



Memory, Interventions, and the India Gate

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A/3060/2017

Fifth Year, Section B2

Submitted on 17 Nov 2021

Word Count: 11,000

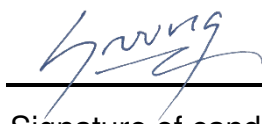
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DECLARATION

The research work embodied in this dissertation titled 'Interventions, Memory, and the India Gate' has been carried out by the undersigned as part of the undergraduate Dissertation programme in the Department of Architecture, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, under the supervision of T Lakshmi Priya.

The undersigned hereby declares that this is his/her original work and has not been plagiarised in part or full form from any source.



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This dissertation, titled 'Memory, Interventions, and the India Gate' by MS Srinivas, roll no. A/3060/2017, was carried out during the Fifth Year, Ninth Semester (2021) B.Arch. Program in the Department of Architecture, under our guidance during August - November 2021. On completion of the report in all aspects and based on the declaration by the candidate above, we provisionally accept this dissertation report and forward the same to the Department of Architecture, School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi, India.

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Acknowledgements

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support and assistance of a number of people. Firstly, I would like to thank Professor Lakshmi Priya for guiding me throughout the research and writing process. You helped me move from a set of loosely connected ideas to a structured research framework with a well-defined research question and methodology, and further develop the dissertation to the stage it has now reached. I would also like to thank Professor Jaya Kumar for supporting this process as the project coordinator and providing valuable inputs from time to time. Finally, I would like to thank my friend Shreya Singhal for spending long hours discussing my ideas with me, as well as for helping me conduct interviews and review this final draft.

Abstract

Keywords: Heritage, Memory, Postcoloniality, India

The India Gate was originally conceived by the colonial government in India as the All-India War Memorial, a dedication to the British and Indian lives lost in the First World War. However, it has since become less of a war memorial and more of a national icon, and come to symbolize India's national identity. Following this transition, this dissertation examines current collective memory of the monument's history through online surveys and in-person, semi-structured interviews at the India Gate and elsewhere in Delhi. Further, it investigates the history of interventions at the India Gate using sources such as newspaper and TV reports, autobiographical records, and community-posted photos and videos on the internet. It then analyses these results in conjunction with each other to understand how interventions at the India Gate have affected and been affected by local collective of the monument's history.

Based on this analysis, it appears there has been a kind of collective forgetting of the India Gate's history, which has enabled the monument to take on its new identity. In some cases, this forgetting has extended into a re-remembering, wherein people believe that the India Gate was built by an independent Indian government or for nationalist causes. Furthermore, it seems that interventions at the India Gate such as the Amar Jawan Jyoti and the tricolour night lighting have aided this forgetting, and some have possibly encouraged the construction of the new false narratives observed. This suggests that heritage interventions can have significant memorial consequences, and need to be conceived sensitively if they are not to bury history and construct alternate narratives of the past.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The India Gate is a curious monument. It was conceived by the colonial government in India as the All-India War Memorial, a memorial dedicated to the British and Indian lives lost to the First World War, and as the architectural centrepiece of the new imperial capital of India, New Delhi. When Viceroy Chelmsford inaugurated the monument in 1931, he had declared that the ‘stirring tales of individual heroism’ memorialized by the monument would ‘live forever in the annals of this country.’ (Arthur, 1921). On the surface, he seems to have been vindicated – the monument has since become one of India’s most iconic, perhaps next only to the Taj Mahal. But on closer observation, it appears that the monument has attained this status not as a war memorial, but as ‘India Gate’, a symbol of India’s national identity almost. It is surrounded today not by solemn mourners, as one might have expected, but by balloons, soap bubbles, and cheerful picknickers.

This transformation is remarkable, given that the monument remains untouched, still bearing its original inscription in stone. Neither has its history been erased or rewritten; it is accessible easily enough. Typically, the significance of heritage monuments is associated with the point in history they represent (Hall, 2004). However, in this case, the colonial history of the India Gate almost contradicts its national significance today. What, then, is the relationship between the present significance of the India Gate and its colonial past?

To understand this, one needs to examine how the history of India Gate is *remembered* today; or in other words, the current memory of India Gate’s history. Memory, as it has been shown repeatedly, can considerably deviate from history, even when this history has been well-established. And given the considerable shift in the India Gate’s significance, it is almost inevitable that there has been a corresponding shifting in the memory of the monument’s origin.

How could this shift in memory have occurred? It must be noted that while the India Gate, as a structure, has remained unchanged, there have been architectural interventions in its immediate precinct, and it is also visually altered on occasions through lighting. Therefore, given the lack of official discourse about the India Gate onsite (in the form of information guides, for example), it can be said that these interventions, as a form of implied discourse, might have affected public memory of the monument’s history, speaking to visitors as well as those viewing these interventions indirectly through visual media.

Followingly, these are the two questions that this dissertation attempts to answer. What is the current local memory of the India Gate's history? And how have interventions at the site of the India Gate affected this memory? The first question was engaged with through online surveys and in-person, semi-structured interviews at the India Gate and elsewhere. A total of 59 people were surveyed. Following this, an investigation was conducted of the interventions at the India Gate using historical methods, and the information obtained through both these studies were analysed in conjunction with each other.

It is acknowledged that there have only been a limited number of interventions at the India Gate, most of them conservative. In fact, some of them are minor enough that one might even argue that they are not interventions in any meaningful architectural sense. However, it is on purpose that this dissertation engages with such a landscape. Radical interventions will obviously have far-reaching consequences, memorial and otherwise. What this dissertation seeks to understand is if seemingly subtle interventions can also have a tangible effect on collective memory, and if so, how that might happen.

As a monument once involved in the construction of Imperial identity in India, and today intertwined with India's national imagination, the India Gate has much to reveal – not just about the role of architecture in the construction of collective identities, but equally – how narratives of the past can reshape architectural edifices without laying as much as a finger on them. By studying the postcolonial life of the India Gate, it is hoped that something will be revealed about the nature of postcolonial appropriation in India, as well as the narrative acts and cultural processes through which postcolonial nations come to peace with their colonial pasts.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this dissertation is to understand local collective memory of the India Gate and its history, and examine the manner in which this memory has affected and been affected by interventions at the site of the India Gate since Independence.

1.2 Objectives

1. To review the history of the India Gate and its surroundings in the period 1912-1947.

2. To undertake a memory study investigating collective memory in Delhi of the India Gate and its history.
3. To undertake a historical study of interventions at the India Gate since 1947 and examine these interventions as both expressions of and influences on this memory.

1.3 Scope

Much like architectural and digital intervention onsite, media representations may also be expected to indicate and in turn inform collective memory of a monument's history. This is certainly true for the India Gate, which has featured frequently in Indian films. However, these representations are considerable in volume and studying them would require a methodological approach different from the current study. Therefore, media representations of the India Gate will fall outside the scope of the present study.

1.4 Limitations

Firstly, the Central Vista Redevelopment Project of 2020 which is currently underway has significantly disturbed the India Gate and its precinct and placed a number of restrictions on access, movement, and activities in the area. Photography is prohibited in a number of locations around. Along with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this situation significantly restricts the usage of primary research methods.

Secondly, this dissertation examines memory as a collective phenomenon. While this might allow for remarkable insights to be drawn, any such study runs the risk of presenting a homogenizing narrative. It is acknowledged that the findings of this study are not equally representative of the many peoples of Delhi or India, and future studies with a more local focus might be able to put it in better perspective.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

There are two interests at the core of this dissertation: one, the India Gate, and two, memory – its various forms and aspects. On these lines, this section is divided into two parts. The first part examines in detail the history of the India Gate and the key factors that shaped the historical context in which it emerged: Lutyens, New Delhi, the Great War, and Indian Independence. This part provides the historical background for the key questions asked in this dissertation and the analyses and arguments used to address them. The second part disentangles the different kinds of memory that have been identified or formulated by academics to understand group recollections of the past, and elaborates on the ones that are key to this study: collective memory, collected memory, and popular memory. Following this, it examines heritage, which can be understood as a form a collective memory, and the role of discourse in its constitution. In summary, this part establishes the background of theories and academic work that the current research builds upon, and provides the basis for the methodological approach it will adopt.

2.1 From All India War Memorial to India Gate

This background study reviews the history of the India Gate and the historical context within which it was erected. As a monument built to memorialize the First World War and serve as the centre-piece of New Delhi, the India Gate needs to be understood in the context of the War and the Imperial capital. Equally, the memorial is one of the key works of the architect Edwin Lutyens, and it also needs to be understood in the context of his larger body of work. The first part of this section reviews the construction of New Delhi, and in particular, Lutyens' contribution to it; the second part examines the construction of the structure as the All-India War Memorial along with a number of similar memorials across the world, and finally, the third part examines the appropriation of the memorial into 'India Gate' post-Independence.

Lutyens and New Delhi

The shifting of the British Imperial capital from Calcutta to New Delhi was announced at the Delhi Durbar of 1911, where Viceroy Hardinge got the announcement made through none other than the visiting King George V. The announcement had been made after a period of

secretive planning, although many had foreseen it following the prominence Delhi had gaining in the 1857 Revolt and the increasing nationalist unrest in Calcutta (Stamp, 2012). Shortly after the Durbar, the Delhi Planning Commission – a panel of experts consisting of J. A. Brodie, Borough Engineer of Liverpool, Captain George Swinton, Chairman of the London Country Council, and the architect Edwin Lutyens – was created to decide on a site and develop a plan for the new city. Once the site was selected, Lutyens was appointed as the principal designer of the city and the viceroy's palace, and in early 1913, his long-time friend Herbert Baker joined him as the designer of the secretariat buildings (Riddick, 2006).

The choice of architectural style for the new city had been a point of contestation from the beginning. Many, particularly in England, proposed that the then prevalent Western style be used, which would now be classified as 'Edwardian Baroque'. However, many also advocated the use of local craftsmen and an indigenous style, including Viceroy Hardinge, whose reasons were probably political (Stamp, 2012). Lutyens, however, staunchly resisted his influence. Lutyens had built his reputation in England as a designer of picturesque mansions and gardens (Ridley, 1998), and towards the end of the century, he had begun adopting a more classical idiom. By 1903 his conversion was more or less complete, making him a part of the mainstream architectural fashion in England (Irving, 1982). Nevertheless, his work remained quite different from the architectural requirement in Delhi, and he was likely chosen partly because of what Holland (2018) calls his skill with signifiers of wealth and taste, and partly because of his good relations with the Viceroy and his wife (Stamp, 2012). He refused to use Indian draughtsmen to orientalize his designs, and agreed to use ornamentation only 'within reason'. His approach was, famously, to design as an 'an Englishman dressed for the climate', and he was convinced that the only architectural style that could represent 'the ideal of the British Empire' and be adaptable to Indian climate was 'of course classic' (Irving, 1982).

At the centre of New Delhi is Rajpath (originally Kingsway), a linear axis running from the Rashtrapati Bhavan (built as the Viceroy's Palace) on the west to the India Gate on the east. This axis is perpendicularly bisected by Janpath (originally Queensway), which runs from the Connaught Place (located by the railway station at the edge of the old city of Shahjahanabad) on the north to the Lodi Gardens on the south. The grid around these two axes is created by the superimposition of two grid systems: one rectangular, and another a unique geometric system in which two intersecting hexagons are located with their intersections points at the two endpoints of the Rajpath, which are subdivided into smaller hexagons and triangles. This

geometric system was developed as means of relating the new development, either through roads or visually, to existing landmarks such as the Purana Qila (Indrapat), Humayun's Tomb, and the Safdarjung Tomb.

There is no shortage of authors who have criticized New Delhi for being, as Greenberg (1969) notes, an 'Imperial fiat-city'. Driving towards the viceroy's palace, Robert Byron had announced it 'an offence against democracy, a slap in the face of the modern average man.' (Lutyens et al., 1985). The architect Colin Amery had declared that one thing must be remembered when discussing New Delhi, which is that its design was concerned with the architecture of power (Ribiero and Jain, 1984). More recently, Anthony King (2012) has criticized the city as a typical example of colonial urban development strongly influenced by the 'power structure inherent in the dominance-dependence relationship of colonialism'. Similarly, Jyoti Hosagrahar (2005) has criticized it for completely excluding all commercial activity and consequently worsening living conditions in the already congested Shahjahanabad.

However, it has also been noted that New Delhi is more than just another imperial city. British historian Gavin Stamp (2012) remarks that given the British governments' 'parsimony and philistinism', New Delhi's buildings are of a surprisingly high aesthetic quality; he even contends the Viceroy's House to be one of the greatest buildings in the world. Perhaps rightfully, Jane Ridley (1998) (great-granddaughter of Lutyens) notes that New Delhi is one of the few works of imperial architecture to receive critical acclaim. She observes that New Delhi is not a traditional baroque city because the central ceremonial axis is lined not with houses, but with trees and canals. The roads are lined with trees, behind which the bungalows disappear, and the hexagonal geometry is blurred by this 'leafiness'. The design is a juxtaposition of the natural and the classical, she writes, in the manner that Lutyens' gardens are. She essentially argues that the design of New Delhi emerges perhaps more from Lutyens' imagination and experiences than from any imperial commandment. This idea is echoed by the American architect Allan Greenberg (1969) in 'Lutyens' Architecture Restudied' (Greenberg, 1969), where he finds through an extensive study of Lutyens' houses that despite his stylistic departure from his earlier works in New Delhi, he carries over a number of formal and spatial systems to his new houses. He notes that the attention Delhi receives as an Imperial city is despite the fact that it is only one-third the size of Washington D.C. or Canberra, and significantly less monumental. Like Ridley, he holds that New Delhi is

therefore much more than an imperial city and must be recognized equally as falling under the English tradition of the picturesque landscape.

The Great War and the All-India War Memorial

In his biography of Lutyens, Hussey (1953) notes that the end of the Great War marks the beginning of the richest part of Lutyens' career, which sees him emerge as one of the key designers of war memorials in Europe. His first project in England was the Cenotaph, which was originally constructed as a temporary structure in Westminster for the national parade celebrating the peace armistice. But the memorial received such an overwhelming response that it was replaced with a permanent structure and designated as Britain's national war memorial. Lutyens was a prolific memorial designer: over the course of his career, he would design over 133 memorials in Britain alone (Greenberg, 1989).

This is essentially the period in which war memorials in the modern sense, which are more inclined towards mourning rather than celebration, and memorialize ordinary soldiers rather than singular leader, begin to appear (Inglis, 1992). Because the Great War was a period of deep loss for Europe and many other parts of the world, war memorials, with their newfound capacity to represent the loss of the common public, began proliferating European (and to some extent, colonial) landscapes in unprecedented numbers (citation needed). During this time, the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission (IWGC) was created in 1917 to create and care for World War I (and later World War II) cemeteries and memorials across the British Empire (King, 1999). Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker were both appointed as principal architects to the IWGC..Part of the IWGC's charge was to develop an aesthetic for the mourning of the War. Lutyens and style. 'Elemental Mode' (Hussey).

It is in this context that the All-India War Memorial needs to be understood. Although the memorial was unveiling only 1931 along with the rest of New Delhi, the project had been initiated as far back as in 1916, a year during which casualties due to the War had been particularly high (Johnson, 2018). In that sense, the All-India War Memorial is one of the very first memorials to be imagined among the wave of memorials that would soon appear.

The design of New Delhi draws from a number of Western sources. Firstly, the Viceroy's Palace sits atop Raisina Hill as an acropolis, a reference to the Capitol in Rome (Ridley,

1998). But it more closely resembles, in its organization and structure, the city of Paris, and the colonial capitals of Washington D.C. and Canberra. In his comprehensive architectural study of New Delhi, Volwahn (2002) points out that the pattern of the three icons along the Champs-Élysées – the palace (Louvre), obelisk and triumphal arch – occur in a number of imperial cities such as Berlin and Washington D.C. and has similarly been reproduced in New Delhi as the Viceroy's Palace, the Jaipur Column, and the All India War Memorial.

In this context, the already apparent similarities between the Memorial Arch and the Arc de Triomphe become unmissable. However, there are also clear differences in proportion as well as imagery: unlike the elaborately sculpted ornaments of the French Arch, the India Gate is notably free of embellishments, and unlike the built grandeur of the former's context, the latter finds itself in a more picturesque environment. At its inauguration, Robert Byron (qtd in Volwahn, 2002) praises the War Memorial over the Arc de Triomphe, arguing that the low springing point of its arch gives it something to carry, which invests it with a kind of life that the Parisian memorial lacks.

Independence and the India Gate

The peculiarity of the postcolonial context can cause memorials to live out unusual lives. In 'Memory, place, and British memorials in early Calcutta', Peter Robb (2017) writes about the frequent tussles over memorials of the Indian Revolt of 1857. In Kanpur, for example, the British had employed the acclaimed Italian sculptor to build the Angel of Redemption, a memorial to the 1857 massacre of British soldiers and civilians by Indians at Kanpur. The memorial was built over the well in which the bodies had been dumped, and Robb notes that over the years it became a site of 'pilgrimage' for the British in India. However, the statue was minorly defaced on 15 August 1947, following which a local committee decided to move the statue elsewhere. The well was converted into a plant bed and grassed over. Both these entities are still in their place. But interestingly, many think that the actual well is actually located to the left of the plant bed, where a statue of the rebel leader Tantia Tope stands on a circular plinth. The truth remains a matter of speculation.

It is this context that the India Gate needs to be understood. Despite its prominence as a monument, the India Gate has only been minimally studied. David Johnson's 'New Delhi's All-India War Memorial (India Gate): Death, Monumentality and the Lasting Legacy of Empire in India' is a comprehensive colonial and postcolonial history of the monument, and

perhaps the only full-length treatment of the subject. Apart from Johnson, the history of the monument has been touched upon by works discussing the history of Delhi's built environment such as and . Beyond historical studies, the India Gate has received attention as a site of peaceful public protests . However, attention to the site has generally been limited, and practically no literature exists on its relationship with memory. This dissertation, therefore, aims to contribute to the scholarship on the city of Delhi and its built environment in this regard.

2.2 Heritage, Discourse, and Memory

Many consider there to have been a 'memory boom', a surging interest in memory in Western society and academia beginning in the later part of the twentieth century and continuing perhaps until this day (Simine, 2013). However, despite the popularity of memory, or maybe because of it, terms such as collective memory lack a single accepted definition, and a number of alternate memories such as cultural memory, public memory, and national memory abound. Therefore, the first part of this section aims to establish ideas of and debates around collective memory as relevant to the present study. The second part examines a key tool through which collective memory is constructed: the heritage landmark. It reviews contemporary definitions of 'heritage', which place heritage value in relationships rather than intrinsic properties, and investigates the role of discourse in the mutual constitution of heritage and memory.

Collective Memory

As the historian Eric Hobsbawm (2011) notes, to be a part of a group is to situate oneself with respect to a past, even if only in opposition. A group, then, is essentially a collection of individuals with a shared set of relationships with the past. Echoing this idea, *The Habits of the Heart* (Bellah et al., 2008) remarks that any real community can be said to be a 'community of memory', one that does not forget its past. In other words, some form of collective remembering is integral to the constitution of groups.

The idea of 'collective memory' aims to understand this phenomenon of group remembering. French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, although not the first or only person of his time to

work on this idea, is usually credited with lending the idea theoretical weight (Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi and Levy, 2011). In *The Social Frameworks of Memory* (originally published as *Les Cadres Sociaux de la Mémoire* in 1925), Halbwachs (1992b) reasons that there exists a collective memory, a shared restrictive framework within which all individual memories are bound to arise. He makes this argument by comparing memories with dreams. Dreams are not considered to represent the past in any reliable sense, he notes; they are at best a potpourri of fragmentary images. Conscious memories, on the other hand, are far more coherent and reliable. This indicates, he writes, that being awake is essential to any meaningful recollection of the past. He finds this explained by the idea that the confines of society and comparative reasoning with one's knowledge of their society are essential preconditions for the recollection of memories. In other words, individual memory is constructed by the constant negotiation of first-hand memories with the larger framework of collective memory. Therefore, individual memories are meaningless outside of a collective memory. Such an existence is simply not possible.

Halbwachs' use of the term 'collective memory' lends itself to equivocation: in his sense, collective memory is not a memory in itself, but a framework within which memories are constructed. To make use of this idea of unambiguously, collective memory in the Halbwachian sense will henceforth be addressed as 'collective memory framework', whereas 'collective memory' will refer to the set of memories shared by a collective (citation) .

In *Remembering*, a study of the social dimensions of individual remembering, the psychologist Frederic Bartlett (1995) notes that Halbwachs is concerned only with memory in the group, and not memory of the group. Halbwachs writes that only individuals remember, and it appears that for him, there is only a collective memory framework, no collective memory. Bartlett, however, suggests that the presence of a collective memory is implied by the presence of a collective memory framework. Nevertheless, he points out that it is difficult to ascertain the existence of a true collective memory, as unlike individuals, one cannot simply ask groups if they remember. This is a key difficulty in collective memory studies, and 'Collective Memory: Two Cultures' notes that responses to this difficulty essentially fall into one of two schools of thought: one holds that collective memory is essentially 'collected' memory, the aggregate of individual memories, whereas the other grants a more independent existence to collective memory. The argument for the former is a seemingly greater ontological validity, whereas the latter can offer more explanative power. Either way, Bartlett

writes, while the existence of true collective memory might be debated, the existence of a collective memory framework cannot be denied.

Having established the basic ideas around the nature of collective memory, the question that follows is that of the processes through which it is constituted. Halbwachs suggests an analogy for the construction of the collective memory framework. If we think of our present as a rocky beach, he says, then the advancing sea is the tide of our living memory, washing up the turbulent past against our present. As the tide recedes, so do the waves, leaving behind only 'miniature lakes nestled amidst the rocky formations.' (qtd in Hutton, 1993). Since the roaring waves of water are now mere puddles, he adds, and the past itself so diminished, the rocky formations that harbour these puddles take on an enlarged role, both containing and shaping the past for us. While this offers a picturesque metaphor of the process, it makes the mistake of imagining the present as a static coast. It misses out on the eponymous problem highlighted by the sociologist Karl Mannheim (1952) in his seminal work, 'The Sociological Problem of Generations'. Unlike a 'Utopian' society with a single, immortal generation, he writes, our society is characterized by the constant appearance and disappearance of participants in batches we call generations. Each member can only participate in the progression of time for only a limited period. Therefore, we need continuous systems of transmitting accumulated cultural memory. French historian Marc Bloch ([1925] 2011) notes that Halbwachs shies away from theorizing this transmission, French historian Marc Bloch notes. Instead, Bloch writes, he offers 'vague anthropomorphisms' such as that groups have a tendency to redact from their memory anything that could divide their individuals. Offering his own explanation, Bloch writes that whether or not collective memory is understood to be collected memory, it can be safely said that for memory to outlast generations, the youngest of each generation need to communicate their memories to the oldest of the next. Therefore, collective memory is transmitted, at least in part, through everyday interactions.

Of course, everyday interactions do not occur in a vacuum; they are informed by (and inform) public discourse. The Popular Memory Group (1982a), a group of academics who worked from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham, calls this process the 'social production of memory'. This process, they write, produces a 'popular memory', a kind of collective memory which is informed by everyday interpersonal interactions on one side, and on the other side, the 'historical apparatus' – which is constituted by the state and its politicians, public media such as television and newspapers, professionals such as historians, and all the other actors who contribute to the web of public

representations that permeates a society. The Popular Memory Group's approach is fundamentally different from that Halbwachs and other sociologists in that the latter are essentially interested in the social systems and processes that form a part of the collective memory framework, whereas, the Popular Memory Group seeks to study collective memory so that we may become 'historians of the present' (Popular Memory Group, 1982b). While the sociological work around the idea of collective memory will form the theoretical basis for this dissertation, its motivations are more aligned with that of the Popular Memory Group: it is interested not in the collective memory framework, or the social processes behind collective memory, but collective memory as a phenomenon unto itself.

Heritage and Discourse

In his later work, *The Legendary Topography of the Gospels* (*La Topographie Légendaire Des Évangiles*), which examines the construction of Christian religious geography in Jerusalem, Halbwachs (1992a) emphasizes the significance of landmarks in the construction of the collective memory framework. He notes that when one recollects the past, they do not recollect everything about it. Rather, they recollect certain fragments – key figures, dates, events – which are then used to extrapolate a more complete picture of the past. Collectives remember, he writes, by 'localizing' such key memories, or in other words, projecting them onto contemporary sites and landmarks. Through this process, a group can embed an image of the past in a geographic or spatial framework, within which then the individual memories of the group's members will have to be located.

A landmark onto which key memories have been projected onto in this manner would essentially become 'heritage' for the concerned group. Indeed, building on the work of Halbwachs, Peckham (2003) argues that heritage can be understood as form of collective memory. Similarly, Stuart Hall (2004) writes that heritage is a fundamental tool in the selective binding of highlights from the past, which is essentially the process through which national memories are constructed. But what is 'heritage'? As widely accepted in contemporary literature, heritage is not a 'thing' or a movement, but a manner of thinking characterized by reverence towards and attachment with certain objects, sites or practices that are thought to exemplify some aspect of the past (Harrison, 2013).

Organizations such as UNESCO and ICOMOS, which have spear-headed the globalization of heritage, prefer a more straightforward definition, such as 'artefacts, monuments, groups of

buildings and sites, and museums that have a diversity of values including symbolic, historic, artistic, aesthetic. . . and social significance' (Pessoa and Deloumeaux, 2009). However, such definitions assume heritage to have inherent value. Laurajane Smith (2006) diffidently contests this notion in her classic *The Uses of Heritage*, declaring in her opening statement that 'there is, really, no such thing as heritage.' She reiterates the idea that heritage is constituted not by the character of a site or object, but by the character of people's relationship with them. Further, she writes, official definitions such as those of UNESCO work to create power relations that limit debates about and challenges to established social and cultural values and meanings.

It is to be noted that the processes through which heritage relationships, relationships of reverence and attachment, do not form automatically. Rather, they must be constructed and preserved through social processes which are essentially located in the present (Byrne, 1991, 2008). Therefore, while heritage sites might refer to aspects of the past, heritage is – much like collective memory – essentially a phenomenon of the present (Graham and Howard, 2012).

Discourse is one of the primary processes through which heritage is constructed in the present. Laurajane Smith (2006) writes that the practice of heritage can be understood in three ways: as a management and conservation practice undertaken by a group of professionals or experts, as an economic or recreational practice, and as a sociocultural practice of 'meaning and identity making'. She argues that each of this practice, as well as the meanings that physical heritage subjects assume, are constituted by some form of discourse, which they also in turn reshape. Therefore, as Hall (2004) writes, heritage needs to be understood as a discursive practice, essentially a discourse-led phenomenon.

But what exactly is discourse? Geographer Tim Cresswell (2009) provides a thorough review of the idea in *The International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*. He writes that in everyday use, the term simply refers to spoken or written communication. The more academic or Foucauldian use of the term differs from its everyday usage in two ways. Firstly, it refers not just to speech and text, but all forms of representation, and further, maybe even institutions, objects, and practices. Secondly, it does not simply describe something that already exists, but also describes something into existence. In other words, it does not simply describe a reality that is true or false, but 'performs' this reality and produces 'truth effects'.

In 'Heritage and Discourse', Wu and Hou (2015) note that the idea of heritage as a discursive practice has become a recurring theme in heritage literature. However, they write, much of the focus has been on discourse in a more everyday sense, wherein policy texts (see Waterton, Smith and Campbell, 2006) or other academic works (see Butler, 2006) have been examined. In particular, Smith's (2006) notion of 'Authorized Heritage Discourse' (AHD) has garnered much attention. Smith argues that as a result of the power relations created by the discursive nature of heritage, there exists an 'authorized' heritage discourse. Within nations, this might be a discourse that legitimizes the nation state. The idea that has garnered much more attention, though, is the AHD created by international organizations such as UNESCO, which universalizes monumental, Eurocentric sensibilities of heritage. Wu and Hou (2015) note that while this is an important concern, the examination of heritage discourse can and should do more than critiquing global and hegemonic narratives of heritage. They write that in particular, much work remains to be done to improve our understanding of heritage and heritage practices more locally.

This study, therefore, seeks to add to the current literature discussing heritage discourse in three fundamental ways. Firstly, as Lowenthal (1998) notes, 'every act of recognition alters survivals from the past. Simply to appreciate or protect a relic, let alone to embellish or imitate it, affects its form or our impressions.' However, this kind of discourse – the discourse that originates from tacit heritage practices – has been largely ignored, and academic focus has generally been directed towards textual or more conventional mediums of discourse. This dissertation will fill this gap by studying the discourse of the official practices of protection and presentation applied to a heritage site. Secondly, only limited work has been done on local heritage discourses, and practically none in India. This dissertation will improve this by analysing heritage discourse in the specific context of postcolonial India. Finally, since heritage has been studied along with discourse and memory only separately, this dissertation will bridge these two streams of thoughts by studying the memorial implications of heritage discourses.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter explains the methodological approach adopted by this dissertation to examine local collective memory of the India Gate's history, and the relationship between this memory and the interventions that have occurred at its site since Independence. It describes the structure of the research, explains the specific methods chosen and the reasons for these choices, and describes the manner in which these methods were developed and employed in the context of this particular study.

Firstly, two sets of literature reviews were conducted – one concerned specifically with the India Gate, and the other with the three ideas that are of core theoretical interest to this study: memory, heritage, and discourse. As part of the first essay, India Gate's Pre-Independence history was discussed, particularly in the context of the Great War, the construction of New Delhi, and Lutyens' body of work. Also reviewed was the engagement of prior academic work with India Gate, which as noted, has been limited and wholly architectural. The second review discussed major ideas of collective memory, and theoretical and methodological debates around the idea through the works of scholars such as Halbwachs, Bloch, and Olick. Following this, official and emerging ideas of heritage were reviewed, and the relationship between heritage and memory was established along with the role of discourse in their mutual constitution. These two reviews were used to iteratively define the research question and establish the framework of the study, including its methodology, scope, and limitations.

The core study was primarily conducted in two parts. Firstly, a memory study was undertaken to understand local collective memory of the India Gate and its colonial history. This study surveyed 58 people and recorded their individual memories of and feelings about the India Gate and its history. Following this, a study of primary historical sources was undertaken to identify interventions carried out in the India Gate precinct since 1947. Additionally, two experts – AGK Menon, a respected academic and senior member of the Heritage sector in India, and Sanjay Bharadwaj, an established architect in Delhi with a keen interest in New Delhi and heritage – were interviewed, although only brief conversations were possible with them due to limitations of time.

For the memory surveys, two distinct methods were used: online questionnaires and in-person, semi-structured interviews. Online questionnaires were expected to be less reliable than in-person interviews because although participants were requested not to look up

answers on the internet or ask people around, it was not possible to ensure that they complied with these requests. Additionally, in the light of its results, respondents to the online questionnaire appeared to be self-selecting. This issue is expanded upon in Chapter 4. Nevertheless, the online questionnaire was useful in reaching out to people, most of whom could otherwise not have been reached by this study.

Survey responses were elicited from pre-identified groups so that inferences may be drawn based on patterns in each group. Grouping was primarily based on the location where the respondent either lived or was surveyed. Three broad locations were chosen: Lajpat Nagar (a middle-class neighbourhood familiar to me and moderately distant from the India Gate), Noida (a middle-class neighbourhood familiar to me and significantly distant from the India Gate), and the India Gate precinct. Within each location, sampling was randomized to include all ages and social groups. Apart from people from these locations, a group of members from MENSA (an established high IQ society) were surveyed through the online method. In all, the following six groups were surveyed:

Table 1: Memory survey groups

No.	Participants	Method	Size
1	India Gate visitors and hawkers	In-person interview	18
2	MENSA members	Online questionnaire	17
3	Residents of Lajpat Nagar I	Online questionnaire	4
4	Residents of Lajpat Nagar II	In-person interview	5
5	Residents of Noida I	Online questionnaire	6
6	Residents of Noida II	In-person interview	8

The online survey of MENSA members, which was the first survey to be conducted, was used as a pilot study to take stock of possible responses and refine the questionnaire. The final questionnaire asked respondents for basic information about themselves, their memory of the India Gate's history, and their personal relationship with the site/monument (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire). The aim of the questionnaire as well as the in-person

interview questions was to elicit and document the participant's memory rather than knowledge by focussing not on specific facts but a general sense of past events and their chronology. To allow for rich, narrative responses, the in-person interviews were semi-structured. Two or three core questions of the questionnaire (such as question 7 or 12) were used to start off the interview, following which the conversation was continued based on the participant's response.

Given the nature of memory, a number of responses were vague, self-contradictory, and/or imagined historically impossible relationships. Analysis of these responses had to take this into account. For this purpose, a 'keyword analysis' method was designed to map 'keywords' and 'narratives', where 'keywords' are recurring answers to a given key question and each 'narrative' is formed by the combination of a pair of keywords. Responses were grouped by survey method and group, and each response set was used to generate a keyword analysis diagram (see *Figure 2*). This ensured that disparate individual responses were not boxed into a limited number of simple narratives, and relations between ideas were mapped even if they were contradictory.

Following this, the historical study of interventions was undertaken. This was done predominantly using primary sources such as newspaper and TV reports, autobiographical records, archival documents, satellite images, and community-posted photos and videos on the internet. These were used not only to identify interventions made on the site, but also planned interventions that did not materialize, and their histories and motivations. This information was then analysed in conjunction with the inferences drawn from the memory surveys, and conclusions were drawn with regards to the manner in which interventions at the site of the India Gate have affected collective memory of the monument and its colonial history.

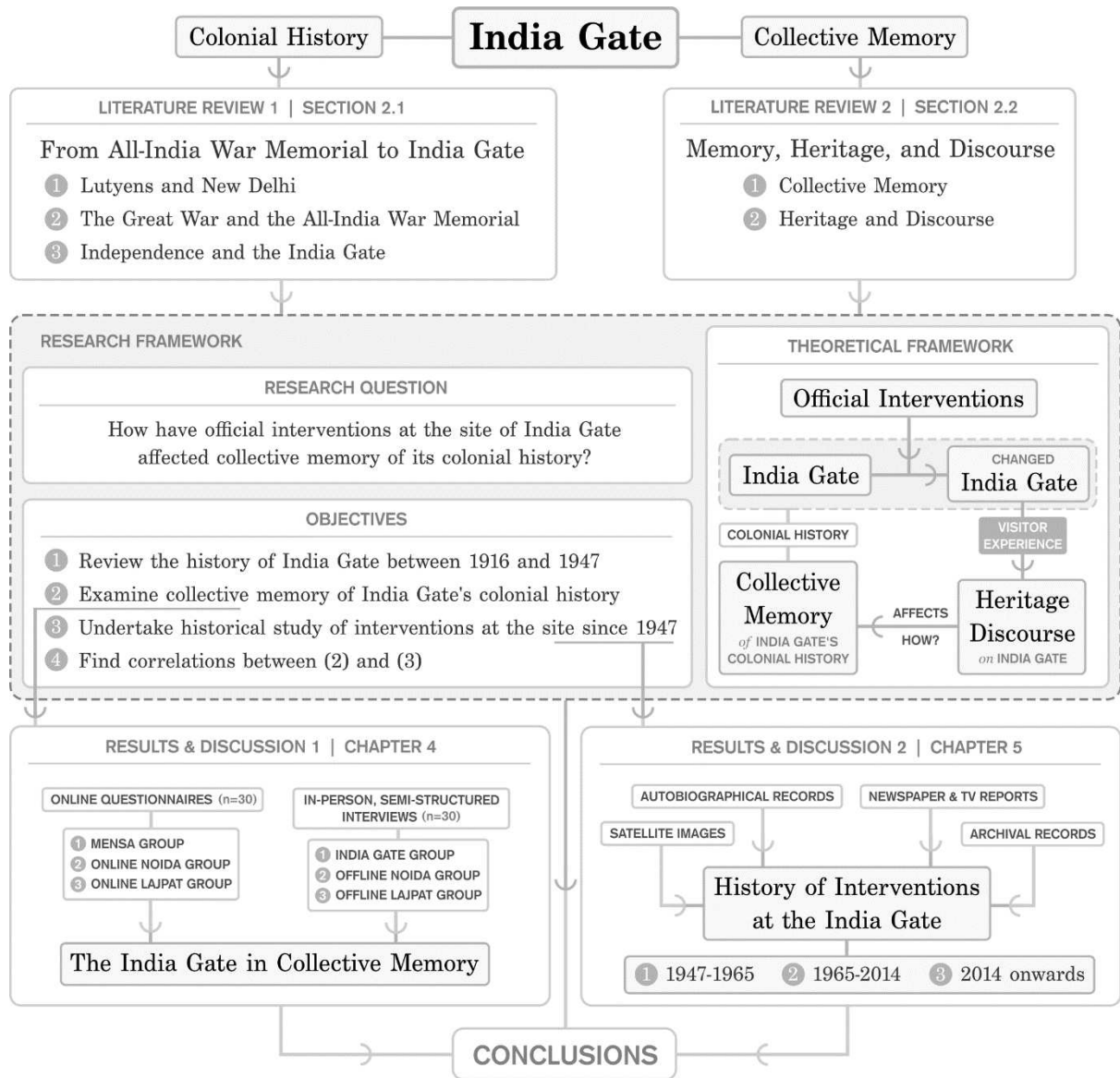


Figure 1: Methodology Chart

Chapter 4 The India Gate in Collective Memory

This chapter examines the results of the surveys undertaken in Delhi to understand the India Gate in local collective memory. As noted in the Chapter 3, two methods were used for the collection of individual memories: online forms and in-person, semi-structured interviews. A keyword analysis of the group-wise results of these surveys can be found, split by method, in *Figure 3* (for the full set of responses, see Appendix B).

As can be observed, the results from the two methods are considerably different. For example, respondents to the online survey are far more likely to identify the India Gate as a colonial war memorial – 71% of online respondents identified it as one, whereas only x% of in-person respondents were able to do so. This can be attributed to two factors. Firstly, since the online forms were sent as links on a messaging platform, there must have been an element of self-selection; in other words, people who were either familiar with or interested in the subject would have been more likely to open the link and complete the survey. Secondly, and more obviously, online forms allow respondents to ‘cheat’, i.e., look up answers on the internet or ask nearby people. This means that the distribution of responses as obtained through the in-person interviews is more representative of the general population, than is the one obtained through online surveys.

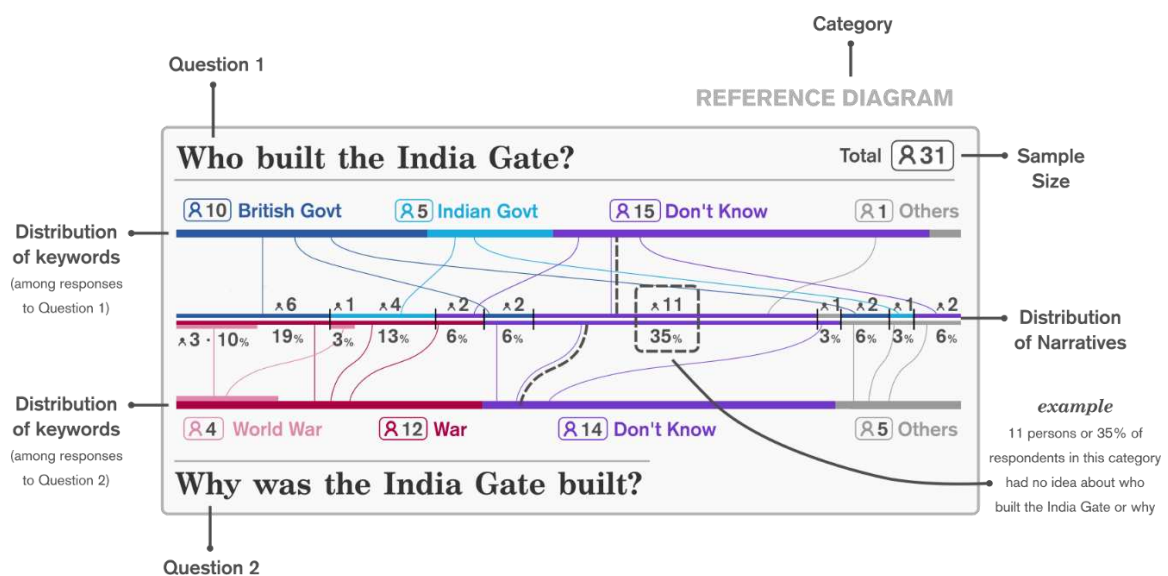


Figure 2: Guide to reading keyword analysis diagrams

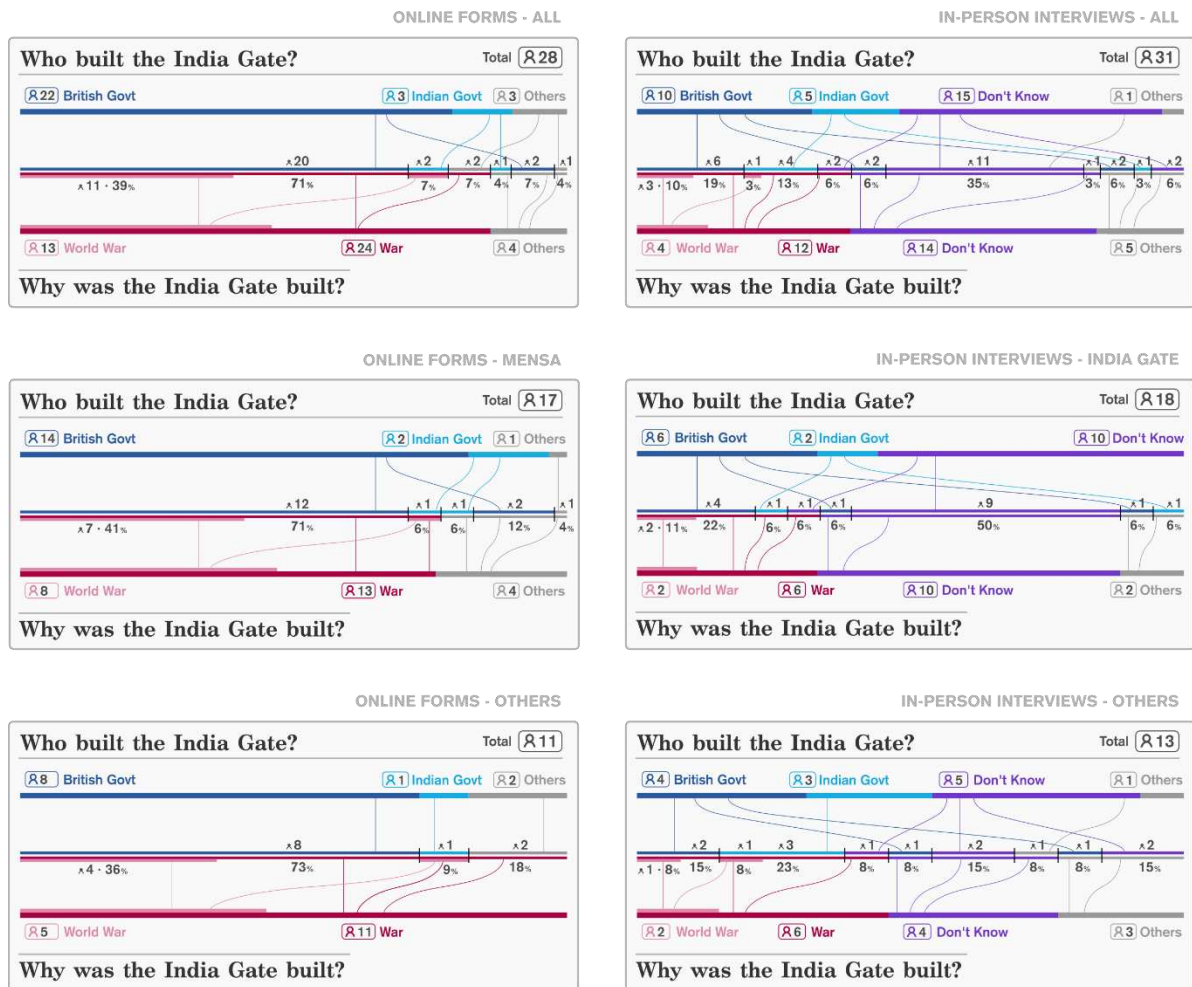


Figure 3: Community Survey Results

A significant majority of respondents to the online surveys (71%) identified the India Gate as a colonial war memorial. However, this was completely contradicted by the results of the in-person interviews, where only 19% identified it as such. Given that the in-person interviews are more representative of actual distribution, this suggests that most people do not understand the India Gate as a British war memorial. At the same time, a significant number of people do exist who are aware of the India Gate's colonial history.

To understand this, a distinction needs to be made between inert awareness and memory. Memories are a part of larger, reasonably coherent narratives that can be expected to inform the present-day identity of the subject, whereas facts can be retained and passed on in isolation, with no identity consequences. In the case of this survey, while a respondent would have *remembered* that the British ruled over India, they only remembered *reading* or *hearing* that the India Gate was built by the British. The former, a memory, is emotionally charged;

the latter is simply a piece of trivia that does not connect to their primary narratives of the past. Consider, for example, a retired government employee who was encountered lounging in Connaught Place with a friend. Born and brought up in Delhi, he was intimately familiar with the India Gate. He had visited it many times, and even climbed up to its top, a space inaccessible to the public, because he knew one of the men standing guard at that time. It was of little surprise then that he knew that the India Gate was a British Memorial constructed for Indian martyrs of the First World War. However, when asked (with curiosity) if India had even participated in the First World War, he seemed truly stumped. He had not made the connection that if the India Gate was a World War 1 memorial for Indian soldiers, then India, his country, must have participated in that war. He had conveniently compartmentalized history and memory; in his mind, it seemed, the India Gate's history had little to do with the past of his nation as he remembered it. This appears to be the case with most people who are aware that the India Gate was a colonial war memorial: they seem to be *aware* of this history, but it seems to have little bearing on any present happening.

Surprisingly, across all the six groups, there was at least one respondent who imagined the India Gate to have been built by an independent Indian Government and/or for a nationalist cause such as the honouring of 'freedom fighters'. In fact, 13% of responses in the in-person interviews imagined so, a figure comparable to the 19% who were aware of the India Gate's actual colonial history. It is also remarkable that this narrative was significantly more popular among respondents aged below 25.

This forgetting and re-remembering is perhaps the result of India's attempts at reconciling its colonial history with narratives of the past upon which the idea of India has been built. After all, the information that the British built the India Gate, presently a national icon, as a memorial to British as well as Indian lives lost to the First World War, does not sit easy with the popular narrative that the British were self-serving oppressors. Further, as a war where Indian soldiers essentially fought for the British, remembering the First World War would only be confusing or hurtful, depending on one's point of view. The history of the India Gate, then, essentially falls into this category of histories that threaten to question and complicate the simple narratives of the past that underly the idea of India, and are therefore better forgotten, compartmentalized as a fact, or as observed in some of the survey responses, modified to suit more deeply-held beliefs.

Chapter 5 Interventions and Memory

The results of the memory surveys indicate that there exists a significant population in Delhi with little to no memory of the origin of the India Gate. Furthermore, there is also a significant number of people who believe that the India Gate is *Indian*, i.e., that it was built by a government of independent India, and/or that it was built for a nationalist cause. This chapter examines the history of interventions at the site of the India Gate and aims to discuss how these interventions reflect the memorial observations made, and if they could have, in turn, contributed to this forgetting and re-remembering.

5.1 Initial Changes



Figure 4: The statue of King George V in its original location in 1965 (People and Places on the Long and Dusty Road., no date).

In the first two decades following Independence, the All-India War Memorial witnessed two key changes: by 1950¹, it was renamed to ‘India Gate’, and in 1965, the 60-feet tall statue of King George V under the nearby Chhatra was removed. The first change was part of the

¹ Exact date is unclear, but it can reasonably be assumed that the memorial was renamed along with other buildings and roads in the Central Vista.

general renaming of the colonial buildings and roads in New Delhi, the seat of the newly formed Indian Government. This renaming followed a simple pattern: buildings and roads were given a Hindi name that was either a translation of the original name, or in the case of some buildings, described their newly acquired democratic function. The Viceroy's Palace, therefore, became *Rashtrapati Bhavan*, Hindi for 'President's House'. King's Way was translated to *Rajpath*, while Queen's Way became *Janpath*, Hindi for 'People's Way'. The renaming of the memorial arch, however, does not follow this pattern. The words 'War' and 'Memorial' were dropped from its name, and it simply became 'India Gate'. Ironically, while cars could once drive through the India Gate, they have not been allowed to do so at least since 1968; so, while the memorial arch became a gate in name, in function it has been anything but.

The other change, the removal of the statue of King George, was a more long-drawn process. The British had left public structures dedicated to Viceroys and other administrators all over India in the form of busts, statues, garden ornaments, and funerary monuments. It has been established that at least 170 statues were exported from Britain's leading sculptors to India between 1800 and 1940 (Steggles, 2000, 2017). In New Delhi, marble statues had been erected at traffic intersections and other key public spaces, the crown of which was the 60 feet tall statue of King George V at the India Gate Chhatra².

Following Independence, the new government left this statuary untouched, much to the ire of more conservative nationalists. The latter felt that the statues had to go because, as Lala Onkar Nath had argued, 'they reminded the Indian people of their bitter past'. There was, of course, also some political gains to made out of calling for their removal, as Nath himself almost admitted in a later part of his statement: 'the change [of power] had come,' he had remarked, 'but conditions must be created so that people could feel it.' (qtd in Johnson, 2018). This rhetoric began to escalate in the mid-fifties and began to feature repeatedly in political statements and media coverage of the issue, and there were even incidents of vandalism (McGarr, 2015). Nevertheless, the statues in Delhi would stay in place for the next two decades. An important reason behind was Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who firmly believed that the statues must be left in their place. His primary argument was that removing them would amount to erasing history (McGarr, 2015), but Johnson (2018) suggests that maintaining good relations with the British Government might have also been a motivation.

² The statue was not a part of the original plans for New Delhi, but was later added when the king died before he could see the city built (McGarr, 2015)

Given the involvement of the British Government and related offices such as the Commonwealth Relations Office in the issue, Johnson's argument is plausible. However, Nehru could hold out only for so long. Statues across the country began coming down following his death in 1964 (Sohini, 2020). In 1965, the statue of King George at India Gate was the target of an attack by members of the Samyukta Socialist Party. The statue was smeared with ink, and its crown, ear, and nose were damaged. Following this, it was relocated to Coronation Park, the site of the Delhi Durbar of 1911 that has since become the forgotten final resting place of colonial artefacts from across the city. And so, the Chhatra by the India Gate was emptied.

The renaming of the India Gate has certainly had a lasting effect on collective memory of its history. It is the renaming that has almost certainly brought some respondents to the memory survey to think that the India Gate was once a literal gate. But perhaps more importantly, the renaming works to obscure, at least to some extent, the monument's identity as a war memorial. Similarly, the removal of the statue of King George V stripped the India Gate of perhaps the only culturally specific symbol there was on the site, apart from the inscription on the memorial arch itself. The memorial and the Chhatra, now without the colonial statue, appear culturally amorphous, as if they could have possibly been erected by anyone. In other words, the removal of the statue worked to obscure, at least to some extent, the monument's colonial history. This is not to say that either of these actions were wrong. Perhaps they were necessary for the building the identity of a fledgeling nation, even if only imagined. But it needs to be understood that those actions came with memorial consequences.

5.2 War Memorials

In 1971, following the Bangladesh Liberation War, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sought for a memorial to honour the lives of the soldiers lost to the war (NDTV, 2012). The result was the Amar Jawan Jyoti, the first of the two war memorials to be erected in the India Gate hexagon. Built right under the India Gate, the memorial features a black marble pedestal mounted by a downturned rifle and capped by the helmet of the Unknown Soldier. This pedestal is surrounded by four golden urns, one of which is the *Amar Jawan Jyoti* or the Eternal Flame of the Unknown Soldier. On the Republic Day of 1972, Indira Gandhi began the ceremonial parade by laying a wreath at the newly built memorial. Some (citations) have praised the memorial as an example of a sensitive intervention that does not disrupt its

heritage surroundings. However, the form of the memorial has less to do with design strategy and more to do with the constraints within which it was built – following the end of the war, only x days were left for the Republic Day, and therefore Brigadier Kapoor, who was charged with building the memorial quickly, erected it in a mere four days.



Figure 5: The Amar Jawan Jyoti, seen here with the India Gate chhatra in the background (Sagar, 2019).

In 2009, the Indian Armed Forces began seeking a National War Memorial, and in the same year, the Defence Ministry agreed. The Armed Forces developed a proposal in which the area behind the India Gate surrounding the empty Chhatra would be converted in a landscaped memorial, as shown in Figure 4. However, this proposal was rejected by then Chief Minister of Delhi Sheila Dikshit and the Delhi Urban Arts Commission on the grounds that it would disrupt the ambience of the site and its function as public space.

However, by 2014, a new proposal was under development, this time targeting the park in the C-Hexagon to the East of the India Gate. A design competition was held, through which the design of WeBee, a Chennai-based firm was chosen. The memorial was inaugurated in early 2019.



Figure 6: Visualization of the war memorial proposed by the Indian Armed Forces in 2009 (Gokhale, 2012).



Figure 7: The National War Memorial built in 2019 (Ajmal, 2019).



Figure 8: The India Gate during the Central Vista Redevelopment Project (source: author).



Figure 9: Satellite images showing the India Gate hexagon changing from 2015 to 2019 due to the construction of the National War Memorial (source: Google Earth).

The three proposals share a rather peculiar sentiment. They consider the India Gate inadequate or inappropriate to act as an Indian war memorial, but at the same time consider it the best site to locate the new war memorial. Why could this be? When Indira Gandhi wished to publicly honour martyrs of the Bangladesh Liberation War, she seems to have considered the India Gate unsuitable for doing so. It appears that Indira Gandhi, as the Indian state has been since, apprehensive of acknowledging the India Gate as a war memorial. In fact, no official visit has been made to the India Gate till date acknowledging Indian martyrs of the First World War. This apprehension might possibly arise from the fact that the India Gate was intended to memorialize a war in which British and Indian soldiers fought side by side, and one could argue, stand as a symbol of imperial unity. Or perhaps, more simply, it stems from a fear of acknowledging continuity with one's colonial past. Nevertheless, even if a new memorial needs to be constructed, why does it have to be done at the India Gate? It is by no means an obvious location. In fact, when a National War Memorial was proposed in 1944 by the colonial government, it was planned at an empty site near the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Locating the war memorials at the site of the India Gate is clearly a response to India Gate's war memorial identity, even if the official intention is to not publicly or directly acknowledge it. At the risk of stretching the argument too far, it could be contended that the Indian government, while itself mindful of the India Gate's past, would at least subconsciously, rather have its subjects forget it. Of course, neither the Indian government nor the general public are single entities, and this argument has to be made with utmost caution.

5.3 Lights and Lasers

Apart from the physical interventions at the India Gate, there have been two kinds of interventions of note that may be described as visual/digital interventions: 3D laser shows and a change of night lighting. The first two laser shows were conducted some time before 2014, probably on a national holiday or a similar occasion. Following this, in 2014, the Ministry of Tourism proposed a regular laser show at the India Gate, and it seems that the Delhi Urban Arts Commission (DUAC) reluctantly approved it. However, when this proposal surfaced in public, it was strongly condemned by heritage professionals. AGK Menon, then convener of INTACH, wrote letters to the defence minister, the New Delhi Municipal Corporation, and the Central Public Works Department (the organization entrusted with executing the show). He suggested conducting such a show on a war memorial would be 'sacrilegious', and that

the show be taken elsewhere, such as Connaught Place. This resulted in the show being temporarily stalled. However, the next year, the Ministry of External Affairs proposed a laser show for the India-Africa Forum Summit, and after consultation with the Ministry of Defence, they decided to go ahead with the show.

This was happening at a time when the political climate in India was rapidly changing. The proposal for the National War Memorial was already under development, and the radical Central Vista Redevelopment Project was in the pipeline, both of which would have far-reaching effects on the precinct. AGK Menon, who was interviewed as a part of this study, seemed to think there is not much one could do about any of this. In 2018, the night lighting of the India Gate was changed from subtle, warm lights that highlighted the monument's architecture, to a pair of blue-purple lights at the base, and a series of lights at the top projecting the Indian tricolour onto the monument's forehead. In 2020, another laser show was conducted on the occasion of Independence Day, and it appears that this is going to be the norm now.

The content of the laser shows has varied wildly. Visuals have included the India Gate breaking apart and falling back in place in various ways, the India Gate filling with water or fire or other such elements, images related to the event being observed, unidentified mountains and sunsets, images of other monuments such as the Lotus Temple, Jantar Mantar, and the Taj Mahal, and that of the back of a lorry blowing smoke at the monument and covering it with ash. Most of these visuals would communicate to the audience that the monument itself is of no significance, almost suggest that it is just a large, empty structure that happens to be there for unknown reasons. The tricolour lighting also accomplishes something similar: it obscures the identity of the India Gate as a colonial war memorial, while also suggested that the monument is Indian in its origin or purpose. It is perhaps projections like these that have planted the idea in its audiences that the India Gate is somehow Indian. Such projections would not be considered appropriate on any other war memorial. Clearly, the India Gate is being denied the status of a war memorial here.



Figure 10: The India Gate at night, lit in the tricolour (source: author).



Figure 11: 3D laser projection on the India Gate of (left) a truck blowing smoke and (right) a Volkswagen advertisement (ARTIST2WIN, 2012).

Chapter 6 Conclusion

What is the history of India Gate in the memory of the people of Delhi? The memory surveys indicate that for some, attempting to recollect this history was like hitting a blank wall. For others, it was like searching through a foggy storeroom for an old belonging that may or may not be there. Of course, many – about 13% of those who partook in the in-person interviews – did know of the memorial's history. But to understand this knowing better, a distinction needs to be made between memory and inert awareness. It might be difficult to draw a line between them, but awareness is traded in facts that appear to be external and of little personal relevance, whereas memory is constructed and reconstructed through narratives that present themselves as relevant to the personal past and present. Awareness is additional to one's understanding of the world, whereas memory is integral. So, when the respondent at Connaught Place knew that the India Gate was a World War I memorial but was surprised to think that India might have participated in the war, it was because all he had was awareness of a fact that had no place in his narratives of the past of himself or his nation. Compare this to the Amar Jawan Jyoti: not only was the small flame burning under the towering arch far more familiar to respondents, but there was also a feeling among most of them that it was a war memorial for *their* soldiers, soldiers who had sacrificed lives for *their* country. Their knowledge of the memorial was personal. It was not inert awareness, but memory. It can be said, then, that the people of Delhi have little memory of the India Gate's origin, and this is not the result simply of general unawareness or apathy, but at least in part, of a kind of collective forgetting. In fact, this forgetting has been so deep that in some cases, it has extended into a re-remembering: 13% of the responses to the in-person interviews imagined the India Gate to be *Indian* – built by an independent Indian government or for a nationalist cause, to memorialize 'freedom fighters', for example.

The interventions that have happened at the site of the India Gate have catalysed this forgetting and re-remembering, and over time also come to reflect it. The initial interventions – the renaming of the All-India War Memorial to the India Gate and the removal of the King George V statue – can be said to have initiated this forgetting by diminishing the monument's war memorial and colonial identities respectively. They were straightforward and perhaps necessary steps in Indianizing the national capital. However, things get more complicated from here.

The Amar Jawan Jyoti, the next intervention, betrays a curious conflict: the government found the India Gate itself unsuitable for honouring the martyrs of the Bangladesh Liberation War, but decided to place the new war memorial right under the India Gate. The location makes only little sense even in the context of the Republic Day parade, given that the Prime Minister's visit to the Amar Jawan Jyoti happens just before the parade, and the parade itself starts at the other end of the central axis. Therefore, it appears that the location of the Amar Jawan Jyoti is primarily a response to the India Gate's original commemoration. This implies that the government was mindful of the India Gate's history, but did not wish to publicly acknowledge it. Rather, they intended to appropriate it. Since 1972, numerous heads of the state and dignitaries have laid wreaths at the Amar Jawan Jyoti, whereas no acknowledgement has been made of the India Gate's commemoration. The appropriation has not extended the India Gate's commemoration, but has essentially replaced it. The survey responses confirm this: while the India Gate's original purpose has generally become obscure, the Amar Jawan Jyoti was familiar to every participant asked.

Subsequent to the Amar Jawan Jyoti, interventions begin to increasingly reflect the collective forgetting that has been discussed. Given the rise in populism during this period, this is perhaps the result of popular amnesia infiltrating the state. Consider the 3D laser shows that have happened at the India Gate. Visuals projected on the monument include the monument breaking apart, filling with water, and being cloaked with smoke from the back of a lorry. They are arbitrary and bear no relationship to the India Gate. This would communicate to most audiences that the monument itself is of no significance, that it is just a large, empty structure that happens to be there for unknown reasons. Would such a show be considered appropriate on any other war memorial? Clearly, the India Gate is being denied the status of a war memorial.

Towards the beginning of 2018, the night lighting of the India Gate was changed to include a large tricolour projection. This, in some ways, can be understood to have an effect similar to the laser shows. However, unlike a sunset or a lorry, the tricolour is not a random visual, but one laden with meanings. It is universally associated in India with the Indian nation, and by extension, the Independence movement. The visual superimposition of the tricolour over the India Gate, therefore, supported by the monument's name and architectural ambiguity, would communicate to most viewers that there exists a significant relationship between 'India' and India Gate. This is true to some extent: the India Gate is located in India, at a location no less than the centre of its national capital, and has come to become a national icon. However, as

an unsubtle form of communication, the tricolour projection risks exaggerating the relationship between the India Gate and the Indian nation. Indeed, it is perhaps representations like this that have led people to imagine that the India Gate is Indian in its origin or purpose. Therefore, not only does this practice obscure the original history and commemoration of the memorial, but in fact encourages the propagation of false narratives of the past.

There is clear message here: heritage interventions have memorial consequences. In the hands of a conspiring state, interventions – even reasonably simple ones – can serve as a means of elevating narratives of the past to a *de facto* official status without advocating for or propagating them publicly. But even if a state is reasonably innocent, its interventions will still be a form of heritage discourse, espousing for certain narratives of the past. Therefore, a state seeking to be responsible must be sensitive to memorial consequences while intervening at a heritage site.

If interventions are conceived and implemented without deliberation, with little regard to the history of a site, the state risks burying history and potentially giving birth to imaginary alternatives. Again, it is possible that a state intends to do this. But as the literary critic Homi Bhabha (1994) cautions, '[memories] which are blocked and banned can perambulate the unconscious in dangerous ways, causing seemingly inexplicable symptoms in everyday life.' Toying with memory might yield short-term political benefits, but it does long-term good for neither the state nor its people.

This dissertation's examination of the India Gate has taken it far beyond the monument itself, into the realm of the postcolonial condition and the nation's relationship to its past. Perhaps the methods of this study will prove useful for future studies to undertake similar investigations of other such monuments and heritage sites. It is clear that interventions have memorial consequences, but future studies might be able to better establish the nature and mechanisms of these consequences. Not only would this help us conceive heritage interventions more sensitively in the future, but hopefully also provide us with just little insight into our collective relationship with the past.

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Appendix A: Online Survey Questionnaire

The following questionnaire was used to survey residents of Noida online. This questionnaire was developed by refining the questionnaire prepared for members of MENSA based on their responses. For the online survey of the third group (residents of Lajpat Nagar), a shortened version of this questionnaire was used to try and increase response rate.

Part I

1. Where are you from?
 - a) Delhi NCR
 - b) Not from Delhi NCR but lived here for a long time
 - c) Not from Delhi NCR and moved here recently
2. How old are you
 - a) 0-18
 - b) 18-25
 - c) 25-40
 - d) 40-60
 - e) 60+
3. What is your educational qualification?
 - a) Secondary school or lower
 - b) Diploma/professional certificate
 - c) Undergraduate degree
 - d) Master's degree or higher
4. What is the field of your occupation?
 - a) Management/Business/Finance/Accounting
 - b) Science/Engineering/Medicine/Law
 - c) Architecture/Design/Urban Planning
 - d) Humanities/Social Sciences
 - e) None
 - f) Other (please specify)
5. How many times have you visited the India Gate?
 - a) 0
 - b) 1-5
 - c) 5-10

- d) 10+
 - e) Only seen it while driving by
6. Do you know who built the India Gate?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Unsure
7. Who do you think built the India Gate?
- a) Rajputs
 - b) Mughals
 - c) Delhi Sultanate
 - d) Mughals
 - e) British
 - f) First Indian Government
 - g) Later Indian Government
8. Who do you think built the Rashtrapati Bhavan?
- a) Rajputs
 - b) Mughals
 - c) Delhi Sultanate
 - d) Mughals
 - e) British
 - f) First Indian Government
 - g) Later Indian Government
9. Who do you think built the Qutb Minar?
- a) Rajputs
 - b) Mughals
 - c) Delhi Sultanate
 - d) Mughals
 - e) British
 - f) First Indian Government
 - g) Later Indian Government
10. When do you think the India Gate was built?
- a) <1700
 - b) 1700-1800
 - c) 1800-1900

- d) 1900-2000
 - e) 2000+
11. Do you know why the India Gate was built?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Unsure
12. Why do you think the India Gate was built? (Guess if you do not know)

Part II

1. What do you think the India Gate symbolizes?
2. How do you think the India Gate looks and feels?
3. Why do you visit the India Gate?
4. Do you have a distinct memory of the India Gate? What is it?
5. How do you think British rule in India was?
 - a) Utterly horrible
 - b) Very bad
 - c) Somewhat bad
 - d) Can't say
 - e) Somewhat good
 - f) Very good
 - g) Excellent
6. Why do you think the British left India?
7. Do you know about the new National War Memorial?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
8. Which of the following wars do you think India participated in?
 - a) World War I (1914-1918)
 - b) World War II (1939-1945)
 - c) Cold War (1947-1991)
 - d) Bangladesh Liberation War (1971)
 - e) Kargil War (1999)

Appendix B: Survey Responses

Online Surveys					
No.	Identifier	Age Group	Location	Who built it?	Why?
1	MENSA 1	25-40	Online	British	World War 1
2	MENSA 2	0-18	Online	Indian Government	Freedom fighters
3	MENSA 3	40-60	Online	British	Coronation of King George
4	MENSA 4	25-40	Online	British	World War 1 and Anglo-Afghan War
5	MENSA 5	40-60	Online	British	World War 1
6	MENSA 6	25-40	Online	British	World War
7	MENSA 7	40-60	Online	British	World War 1
8	MENSA 8	25-40	Online	British	World War 1
9	MENSA 9	40-60	Online	British	War memorial
10	MENSA 10	60+	Online	British	War memorial
11	MENSA 11	18-25	Online	Don't know	Don't know
12	MENSA 12	25-40	Online	British	World War 1
13	MENSA 13	0-18	Online	British	War memorial
14	MENSA 14	25-40	Online	British	War memorial
15	MENSA 15	40-60	Online	British	War memorial
16	MENSA 16	40-60	Online	British	Don't know
17	MENSA 17	18-25	Online	Indian government	World War 1
18	Sector 52 RWA 1	40-60	Noida	Delhi Sultanate	War memorial
19	Sector 52 RWA 2	40-60	Noida	British	War memorial
20	Sector 52 RWA 3	40-60	Noida	British	World War
21	Sector 52 RWA 4	25-40	Noida	British	World War
22	Sector 52 RWA 5	40-60	Noida	British	World War
23	Sector 52 RWA 6	60+	Noida	British	War memorial
24	Sector 52 RWA 7	40-60	Noida	Indian government	World War
25	Lajpat Nagar RWA 3	40-60	Lajpat Nagar	British	World War
26	Lajpat Nagar RWA 4	25-40	Lajpat Nagar	British	War memorial
27	Lajpat Nagar RWA 5	60+	Lajpat Nagar	British	War memorial
28	Lajpat Nagar RWA 2	40-60	Lajpat Nagar	Don't know	Generic war memorial

In-Person Interviews					
No.	Identifier	Age Group	Location	Who built it?	Why?
1	Reema Singhal	40+	Noida	Don't know	Gate/passage
2	Shruti Singhal	25-40	Noida	British?	Passage
3	Shubham Singhal	25-40	Noida	British	War memorial
4	Rahul Jain	25-40	Noida	British	Don't know
5	Shefali	25-40	Noida	Don't know	Public infotainment
6	Sohini	25-40	Noida	British	World War
7	Aastha	25-40	Noida	Indian govt	War memorial
8	Shria	25-40	Noida	Indian govt	War memorial
9	CP Man 1	40+	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
10	CP Man 2	40+	India Gate	British	World War
11	Lajpat Nagar RWA 1	25-40	Lajpat Nagar	Indian govt	World War
12	Auto Driver 1	25-40	Lajpat Nagar	King	Don't know
13	Bike Driver 1	25-40	Lajpat Nagar	Don't know	Don't know
14	India Gate 1	18-25	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
15	India Gate 2	18-25	India Gate	British	War memorial
16	India Gate 3	25-40	India Gate	British	War memorial
17	India Gate 4	25-40	India Gate	British	Gate
18	CCD 1	18-25	Lajpat Nagar	Don't know	Don't know
19	CCD 2	25-40	Lajpat Nagar	Don't know	War memorial
20	India Gate 1	18-25	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
21	India Gate 2	18-25	India Gate	British	Don't know
22	India Gate 3	25-40	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
23	India Gate 4	60+	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
24	India Gate 5	60+	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
25	India Gate 6	25-40	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
26	India Gate 7	25-40	India Gate	Don't know	War memorial
27	India Gate 8	25-40	India Gate	Indian govt	War memorial
28	CP 1	18-25	India Gate	Indian govt	Freedom fighters
29	CP 2	25-40	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
30	CP 3	25-40	India Gate	Don't know	Don't know
31	CP 4	25-40	India Gate	British	World War