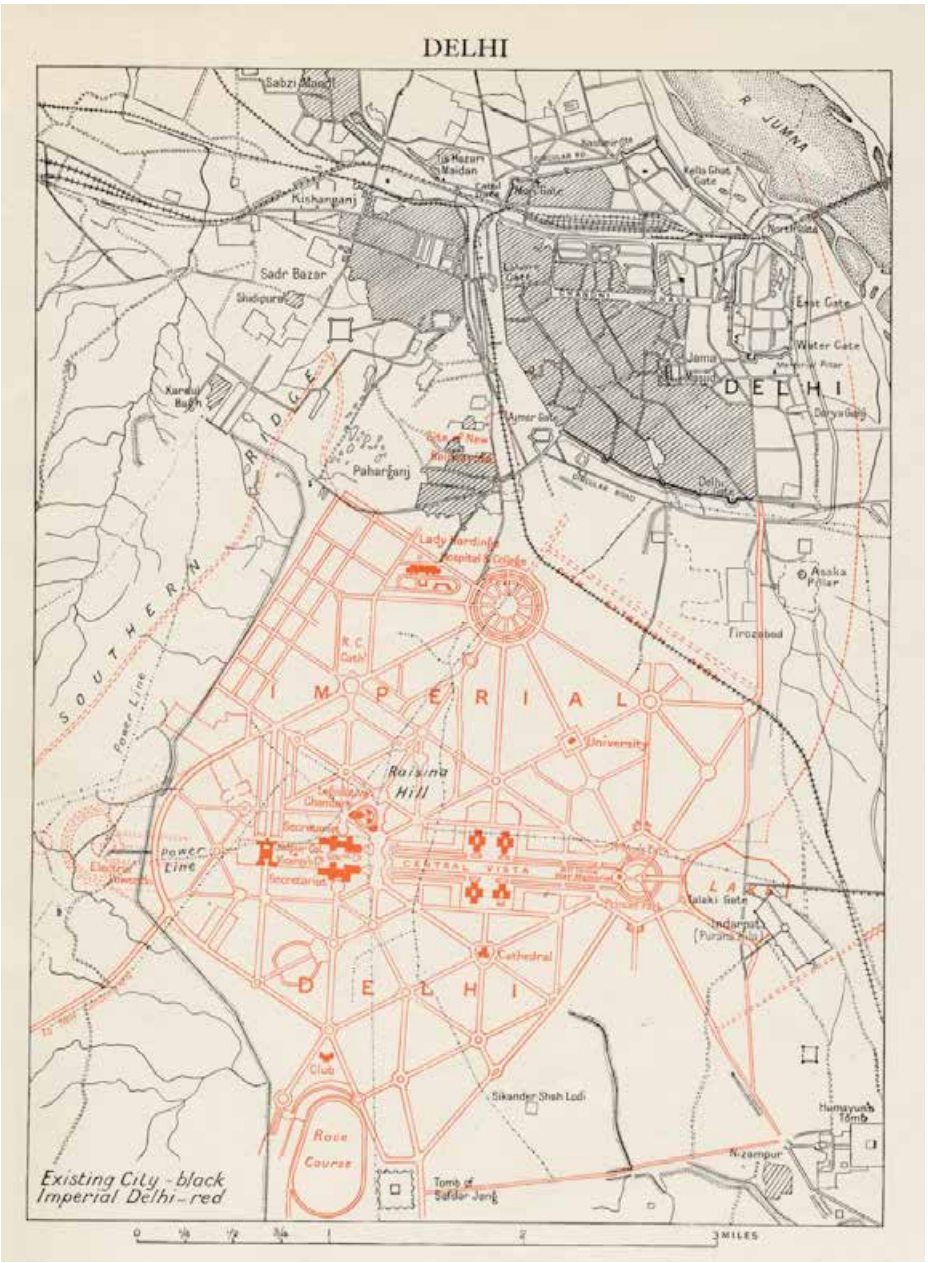

Image 1: A map of Lutyens' projected "Imperial Delhi," from *Encyclopædia Britannica* Eleventh Edition, December 1911, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Lutyens%27_projected_Imperial_Delhi,_from_the_Encyclopedia_Britannica,_11th_ed.,_1910-12.jpg

tombs in what is called today Lodi Gardens or smaller structures such as Sabz Burj into the idea of Imperial Delhi (Image 1). If the grand scheme of Neoclassical architecture manifested the imperial in built form, the Rajput, Sultanate and Mughal structures became the backdrop against which the British Empire unfolded its grandest statement of power.

Lutyens worked closely with the horticulturist William R. Mustoe, who came to Delhi in 1919 after first working in Kew Gardens in London, then the Municipal Gardens in Bombay followed by a stint in the Government Gardens in Lahore. Mustoe familiarized himself with the soil types of north-western India in Lahore, preparing him for his responsibilities in landscaping Imperial Delhi. The Mughal gardens of Talkatora was commandeered and Mustoe proceeded to establish a nursery in which all the species and numbers of local and new trees and plants were propagated. Lutyens determined the planting scheme for Kingsway or Raj Path

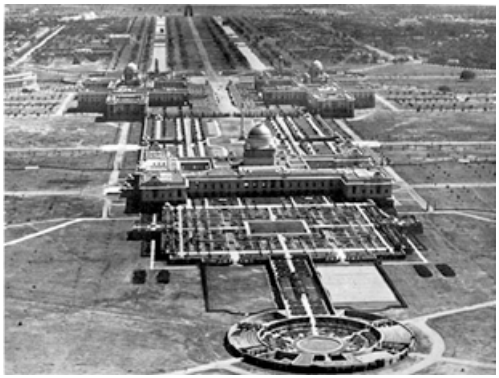

Image 2: Aerial view of the city in progress and the completed city of New Delhi with the war memorial at the end of Kingsway, https://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/video-asia-society-museum-exhibit-depicts-transitional-moment-indias-history

Image 3: New Delhi. © Daily Overview https://images.adsttc.com/media/images/5ecc/7d07/b357/6579/0d00/08a0/large_jpg/New_Delhi.jpg?1590459626

Image 4: Aerial view of the city in progress and the completed city of New Delhi with the war memorial at the end of Kingsway, The Collection of the Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, https://sites.asiasociety.org/princesandpainters/design-of-delhi-edwin-lutyens/

which led to the Viceroy's Lodge and Mustoe and his staff decided for the rest of Delhi, including which trees to plant where, how a specific street gained an identity with a particular species and how the spacing of trees worked with other features such as street lamps and sidewalks.[1] He was also responsible for greening the Delhi Ridge as well as planting the Mughal gardens of the Viceroy's Lodge (Image 2, 3 and 4).

Gurcharan Singh came to Delhi in 1918 and must have encountered this scheme as it was being emplaced. If today we see pre-colonial monuments in bare red or white, lime-plastered sandstone as picturesque counterpoints, Neoclassical imperial architecture in the same colours of sandstone modified with elements from local architecture such as the *chajja* or eave and the *chattri* or an umbrella-like cupola pre-

1 Pradip Kishen recently has spoken critically on the horticultural logic of the Mustoe and Lutyens planting scheme (Verghese 2020).

siding over the city, with large boulevards and circuses lined with green connecting it all, Singh would have seen bare earth, demolition and road construction, living gurudwaras, mosques and temples, the old city of Shahjahanabad, and decaying tombs that were left standing, some of which in the previous 50 years, the British had conserved and converted into gardens (Sharma 2007).

It is important to visualize the state of Imperial Delhi in 1918 as unmade and in construction in order to then imagine how a young man such as Gurcharan Singh, a recent graduate in geology would have seen this city-in-the-making and seen how he could make himself. He came to Delhi from Jammu because his father's friend Sardar Ram Singh Kabli, the owner of Delhi Pottery Works, located just south of the upcoming capital, in what is today Safdarjang Airport, manufactured bricks and tiles. Kabli's brickworks was in the midst of producing a portion of the vast number of bricks required for building Imperial Delhi as a subcontractor for Sobha Singh and Baisakha Singh, two of the five most important contractors who had migrated from Panjab to make their fortunes in the entrepreneurialism made possible by the upcoming city.[2] The work was so intense that Kabli needed assistance and threw Gurcharan Singh into the task of learning every phase of work in the pottery, especially in the tiles section.[3]

Image 5: Khishtsaz or brickmaker from James Skinner's *Kitāb-i tashrīḥ al-aqvām*, artist unknown, 1825, The Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection in the Library of Congress, Washington DC; https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2015rosen2076/?sp=448&r=-1.372,0.537,3.745,1.614,0

The work at the pottery also threw Singh into processes by which the landscape was being transformed. While he was learning to make tiles and watching bricks fired every day, he would have noticed that Delhi Pottery Works was surrounded by other kilns which were located on or near Safdarjang's Tomb. Looking at historic images of brick kilns and brickmakers in paintings and prints made for English patrons or buyers, they appear as something "exotic" that is being captured about the brickmaker and the manufacturing process in India (Image 5). Simultaneously, they also communicate that what is in appearance exotic can be translated into something familiar by the Eng-

2 Singh (2012) documents that construction process of the city. See also Jain (2019). See Delhi Pottery Trust (n.d.).

3 Interview with Mansimran Singh, ceramist and son of Gurcharan Singh, October 9, 2020.

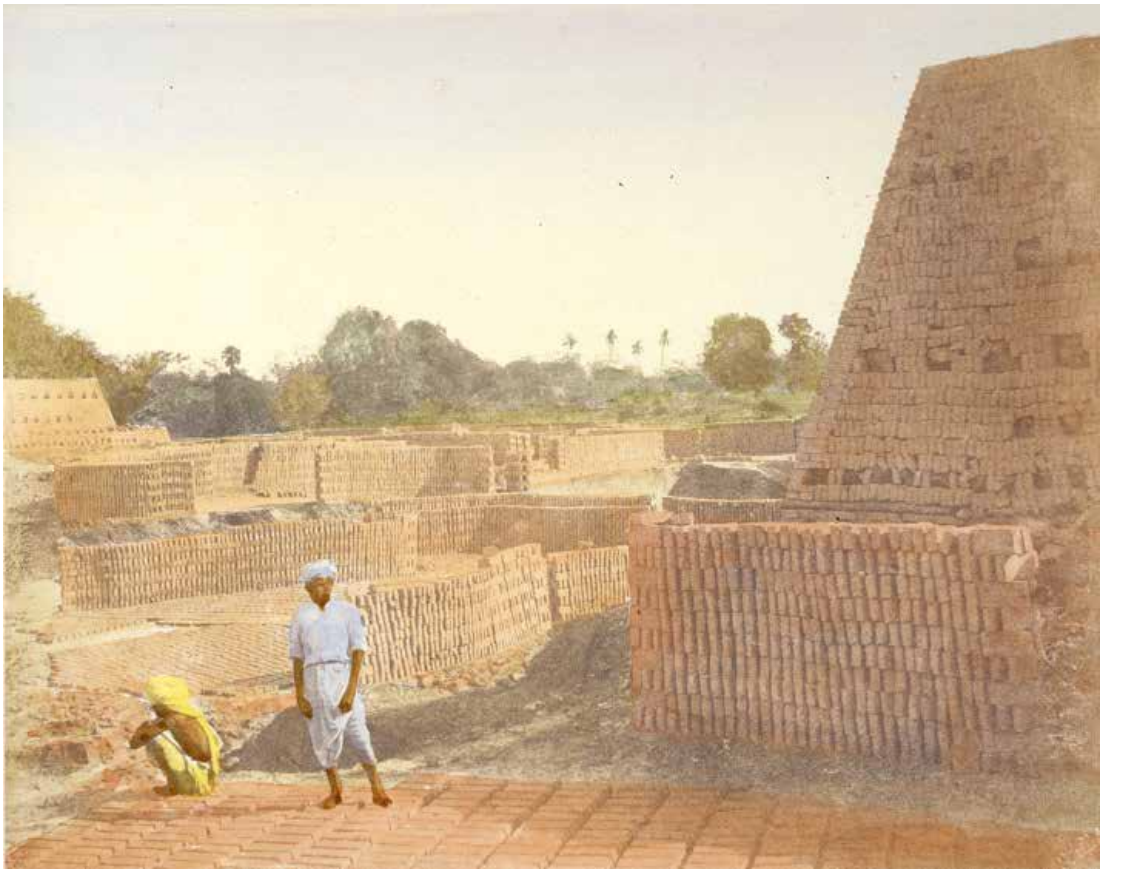

Image 6: Frederick Fiebig, *Brick kiln on the Hooghly*, Calcutta, 1851, photographic print; http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/photocoll/b/019pho0000247s1u00021000.html

lish viewer because in England too, bricks are fired in kilns. Even more important is that the act of visually recording brick kilns and bricks drying also tells viewers that there is permanent or *pakka* material, technology and human labor available to make the new structures that the East India Company and later the imperial Government of India, would need (Image 6).[4] When such images are paired with images of ruined monuments, as they often were in colonial albums, it was possible to see a context in which construction and demolition coexist in such a way that a space could be cleared for the

4 Cowell (2016) tell us about the process and value of making the now institutionalized difference between *kacchā* and *pakkā* materials in the construction of colonial architecture. Dutta (2007) tells us of the importance of visually and economically imagining construction craft in the making of colonial public works. See N.A. (1845) which reassures the colonial construction professional that while brickmaking in India was not as good as in England, with some training and time and an adjustment of materials and process, satisfactory results could be achieved.

Image 7: Pajawa or Clamp Kiln. Photograph Suyash Dwivedi, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kiln#/media/File:Indian_brick_kiln.jpg

colonial contemporary, one in which the colonizer and the native entrepreneur benefitted (Image 7 and 8).[5]

Such entrepreneurialism is evident in the transformations that bricks underwent and the subsequent changes in architectural silhouettes, materials and design. Before the coming of the colonial brick, locally known as *ghumma* (9" x 4" x 3"), the *lakhauri* (approximately 4" x 6" x .75") brick was made for centuries all across northern and central India, as far north as Srinagar and as far south as the Deccan. Lakhauri is a thin brick, which is scaled at slightly varying dimensions in relation to the composition of the clay, the use of the brick in

Image 8: Brick Kiln at Delhi Potteries, near Safdarjung Tomb, now Safdarjung Airport, Delhi, http://delhibluepotterytrust.com/history.php.

5 Gupta (2002) tell us that prior to 1911, there was more than a century of complexity in land ownership because, financial transactions and military action created very intense forms of entrepreneurship. Those natives who became rich were those whose fortunes were not destroyed in the rebellion of 1857, made more wealth by 1858 and began to prosper even more as they made goods to serve the European population and found tenants for the properties they owned.

Image 9: A cusped arch made of Lakhauri bricks at the Chota Imambara, https://anotherglobaleater.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/ci-lakhauriarch.jpg

a specific area of the construction, the quality, type and availability of fuel and the patron's capacities.[6] So, for example, round bricks were cast for pillars, thin bricks could be easily manipulated or cut to follow the curve of an arch, its silhouette well-articulated with the skilled application of stucco and so on (Image 9). When European motifs and designs began to be domesticated, the size of the bricks remained the same though ornamentation transformed (Image 10). The Lakhauri gave immense flexibility to the *mistri* or construction expert.

The *lakhauri* brick transformed into the *ghumma* when the design and the composition of rooms in a building changed from the intimacy of space and shorter wall spans in native architecture to the larger dimensions of EIC-designed architecture. A *Gazeteer of Delhi* (1883-84) tells us that plaster work was still of a fine quality but goes on to note that "the notable deterioration which has taken place of late years in the *rāj mistri*'s craft is attributed by the workmen themselves to the introduction of the very different method of treating wall-surfaces necessary for our large English buildings, where immense stretches of wall have to be covered with plaster as economically as possible."[7]

6 Rishu (n.d.).

7 *A Gazetteer of Delhi* (1883-84, reprint 2020: 130). The writer continues, "a skilled workman will tell you that any cooly can learn to do such work; and as a matter of fact the greater part of the men employed by the Public Works Department are only promoted labourers, and very few of them are capable of working out such details as the pendentives of vaults or the foliated pilasters and the mihrābs of the arcades which are universal in the work of fifty years ago. Even in the English bungalows built at that period, the native fancy, through evidently ill at ease in our vast, rectangular domestic barns, broke out in quaint

Image 10: Lucknow's Chota Imambara made in Lakhauri Bricks with Stucco Design, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chota_Imambara#/media/File:A_statue_holding_chain_for_earthing_purpose.jpg

panelling on the wall and in ornamented mantel pieces. The barrack and the railway station, however, have now effectually checked this; and the *rāj mistri* has learnt how to combine the worst and least durable plaster work ever wrought in India, with pure, utilitarian hideousness."

Image 11: Begum Samru's Palace (after it was partially destroyed in 1857), Chandni Chowk, Delhi, photograph by Robert Christopher and Harriet Tytler, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Begum_Samru#/media/File:1857_bank_of_delhi2.jpg

As colonial architecture was built in the European way, such as in the palaces and bungalows of Begam Samru's house in Delhi (Image 11 and 13) and for her European soldiers in Sardhana (Image 12), *ghumma* were used and covered with lime. Later, when Indian *mistriyan* built the historically important Bradlaugh Hall (1900) in Lahore (Image 14), which was used as the National College and as a space for large gatherings during the freedom movement, the *ghumma* bricks were left exposed, the only embellishment was the beauty of the façade and the perfection of brickwork. [8]

8 This was a building commissioned by Charles Bradlaugh, an MP who advocated for Indian independence and self-determination. See Charles Bradlaugh Society, n.d.

Image 12: European House, ca. early 19th century, Sardhana, UP, http://www.baadalmusings.com/zoomed/samru/ruined-european-house-sardhana

Image 13: Attributed to Muhammad A'zam, artist, *Begam Samru and her household*, 1805-26, Collection of Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, https://viewer.cbl.ie/viewer/object/In_74_7/1/LOG_0000/, accessed on October 16, 2020.

If such structures and others designed by Public Works Department engineers, including churches or government buildings, were built in a colonial Neo-Classical in which *ghumma* bricks were covered with plaster in the early part of the 19th century or later left exposed to make exquisite Victorian and Indo-Saracenic facades such as in Bradlaugh Hall, a new modernist language of exposing the bricks and with minimal ornamentation to create mass and monumentality began to appear in Delhi once it was declared the capital of British India. Brick had acquired representational authority and in the hands of architects such as Shoosmith or George, needing neither plaster nor ornament (Image 15, 16 and 17) (Stamp 2016; Butler 2012).

As Gurcharan Singh arrived, all these transformations were already under way. He would not have understood the landscape in the way I have sequenced the narrative but something of this was surely taken in from the corner of his eye, seen but not fully absorbed. As histories of his career as a ceramist note, Singh was captivated by the blue tiles he found everywhere on the historic buildings that were

Image 14: Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, https://www.dawn.com/news/1209096

left standing across a landscape in formation. It was in these years that the bicycle became a form of personal transport and that the tradition of taking a one-rupee *ekka* ride to see the monuments of the city became common Gupta 2002). Perhaps Singh took such a ride. In any case, his interest in the way the city was, converged with the way it was *becoming*. He had stepped into a city in which its residents had developed an archeological outlook as part of their urbanity, a phenomenon which was a consequence of a palimpsest city transforming into a colonial one.[9]

For the 22-year-old Singh, 1918-1919 was a definitive period that set the course for his entire life. He met Chattar Kaur, the daughter of his employer, and when he asked for her hand in marriage, Kabli agreed, provided that Singh would go to Japan and study industrial ceramics, which he did in 1919.[10] 1918 was also an important year in Delhi for the Satyagraha movement. Whether or not Singh was di-

9 Chenoy (2018) is a critical edition of Mirza Sangin Beg's text which was commissioned by the English East India Company to document Delhi's layout, buildings, habitations, bazars, localities, residences, individuals and local cultures. King (2007: 188-189) talks about the repair and restoration work on the Qutub Minar in 1826 and the formation of the Archaeological Society between 1847-50 to which both English and local elites belonged. He quotes a colonial writer, "The... inflictions of the climate are amply compensated by the endless gratification afforded to intellectual minds, by the number of interesting objects which greet the spectator on every side. A life might be spent in rambling over the ruins of old Delhi and subjects of contemplation still remain. Next to the palace... is the Jumma Masjid, a magnificent mosque. ... From the interstices of the piazza of this fine square, very picturesque views are obtained."

10 Japan was a major supplier for ceramic tiles to India in the interwar years when free trade was encouraged by the

Image 15: Arthur Gordon Shoosmith, St. Martin's Garrison Church, completed 1931, Delhi Cantonment, Delhi, https://dome.mit.edu/handle/1721.3/55863

Image 16: Walter Sykes George, St. Stephen's College, completed 1941, Delhi, https://dome.mit.edu/handle/1721.3/55928

rectly involved, he certainly would have been aware of it. Arriving in Japan, he began to learn Japanese to gain entry into The Higher Technological School in Tokyo. During this period, he became associated with the leaders of Mingei, Japan's Arts and Crafts movement, in which Yanagi Soetsu, Hamada Shoji, Tomimoto Kenkichi, and Bernard Leach, the founder of British studio pottery, came together to make a movement that promoted the folklorization of culture and the idea of an artist-craftsman dedicated to making functional ceramic ware. Singh was captured by the Mingei narrative of the folk and the local and by the potential of stoneware; it became a lifelong passion.

When he returned to India in 1922, he returned to Delhi, married Chattar Kaur, and began to make hand-thrown pots at Kabli's Delhi Potteries, which no one bought. It was at this time he met Abdullah (Image 18), a tilemaker from Dasna near Amroha in Uttar Pradesh, who

Image 17: Walter Sykes George, architect and Shoba Singh, contractor. Sujan Singh Park Apartments, completed 1946, Khan Market, New Delhi, https://www.gettyimages.ae/detail/news-photo/view-of-sujan-singh-park-on-october-9-2015-in-new-delhi-news-photo/528086990

came from a lineage of potters who practiced Persianate ceramics and held the formula for "Delhi blue," as Britishers called the colour of Sultanate and Mughal tiles.[11] Singh gave him a one-rupee coin as *dakshina* or a ritualized offering, which in turn designated Abdullah as his

GOI and continued to play a role in Indian ceramics after Independence when Indians, such as Krishan Kapoor, the founder of Hitkari Potteries, went to Japan for training in industrial ceramics and set up production upon his return. See Panicker (1943) and Toyoyama (2018).

11 There were brickmakers and turquoise-colored brickmakers designated as *khistsaz* and *chunah paz* in the Delhi area as recorded in the James Skinner Album, *Kitāb-i tashrīḥ al-aqvām*, which is in the Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection at the Library of Congress, Washington DC,

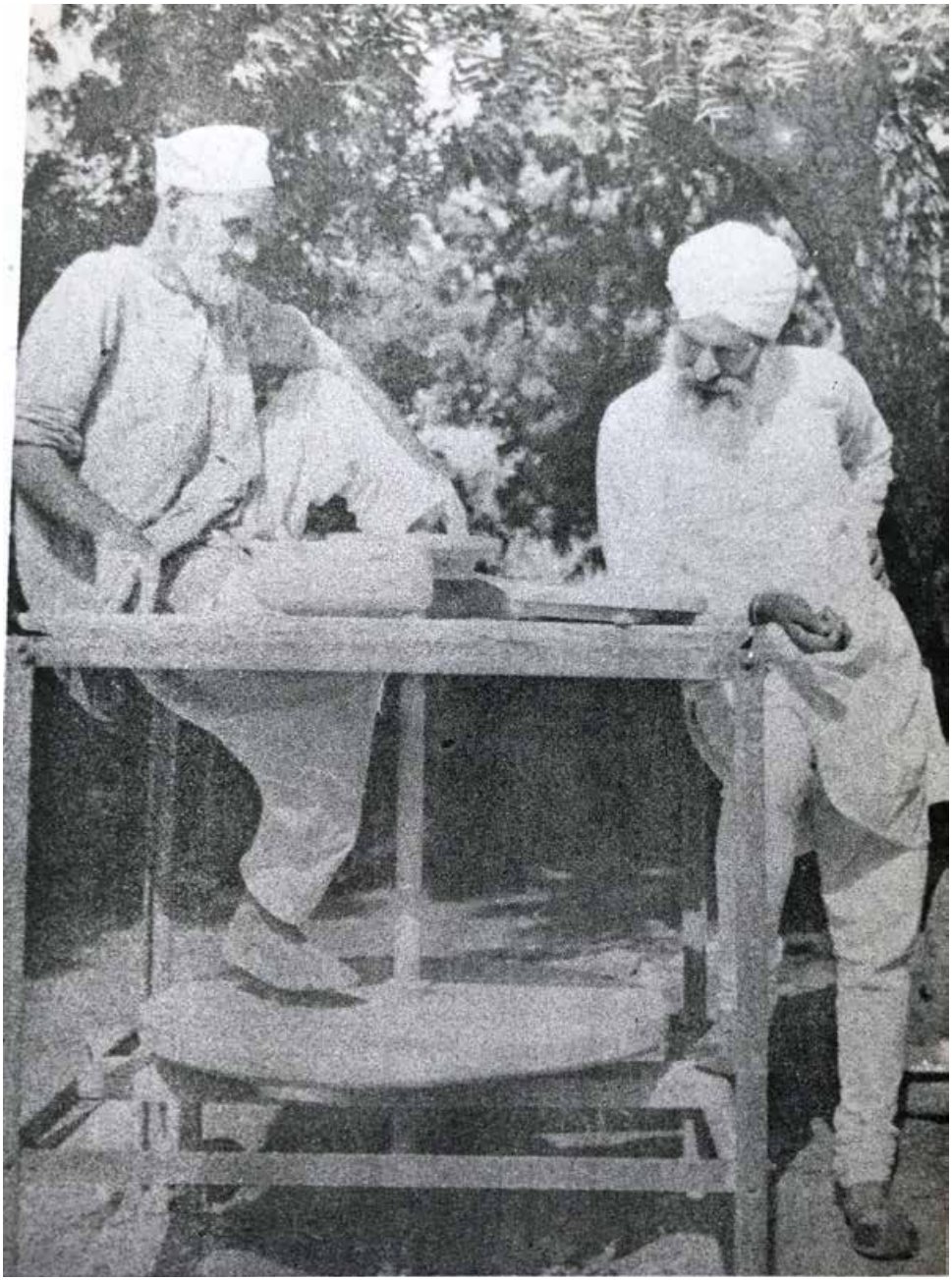

Image 18: Abdullah at the potters' wheel and Gurcharan Singh standing, from Singh, *Pottery in India*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979.

Image 19: Delhi Potteries Tileworks, http://delhibluepotterytrust.com/imgs/history-2/1920-50/Delhi%20Potteries.png, accessed November 4, 2020.

guru, his teacher in ceramics. This continued until 1929. In these years, the pottery shifted to Factory Road (Image 19) as the brick kilns were demolished to make Willingdon (now Safdarjung) Airport and the Singh family built a *ghumma* brick house on the land (Image 20); it had a domed studio and floor tiles designed by Sarada Ukil, a Bengali actor and an artist who trained with Abanindranath Tagore in Kolkata and migrated to Delhi in 1918, while Abdullah and Singh made them. His choice to expose the *ghumma*, a modern form of an ancient construction material, and make an intimate aesthetic statement with it, was the way he distilled the making of Imperial Delhi and his alliances with its various makers to build his new workshop-home. The earthy modernism of the exposed brick house, the incorporation of designed, handmade tiles and Singh's affiliation with a hereditary Muslim potter who worked with materials which inhabited multiple temporalities, created the possibility for bringing together, visually and materially, large histories in intricate ways.

Image 20: Gurcharan Singh and Chattar Kaur's House, Dome View, made of ghumma bricks and completed 1932 with later additions of Delhi Blue Ceramic jali, http://delhibluepotterytrust.com/index.php, accessed on November 4, 2020.

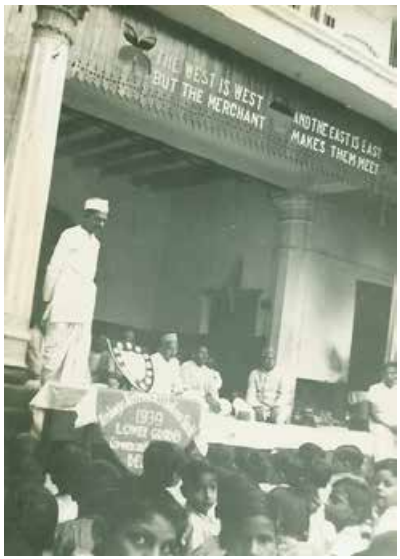

Image 21: Narain Prasad, photographer, Audiences at an inter-school competition sponsored by the Delhi Merchants Association, 1939, http://nebula.wsimg.com/c730cc8dd5564d23db33be3221fba4d3?AccessKeyId=617D84A9BB3FDBCA34E8&disposition=0&alloworigin=1 on the Centre for Community Knowledge, Ambedkar University, http://www.cckonline.in/cameras-of-the-past.html, accessed on November 4, 2020.

https://lccn.loc.gov/2014658650, accessed October 12, 2020. See Pourhadi (1977). There were mosaic makers in the old city as well; see Gupta (2002: 41).

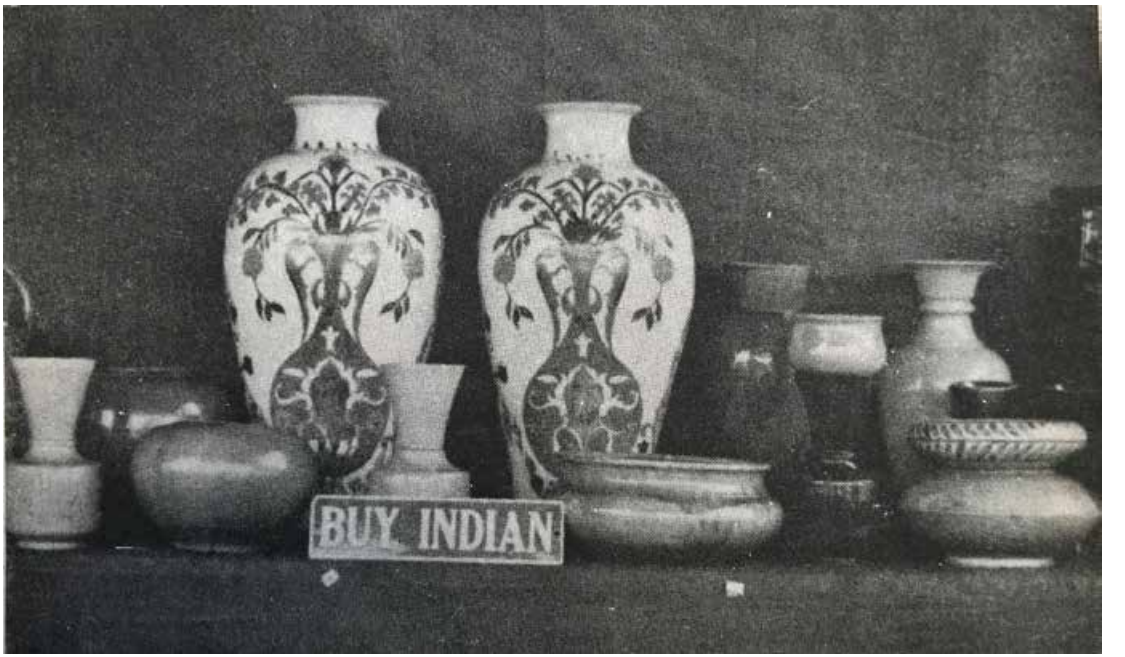

Image 22: Gurcharan Singh's display for a *swadeshi* exhibition, from Singh, *Pottery in India*, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979.

Image 23: Gurcharan Singh, Kamandalu Tea Set, Delhi Blue Pottery, first developed in Ambala, Panjab circa 1949. This set is from the 1970s. Collection of Anuradha Ravindranath, New Delhi. Image © Piramal Museum of Art, Mumbai.

Working in Delhi as the Swadeshi movement grew in ways that M. K. Gandhi advocated and also did not conceive (Image 21), Gurcharan Singh kept building his repertoire of stoneware in India, domesticating *mingei* into *swadeshi*. Image 22 is a selection of Singh's work that was showcased for a Swadeshi exhibition in Delhi in the 1930s. The pots and vases he made are both local and *mingei* in design concept. For example, he placed a painted vase on a large white vase based on Mughal ornamentation found on carpets or in wall niches inside palace rooms in the Red Fort. The vases without figural ornamentation are in shapes that have cosmopolitan origins and Singh's experimental glazes; he was bringing together his education in geology to source materials, his industrial training and *mingei* experience in Japan, his tutelage under

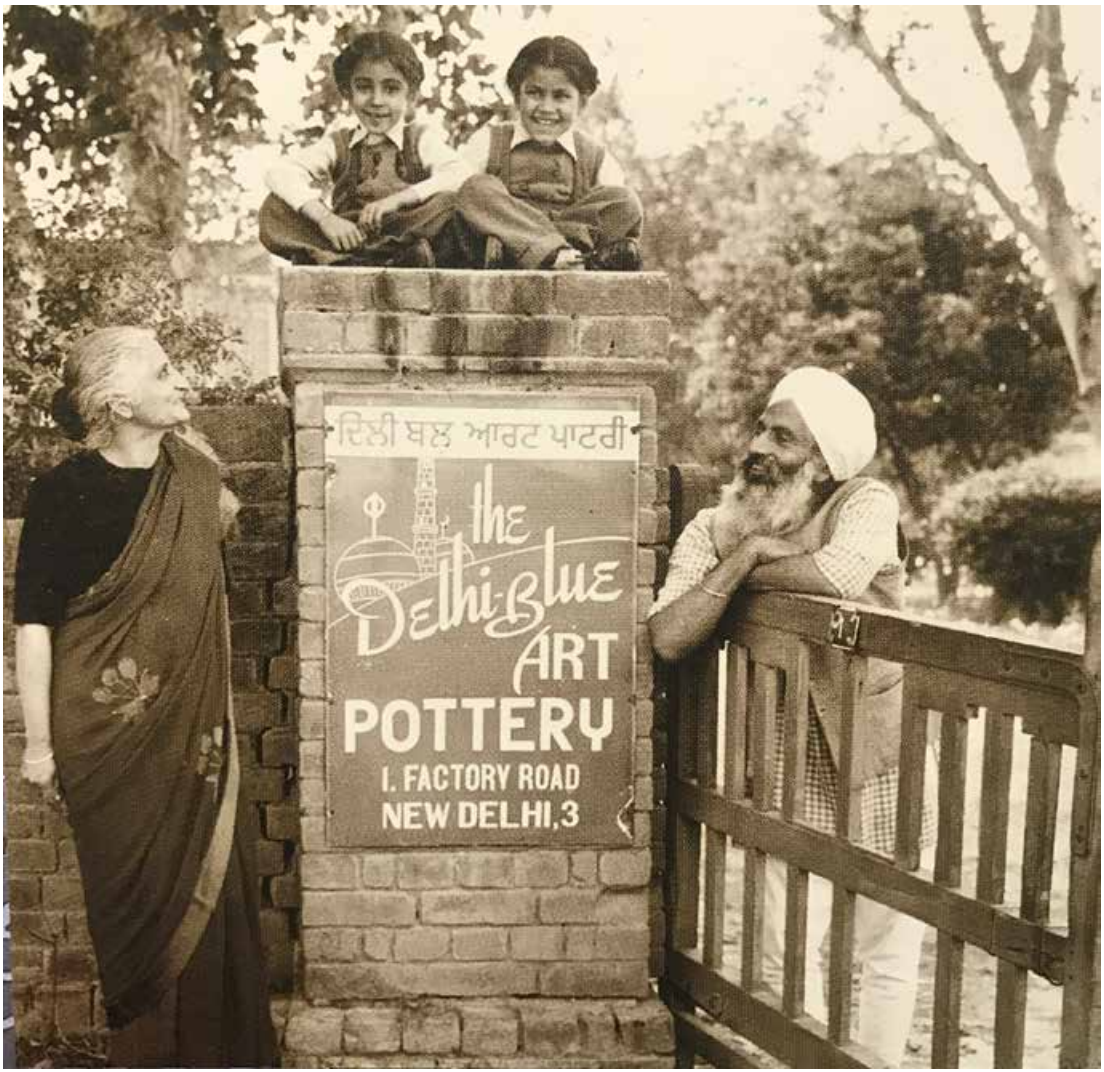

Image 24: Chattar Kaur and Gurcharan Singh with children, from Singh, Pottery in India, New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979.

Abdullah and his work in Delhi Potteries to create stoneware, a completely new clay body for India that he had to compose. It would take another decade for him to make a confident and more integrated *swadeshi-mingei* ware such as the Kamandalu Tea set (Image 23, first made in Ambala in 1949) for which he took the common mendicant's water holder –*kamandalu*– and turned it into an East Asian tea pot with a provision for a bamboo handle and accompanied with English-style, handled teacups and saucers. It was in 1930s too that the competition from

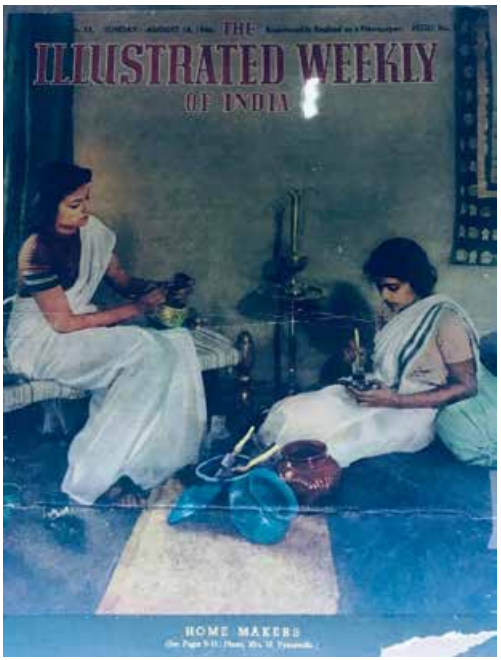

Image 25: Cover of *Illustrated Weekly*, August 1946, HV Archive and The Alkazi Collection of Photography.

Japanese industrial tiles increased and finally in 1939, Delhi Potteries closed. Singh went to Srinagar, Bundi, Lahore and finally Ambala, setting up ceramic training institutes or working as a geologist for various governments.

In a few years after Partition, when he retired from government service in ceramics, Singh moved back to Delhi and started The Delhi Art Pottery on Factory Road. From here, his studio pottery practice expanded (Image 24). Even before Independence, after 1857, when the railways made the city a central junction, hotels became established, first for the English and then for the native elite (King 2007: 237). Delhi's anglicizing upper classes began to use tiles and then bone china in the home (King 2007: 210; Hosagrahar 2001). That very same class also became enamoured with the

Image 26: The Delhi Blue Art Pottery, Tea Set. Collection of Anuradha Ravindranath, New Delhi. Image © Piramal Museum of Art, Mumbai.

Image 27: The Delhi Blue Art Pottery, Ceramic *Jāli*, India International Centre, architect Joseph Allen Stein, inaugurated 1962, New Delhi. Photograph by Annapurna Garimella.

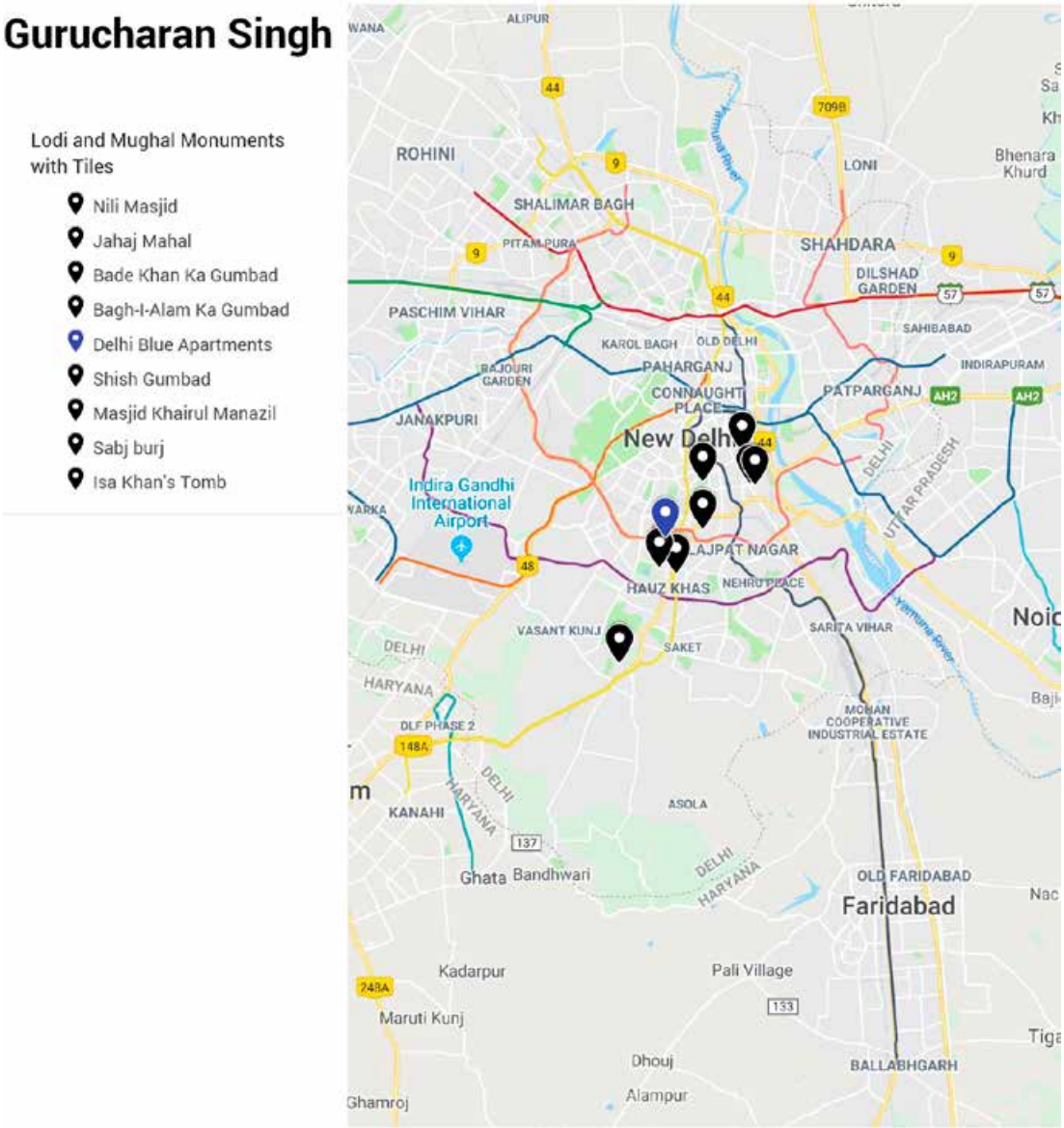

Image 28: Precolonial monuments with Delhi Blue tiles. Map made on Google Maps by Annapurna Garimella.

Image 29: Gur-e Amir, c. 1400 CE, tile-decorated mausoleum of Timur, Samarkand, Uzbekistan, Central Asia, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gur-e-Amir#/media/File:ShrineofAmirTimur.jpg

aesthetics of *swadeshi*; the hand-tinted cover of *Illustrated Weekly* from August 1946 shows two students from Lady Irwin College dressed in khadi saris and painting pots, one of them the same shade of Delhi Blue that had captivated British architects and planners (Image 25); Gurcharan Singh was now entering popular culture as sign of the new, of the local and of the self-made.[12]

After Independence, the first Indian government banned the import of foreign-made ceramics as part of the effort to grow local industries. Simultaneously, as Imperial became New Delhi, and new embassies and industrialists established themselves in the nation's capital, the need for table ceramics only grew as a consequence of the dinner parties for which the city is today so famous.[13] Many foreigners from the US and England who came to reside in Delhi were already familiar with the studio pottery movement which had expanded to include amateur training and practice. Gurcharan Singh began to teach a variety of people at Delhi Blue Art Pottery and he began to make Delhi blue tableware (Image 26). Soon, he was

12 The blue was given by the unknown person who tinted the image.

13 Interview with Mansimran Singh.

Image 30: Sabz Burj, 16th or 17th century, New Delhi, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sabz_Burj#/media/File:Sabz_Burj_1.jpg

Image 31: Fahim Khan's Tomb or Nila Gumbad, Humanyun's Tomb Complex, ca. 1625. https://hi-in.facebook.com/OurMonuments/photos/pcb.492492901532999/492489824866640/?type=3&theate

commissioned to do things like the Delhi blue ceramic *jālī* which was first exported and then began to be used locally, for example in Joseph Stein's India International Centre (Image 27).[14]

To understand how one person, a young Panjabi Sikh man, a geologist, a novice at tilemaking, became involved in making Delhi into a place, we

14 Ibid.

Image 32: Tomb of Isa Khan Niyazi, 1547, Humayun's Tomb Complex, New Delhi, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb_of_Isa_Khan#/media/File:Isha_Khan_Niyazi's_tomb_-_Delhi_297_HT.jpg

have to hold on to that moment in 1918, when Singh would have seen the future and the past simultaneously in the present, perhaps without even knowing that he was doing so, to connect it to the moment when he would recognize that his own body and mind were involved in the task of making materials for a place in which structures had been demolished and structures were being made. These moments come to us as precious fragments for imagining how Delhi in 1918 became for Singh a place of brown, a place where blue stood out as a magical streak

Image 33: Monsoon Sky over Mehrauli. Photograph by Annapurna Garimella, 2019.

Image 34: Blue tiled dome of Jahaz Mahal, Mehrauli. Photograph by Annapurna Garimella, 2019.

Image 35: Monsoon sunset over tomb in Sunder Nursery, New Delhi. Photograph by Annapurna Garimella, 2019.

of beauty, a local color that had been positioned as a mark of the past in the present through which he would be able to imagine, even if he did not consciously recognize it, as the future among a growing field of green with brown (Image 28). To imagine this is to see through the eyes of architects who imagined the turquoise-tiled dome of Timur's tomb against a paler but brilliant, azure Samarkhandi sky to be in the presence of Lodi builders deciding to trim their buildings with a richer cerulean; and then turn the corner and see Mughal *mi'maran* taking in Timurid and Lodi tiled structures and thinking about making whole domes in blue tiles, condensing the sky on the earth which could then flow and pool into a sharper, richer aqua in a garden that was still being imagined into existence to surround Sabz Burj (Image 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34).[15] It is not too difficult a stretch to think that architects also would plan for the two months when the monsoon visits Delhi and the blue dome becomes a jewel set among the puffy white or orange rimmed rain clouds (Image 35). To imagine all this is to understand that all these histories of New Delhi flow to us across centuries, arriving at our present, thanks to many makers, but especially Gurcharan Singh, who made the city a place of romance, creative entrepreneurship and a new urbane culture of making. It is also to acknowledge the "vibrancy" of things, as Jane Bennett (2010) has termed it, to accept the vitality that matter has for human beings.

15 The exterior of the dome of Sabz Burj originally had turquoise tiles. The Aga Khan Trust is currently restoring it and the cobalt blue ones will be replaced with Delhi Blue tiles.

REFERENCES

Bennett, Jane. 2010. *Vibrant Matters*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bowe, Patrick. 2009. "'The Genius of An Artist': William R. Mustoe and the Planting of the City of New Delhi and its Gardens." *Garden History* 9 (1): 68-79. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40649671.

Butler, Richard. 2012. "The Anglo-Indian Architect Walter Sykes George (1881-1962): a Modernist Follower of Lutyens." *Architectural History* 55: 237-268. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43489721.

Charles Bradlaugh Society. n.d. "Bradlaugh Hall." Accessed October 19, 2020. https://charlesbradlaughsociety.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/bradlaugh-hall-lahore.pdf.

Chenoy, Shama Mitra. 2018. *Delhi in Transition, 1821 and Beyond: Mirza Sangin Beg's Sair-ul Manazil*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Cowell, Christopher. 2016. "The *Kacchā-Pakkā* Divide: Material, Space and Architecture in the Military Cantonments of British India (1765-1889)." *Abe Journal*, Special Issue "Dynamic Vernacular," 9-10. https://doi.org/10.4000/abe.3224.

Delhi Pottery Trust. n.d. "History." Accessed November 4, 2020. http://delhibluepotterytrust.com/history.php.

Dutta, Arindam. 2007. "'Strangers within the Gate': Public Works and Industrial Art Reform." *Colonial Modernities: Building, Dwelling and Architecture in British India and Ceylon*, edited by Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash, 93-114. London: Routledge.

Gupta, Narayani. 2002. *Delhi Between Two Empires 1803-1931: Society, Government and Urban Growth in The Delhi Omnibus*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Hosagrahar, Jyoti. 2001. "Mansions to Margins: Modernity and the Domestic Landscapes of New Delhi, 1847-1910." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 60 (1): 26-45. http://www.jstor.com/stable/991677.

Jain, Anshika. 2019. "The Indians who built New Delhi." Accessed October 20, 2020. https://www.livehistoryindia.com/cover-story/2019/11/15/the-indians-who-built-new-delhi.

King, Anthony. 2007 digital edition. *Colonial Urban Development*. London: Routledge.

Varghese, Shiny. "What's wrong with the trees of Lutyens' Delhi?" *Indian Express*, July 26, 2020.

https://indianexpress.com/article/express-sunday-eye/whats-wrong-with-the-trees-of-lutyens-delhi-6523457/.

Liddle, Swapna. 2018. *Connaught Place and the Making of New Delhi*. New Delhi: Speaking Tiger.

n. a. "Brickwork in India," *Professional Papers on Indian Engineering*, edited by J. B. Medley, 137-144. Roorkee: Thomason College Press.

Panicker, V.G.N. 1943. "Ceramic Education and Training in Japan." *Transactions of the Indian Ceramic Society*, 2 (2): 106-109. https://doi.org/10.1080/0371750X.1943.11012020.

Pourhadi, Ibrahim V. 1977. "The Indian Caste System: In an Exquisite Manuscript," *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 34 (3): 190-207. https://www.jstor.org/stable/29781737.

Rishu. n.d. "The Lakhori Brick." Accessed October 16, 2020. https://thenawabsproject.wordpress.com/2017/07/14/the-lakhauri-brick/#:~:text=It%20was%20in%20size%20of,15%20cm%20and%2019mm%20thin%20;.

Sharma, Jyoti P. 2007. "The British Treatment of Historic Gardens in the Indian Subcontinent: The Transformation of Delhi's Nawab Safdarjung's Tomb Complex from a Funerary Garden into a Public Park." *Garden History* 35 (2): 210-228. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40219928.

Singh, Malvika. 2012. *New Delhi: The Making of a Capital*. New Delhi: Roli Books.

Stamp, Gavin. 2016. "The Tragedy and Triumph of a British Architect in New Delhi," Apollo, May 31, 2016. https://www.apollo-magazine.com/the-tragedy-and-triumph-of-a-british-architect-in-new-delhi/.

Toyoyama, Aki. 2018. "Aesthetics, Sanitation and Nationalism: Japanese Majolica Tiles in Late Colonial India." *International Journal of Asian Studies* 9: 37-66.

OTHER RESOURCES

A Gazetteer of Delhi (1883-84). 2010, reprint of 1884 edition. Delhi: Aryan Books International.

VA.4 Maximum Capacity 4