

Transcultural Toponymic Identities: Case Study of Urban Villages of NCT of Delhi

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1. Toponymy and Transculturalism

Of the myriad characteristics that may define or identify a certain entity; animate or inanimate, name is perhaps one of the most significant portals providing access and passage to the inner most sanctum sanctorum of a specific entity and this becomes even more prominent when one observes the names of places. Place name(s) is an interesting phenomenon. They are akin to treasure maps which take one to a journey of self exploration and discovery. They are similar to the cartographical isolines which sometime join similarities while simultaneously reflecting the differences. Like the contours drawn on typical maps to portray relief, place names vary in quantity, sometimes being numerous (more height equates to steepness, closer contours) while sometimes being sparse and few (a flatter terrain has a widely spaced contours, less height). Just like relief is depicted through contours on a flat piece of paper, similarly one can perceive importance (steepness) of a place through its numerous names varied across space, time, functionality, dialects and even language to name a few. The different place names also portray the importance, fame and connectivity of a particular place across the world.

Place names or Toponymy is a study of place names. But embedded within this field of study is Eponymy interacting and influencing each other across time and space. Eponym is simply names derived from people. This derivation may manifest itself in numerous ways such as Hailey's comet (named after its discoverer: Hailey), Levi's jeans (named after its creator), Disney media and merchandises (named after Walt Disney), Thursday (named after Thor, the Norse god of Thunder: Thor's Day became Thursday), Ford and so on to name a few. But one of the most important and perhaps a long history of naming is manifested in the names of places, often after their founders or chief patrons. To exemplify, Rome was named after Romulus (one of the Romulus-Remus duo), the Americas were named after Amerigo Vespucci who first discovered them, and Serbia named after the Serbs who inhabit it to name a few. The point here is most often toponyms are eponyms being marked on maps as locations, places to visit.

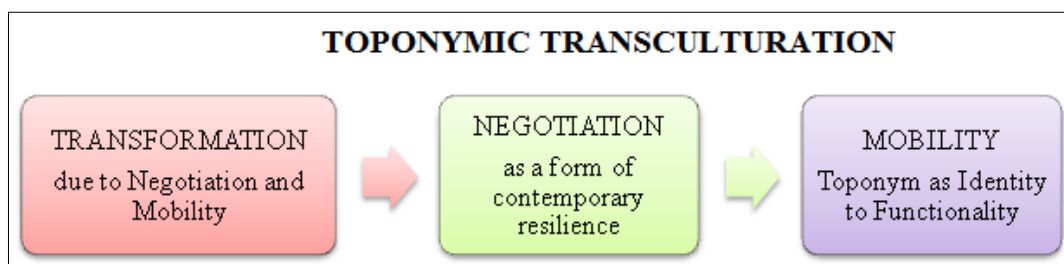
Toponymy gains prominence as identities traceable on maps as a place name is the primary identifier of locating a place in myriad spaces and places. But since change is the only constant in this world, toponymy as well is subjected to it. Numerous reasons may be attributed to toponymic erasures, erased-preservations and even unchanged existence. It is important to note that toponyms also reflect the changing times, realities and aspirations of the people as exhibited by the name change of Tokyo in urban restructuring of the 1970s to make it more relevant to the inhabitants, to make it prominent in the World Economy and to make it

relevant to the myriad actors of urban development such as investors, realtors, developers, MNCs, TNCs and so on.

Toponymy is very much a form premised upon transculturalism. Transculturalism implies a transcendental nature which is not limited to one but extends to several entities/cultures in different ways, intensities and frequencies rooted in time and space. Toponymy and Transculturalism like any entity on this planet are rooted in chronology and chorology and in the inevitable universal constant of dynamism or change. Toponymy is transculturalism because place names are derivatives of cultural and socio-political norms vulnerable to the dynamics of politics and power and fashioned to suit the contemporary needs of the local, global and glocal. Toponymy is premised upon mobilities (of the people from and to a particular place), negotiations (of the everyday practices [adaptations, adoptions and hybridities between past and present]) and transformations (sometimes like Lefebvre's Abstract space, sometimes like the Digital space which subsumes the old and the new and everything in between and at other times rooted in erased- preservations). With all these mobilities, negotiations and transformations, toponymy is very much reflective of and embodiment of transculturalism in a simultaneous transcultured space.

Toponyms are intangible heritages that are subjected to forces of transculturations making them dynamic, ever-changing. It is a negotiation manifested through a place's resilience for existence; names change to be in tune to changing times and changing nature of a particular place, but the place somehow survives, even being transformed at macro, meso and micro levels. Such transformations cannot be mapped easily or observed stereotypically but are embodiment of transculturations. It is important to note though; that a long and complex history/chronology of transculturation implies the importance of a particular place in recorded history.

Toponyms are interactive (bear mobilities, negotiations and transformations), inter-dependent and cyclical relationship with the places they identify leading to Lefebvre's Production of Spaces (1991) wherein lived and representational realities/spaces interact with one another to provide us with Abstract spaces (Lefebvre, 1991) which may not be in essence abstract (like a new toponym which was an old toponym such as Gurugram and Gurgaon). Perhaps toponyms are such Third Spaces (Soja, 1996) which are easier to understand as Heterotopias (Foucault, 1984) since different considerations are taken into account for naming a particular place or rather renaming it.



[Figure 1: Toponymic Transculturation, Author's illustration]

A transcultured toponym is not a singular entity but a mosaic in itself (Cuccioletta, 2001/2002) which is to further state that each toponym is not a self but an amalgamation of different selves and others interacting upon one toponymic space. Toponymic Transculturation occurs in such spaces where transformations are rooted in mobility and negotiations, contemporary urbanscapes of politics and power as well as when new cultural spaces or toponymic culturescapes are subjected to resistances, appropriations and adaptations from within as well as from the outside wherein the local, the national and the global interact in such a way that the resultant spaces are not only indecipherably multicultural but also transcultured.

2. Myriad Toponymies of and in India

The toponymy of India has a long and continuous history of transculturations, performed not only by the people who inhabited and ruled it but also by those who knew about it or had trade relations with it. At different points of time, India has been referred differently, and yet many toponyms existed simultaneously and in a transcultured state. Perhaps, one of the most transcultured toponym is a derivation from River Indus. Historically and even in contemporary times, this is the most transcultured toponym that continues to exist in all its transformations (refer Fig.1) and continues to be a source of identity to the place it identifies as well as the people who inhabit it. Several toponyms of India namely; Sindhu (Sanskrit toponym), India (Latin and Greek toponym), Hindostan/Hindustan/Hind (Persian toponym), Tianzhu or Tenjiku (old Chinese and Japanese respectively), Yintejia (from the Kucheian Indaka, another transliteration of Hindu)/Shendu/Wutianzhu (other Chinese toponyms), Yindu or Indo (Contemporary Chinese and Japanese toponym respectively) and Hodu (Biblical Hebrew) are all examples of transformations at play. The name India is a dynamic bearer of transculturations that it becomes difficult to comprehend its many complexities; primarily due to the importance it played in World History as well as contemporary geography. It implies transculturations by practice, appropriations used in the local language to identify, locate and address a particular place.

The varying toponyms of India across time, space and cultures are indicative of the strong presence of India since ancient times and its linkages and importance in the trade and economy of those periods. But a generalization can be drawn by the fact that across cultures, time and regions, India was always referred by its geographical identity, that is its vicinity to the river Indus further exhibiting the importance of the river Indus in the everyday lives, society, economy, culture and so on of the people of Indus. Akin to the toponymic diversity of India, the constituents of the Indian union namely its states and union territories also have a toponymic story to narrate, rooted in dominance and identity creation. The contemporary Republic of India is organised according to the States Reorganization Act, 1956 with the basic premise of language. Dominant languages of the time were employed to demarcate the states' boundaries (though not an effective medium). Broadly, Indian states' toponymy can be classified into three types (refer to Fig.2) namely, Physiographical; based upon either unique physical characteristics such as hilly, snow-capped or cloud covered or unique geographical creation such as a delta, Sociological; based upon either the patron deity or

the people inhabiting a particular territory and Directional; based upon direction of reference. The contemporary toponyms are a reflection of negotiations that occurred in post-Independence era to organise and administer the regions effectively. Such a transformation becomes more evident while exploring the Indian states' alphabetically as one may find plenty of toponymic history including the changes being made since 1947 or post- independence India in order to mark (on maps as well as people's perception) the toponyms as being thoroughly Indian or as endonyms.

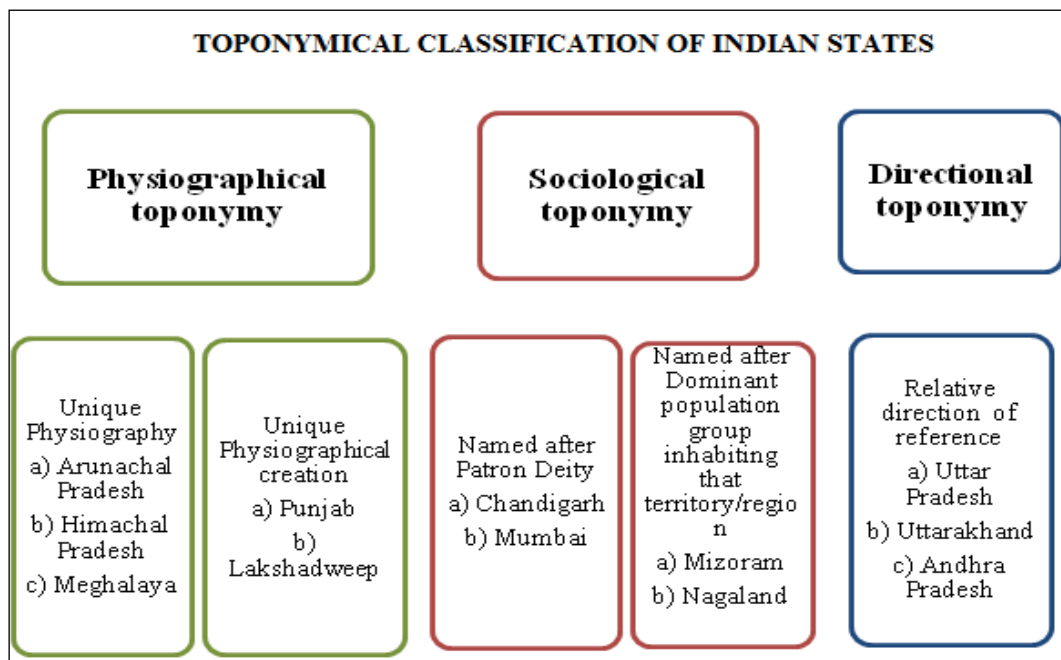
To exemplify, very recently in April, 2016, the millennium city of Gurgaon, Haryana has been officially renamed as Gurugram after tracing its history back to Mahabharata while the district of Rohtak has been renamed as Nuh which is more in synchronisation with the local/informal usage. But this practice is not recent as observed. Many leading cities of India such as Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai have been renamed in the previous century. Bombay was renamed Mumbai in order to reflect de-colonisation, rise of the Indian state, an emergence from colonial shackles even in official and everyday use. However, Bombay was also referred to as Bumbai in the local dialect/use. Mumbai is derived from the local deity Mumbra devi and is supposedly Marathi in language. Very recently; leading English daily, however reverted back to using Bombay to refer to the city stating it as a resistance towards the contemporary, pre-dominant culture. But, officially the city stays as Mumbai for now.

The story with Kolkata is however different since it was always referred to as Kolkata by the locals with love. Calcutta was a derivation of Kalikata village, one of the first of a trio of villages that were occupied by British colonial forces to establish Calcutta. Being an exonym, it was easier for the British to pronounce (a story which transpires in rest of India after 1857) and being the capital of the British Empire in the Indian subcontinent till 1911, no changes in the name transpired. It was only in recent times, that the name was changed to better reflect the local pronunciation. However, change with toponym of Madras is more significant since it was a deeper endonymic change. Madras was renamed as Chennai in the official records as well. This was different from Madras in language and pronunciation and was used more rigorously as an endonym (in Tamil language) in everyday parlance; that is to say the change was more prominent in Hindi than in Tamil.

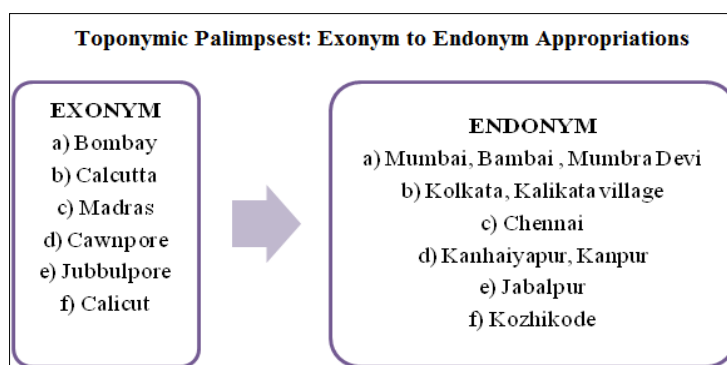
There are several other stories regarding toponyms such as Kanpur. Kanpur initially started out as Kanhaiyapur, after Lord Krishna who is also referred to as Kanhaiya in folk songs and culture. Kanhaiyapur was longer to pronounce and hence a short hand began to be used namely: Kanpur. This was used till the advent of the British who changed it to Cawnpore, an exonym better suited to their use and understanding. Yet again; in post independence era, it was renamed as Kanpur in synchronisation with the endonymy of the place. Other examples include Calicut, famous for its craftsmanship of Calicos was renamed Kozhikode. This was a transformation from an exonym to an endonym significantly. One of the key observations of exonyms in India was the usage of 'Pore' as a suffix in many toponyms which were changed to 'Pur' for endonymic reference and official use. To exemplify, Jubbulpore was changed to Jabalpur, Cawnpore to Kanpur to mention a few. In context of India, it does seem more prevalent in the recent history of the country and its toponymy that changes were made to reflect endonymy in the official records, in order to signify

independence from the colonizers even in context of location on maps, since endonymy was used throughout the history in everyday informal conversations irrespective of official toponyms. These may be regarded as toponymic appropriations or as toponymic palimpsest (refer Fig.3) wherein the former toponym is appropriated by the contemporary government to exhibit a sense of belonging, freedom, de-colonisation and beginning of a new era.

Palimpsest gives way to classification and in India, one finds many commonalities (refer Fig.4) amongst toponyms; sometimes referring to settlement, sometimes to its physiographic or topographical vicinity, sometimes an important infrastructure around which a settlement grew, sometimes even to ease of pronunciation. These commonalities remain united in context of absolute space and its understanding (at the time of a place's conception) yet the way they are referred and consequently named across numerous languages and dialects changes.

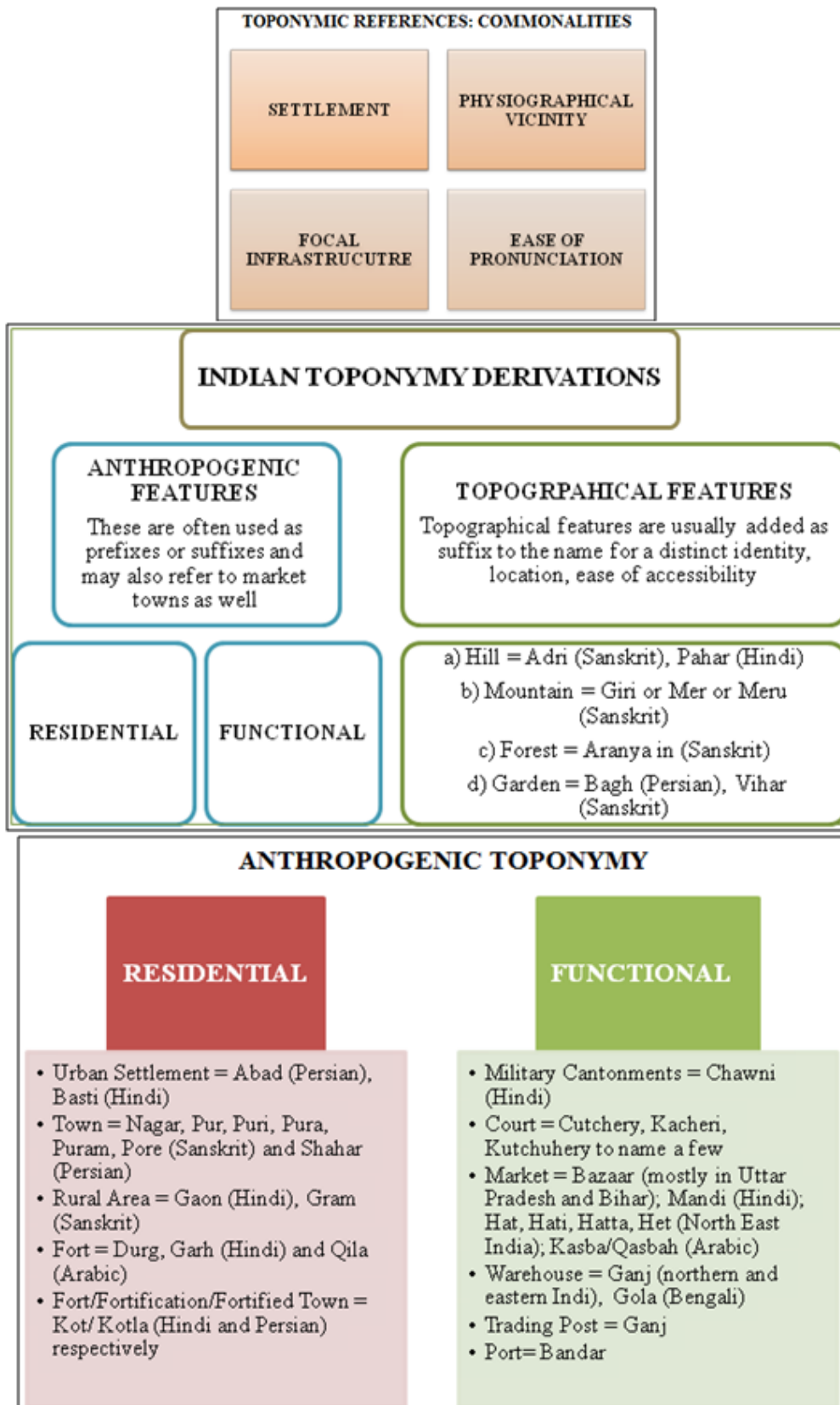


[Figure 2: Toponymical classification for States of India, Author's illustration]



[Figure 3: Toponymic Palimpsest, Author's illustration]

Due to the multiple language influences in different points of time, a same feature may be referred differently in different parts of India based upon the time of naming/conception and the dominant language/dialect being used. Broadly, Indian toponymy is derived from either topographical or anthropogenic features used in various combinations and sometimes as standalone names as well. Anthropogenic toponymy is further divided into two namely based on residential and functional; emphasizing upon the nature of the settlement. This falls within the ambit of mobility being performed by a transcultured toponym and manifested in Delhi's case as well. The toponymic history of Delhi is filled with such mobilities across time and distributed across space but somehow negotiating with the complexity of transculturations and existing simultaneously as transformed entities.



[Figure 4: Common toponymic references and derivations, Author's illustration]

2.1 Delhi

The toponymy of Delhi stands in transculturations as a city of cities, hybrid, resilient and dynamic. Delhi has been transculturally referred as Dehali, Dilli, Dhillika based upon either King Dhillu, who first built this city or derived from the Hindi/ Prakrit word 'Dhili' implying loose which was used by the Tomaras to refer to the city since the renowned Iron Pillar had a weak foundation and consequently had to be moved. Different areas of the city have been referred as Indraprastha, Qila Rai Pithora, Siri, Tughluqabad, Kotla Feroze Shah, Shahjahanabad, and Imperial Delhi in history while Delhi continues to exist in contemporary times.

If one observes the contemporary city map of Delhi, one finds a lot of eponyms which are transformed into toponyms. Areas such as Malviya nagar named after Madan Mohan Malviya, a freedom fighter and revolutionary and several others have lent their names to several streets, localities, and infrastructure such as educational institutions and so on. To exemplify, the streets of Central Delhi provide interesting cases. Dr. Bishambar Das marg (Punjab born doctor renowned for popularising Homeopathy in India) was earlier called as Allenby road (a British field marshal), Subramania Bharti Marg (20th century Tamil Poet) was earlier called as Cornwallis road (after British Governor General: Lord Cornwallis), Thyagaraja Marg (18th century Carnatic music composer) was earlier named as Clive road (after Sir Robert Clive) and the exhaustive list continues. A key connector of the city: the Mathura road is a fragment of the historic Grand Trunk Road and it is interesting to note that in various parts of the city it is referred differently. In some places, it is Mahatma Gandhi Marg, in others Sher Shah Suri marg (the ruler who created it) and in other areas it becomes part of the Ring Road with prefixes of inner and outer. A single road's toponymy varies in different parts of the city making it an interesting road in history and geography of the city. A key centre of the city; Rajiv Chowk or CP also has an interesting toponymy. When the British designed the new Imperial city, they named this centre as Connaught Place after the Duke of Connaught. Post independence; when the Imperial City was transformed into landscape of palimpsest, Connaught Place was transformed into Rajiv Chowk officially. However, people still perceive and refer to it popularly as CP; as a short hand for Connaught Place. Rajiv Chowk may have found place in the official history, geography and toponymy of the city, but CP continues to live on. The toponymic palimpsests of Delhi are many and myriad and a reminder of the hybridization and appropriation that the city has undergone throughout history and geography further exemplifying the transculturations that continue to occur in the city.

3. Transcultural Spaces: Urban Villages and Toponymy of National Capital Territory of Delhi

An urban village by definition is a transcendental, oxymoronic, hybrid and resilient entity in existence. Urban villages are in-between spaces which are neither urban nor rural but a hybridized version of the two; with remnants of traditional society as well as traces of unplanned urban development. Urban villages are places with hybrid and splintering urbanisms (AISayyad, 2001, Graham, Marvin, 2001) bearing transformations in every crevice of their hybrid resilience. Perhaps, it would be better to identify such urbanisms (Wirth, 1938) as Transcultural Urbanisms since in contemporary times, due to (rural to urban as well as urban to urban)

economic induced migration, these hybrid estates have emerged as low-cost and affordable housing to the millions who flock the city. These migrants have diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and as such these hybrid urban villages have also emerged as places facilitating myriad transculturations not only in toponymy but in the local culture as well.

The transculturations occurring are heterotopic (Foucault, 1984) in nature, with myriad meanings and interpretations to myriad people. This interactive relationship between space, people and transculturations(s) gives rise to hybrid, transcendental spaces that are lived appropriations of transcultured reality (Lefebvre, 1991, Soja, 1996). The existing urban villages of Delhi provide a unique case of toponymy rooted in society and geography, development and dynamics. The names of these present urban villages (Thapliyal 1987, Gupta 2010) started out in rurality, in social structures and stratification, entwined in socio- geographical space.

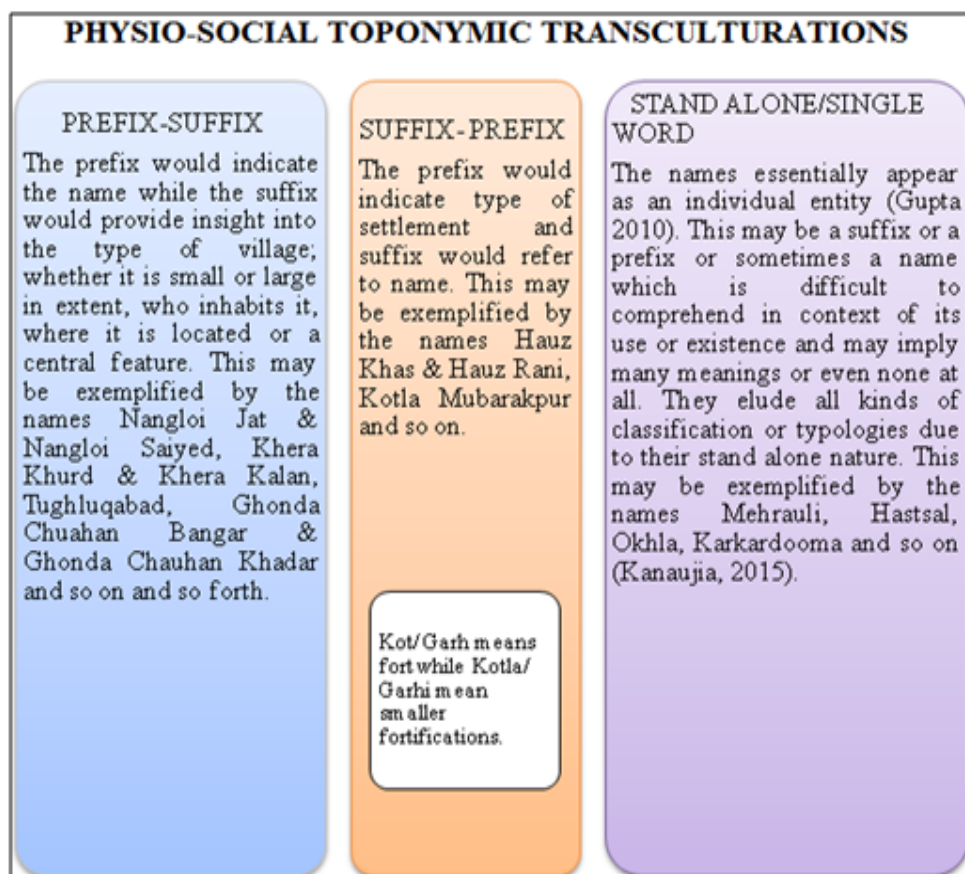
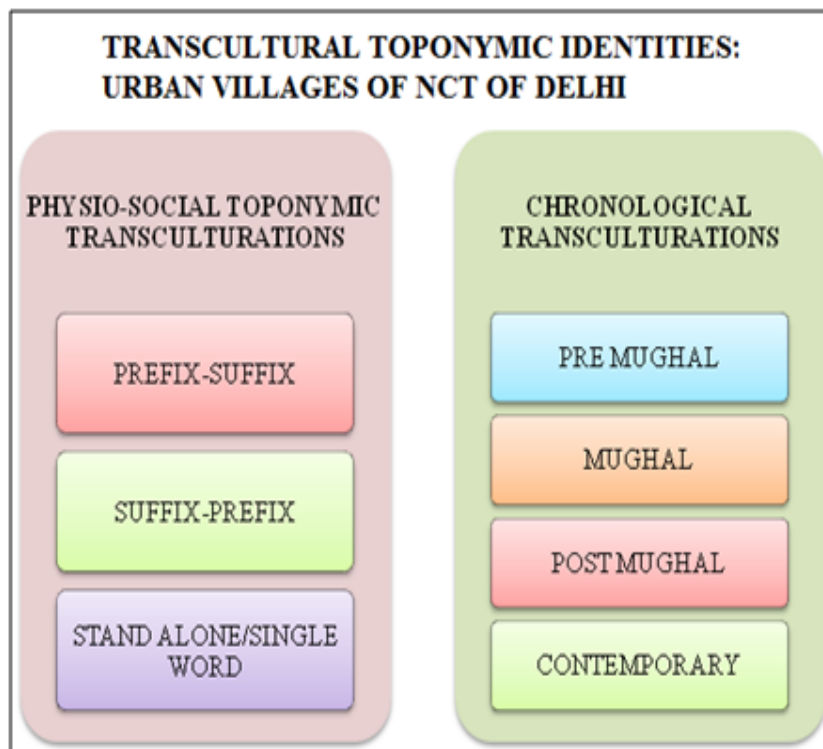
The toponymic transculturations can be generalized in two: Physio-Social and Chronological with three and four sub-classifications respectively. In the first type, villages usually have two letter names: a prefix and a suffix (Fig.5 and 6) as well as standalone names. The combination of prefix-suffix and vice-versa have been used in the toponymy of urban villages of Delhi to indicate type of village (by social group inhabiting it as Jat, Gujjar/Gujran, Chauhan, Musalmanan), physical location (near old: Bangar or new alluvium: Khadar of river Yamuna) and settlement type based upon physical traits (first spatial settlement: Kalan or its adjunct: Khurd) and functionality (Sarais/Rest Houses, Baghs/Garden) to provide a diverse toponymic map of urban villages of Delhi. The standalone names seem to have some erasures over centuries of inhabitation, being reduced to mere names devoid of sociology, physiography or former identity. Yet these names are the most transformed and have extensive transcendental nature because of prior erasures. The second type is based upon Chronology, as to how a particular toponym was/is transformed to reflect endonymy of that society, patron (deity/rulers) and dominant language in use as well as the people inhabiting it. The toponyms hence, by nature are not uniform; they are diverse, hybrid and sometimes transcendental as well; giving rise to transcultural toponymic identities that are used and appropriated in diverse transformative ways in the present day.

While Physio-Social exhibits the transcultural variety of toponyms in mobility, the Chronological is witness to the transcultural transformations inflicted upon the toponymical space of urban villages of Delhi. The chronological transculturations are also a playground for politics and power of myriad actors. There are gradations to transformations based on a particular urban village's antiquity. The Pre-Mughal are the least transformed while the Post- Mughal are extensively transformed. The Post- Mughal includes the British/Imperial era of colonization of India and as such a toponymic endeavour of vast proportions was undertaken to project a new India and a new toponymy to the world reflecting its new and independent status.

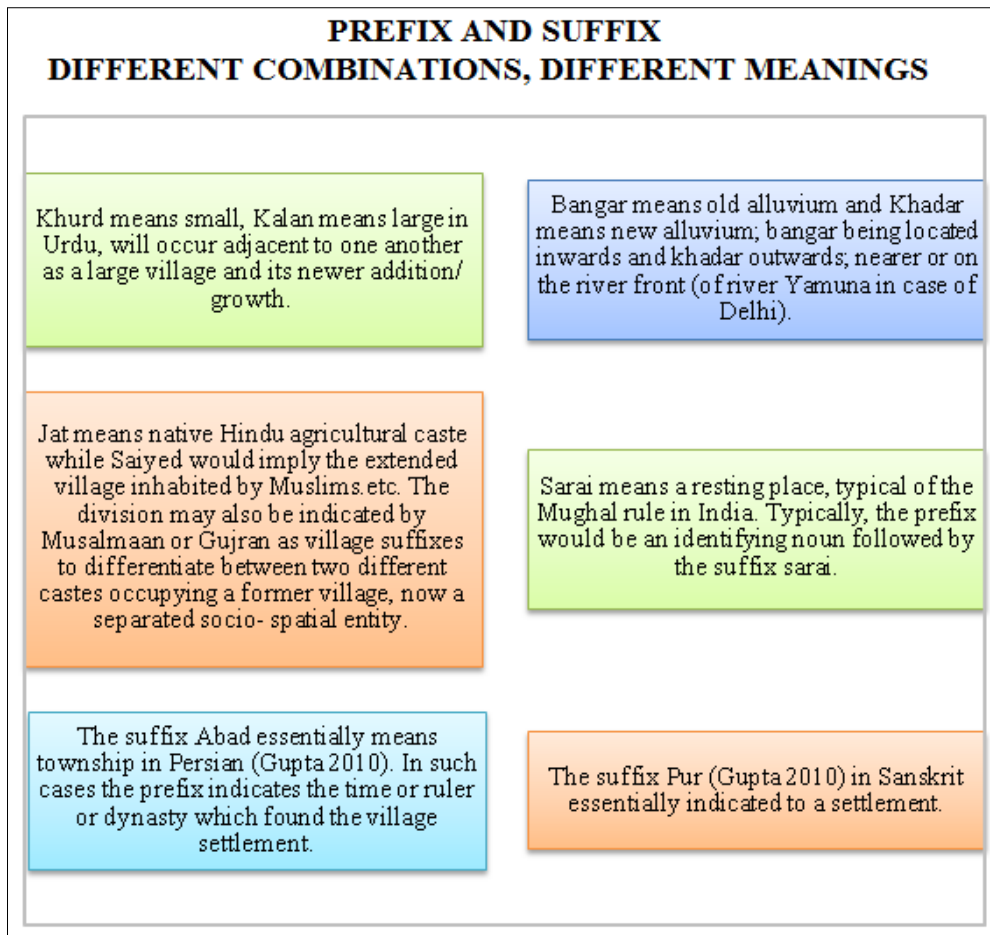
The British period was also one which included an equally extensive project to Anglicise or Exonymize Indian toponymy; for ease of pronunciation and association (refer to Fig.3) by the British colonizers. Post-Independence however, a counter project was undertaken to Endonymize Indian toponymy and still

continuing. Delhi as well was subjected to such toponymic transformations wherein Imperial Delhi was renamed as New Delhi, exhibiting a Palimpsest of Landscape as well as Toponymy. When the city started growing in the 1950s, complete erasures of villages were undertaken; such villages were not present in toponymy, urbanscape, maps or even oral histories of Delhi. As the city progressed to contemporary extent, the phenomenon of urban villages emerged along with their transcultural space, toponymy and status.

Few Pre-Mughal urban villages such as Mehrauli, Hauz Khas and Kotla Mubarakpur remain devoid of erasure but have emerged as transformative in nature and extent. Their extensive antiquity has provided them with transculturations in the form of important landmarks and extensive toponymic presence in contemporary times. While Mehrauli has outgrown itself to include the boundary of another urban village called Kishangarh alias Mochi; as well as providing its name to this encompassed urban village in contemporary cartography, Kotla Mubarakpur¹, on the other hand has witnessed partial erasure after the agricultural land acquisition for Defence Colony, one of the higher end localities of Delhi. Although Kotla Mubarakpur continues to exist in space and cartography and continues to resist the transformations around it, it has somehow become limiting in its toponymic influence. Shahpur Jat also reflects a somewhat similar yet different case of toponymic transformation. It is different because of the economic value associated with toponym of Shahpur Jat as a leading high-end designer boutique (clothing) destination of Delhi.



[Figure 5: Typology of urban village toponymy of Delhi, Author's illustration]



[Figure 6: Details of socio-physical toponymy type of urban villages of Delhi, Author's illustration]

An extreme example of extensive toponymic presence can be exemplified through Hauz Khas². It is also a cultural heritage destination as well as a transcultural food zone. Hauz Khas; like any other urban village in Delhi underwent land acquisition process but due to local political influence, its developmental trajectory was more positive. Although the agricultural land was acquired by DLF in the 1960s, the latter developed urbanscape emerged with toponymic transculturations such as Hauz Khas Block A and so forth, providing a new, hybrid transformation using the old and the new to address the new.

A similar case is found in the Post Mughal urban village of Okilluh or Okhla³ as it is popularly known. The name itself has undergone transformation since 1871 from a traditional endonym: Okilluh to exonym: OKHLA to exonymic appropriation: Okhla. This toponymic palimpsest has emerged as an extensive toponymic presence lending its identity to dominate a considerable section of South East Delhi and neighbouring NOIDA⁴ of Uttar Pradesh in context of toponymy and cartography. At present if one observes the map of Delhi, then one is able to locate Okhla Industrial Estate with phases I, II and III, Okhla Village, Okhla Extension and some urban amenities like Okhla Sewage Plant and so on and importantly Okhla barrage from where the Agra Canal starts. Okhla even went a step further to lend its name to its younger industrial sibling; NOIDA which is an acronym for New Okhla Industrial Development Authority that emerged in the late 1960s. Karkardooma⁵, an urban village in East Delhi follows a similar trajectory of Okhla

but on a smaller scale (Kanaujia, 2015). Karkardooma can perhaps be placed as an example of toponymic mobility wherein the Physio-Social toponym has been transformed to toponymic palimpsest.

The Mughal era provides a large treasury of contemporary urban villages as well as their toponyms. During the Mughal era, majority of the toponyms were prefix-suffix combinations wherein the prefix denoted unique identity while the suffix indicated functionality of the settlement. The Mughal period is marked as a time in history when Delhi emerged dotting with several sarais (rest- houses for travellers), baghs (gardens) and chowks (circles or junctions). Many of these sarais have continued to exist as present day urban villages namely Lado sarai, Ladha sarai, Kalu sarai, Jia sarai, Ber sarai, Katwaria sarai, Sarai Rohilla and so on. Among the baghs, the prominent ones are Roshanara bagh, Shalimar bagh, Jahanara bagh, Arakpur bagh and so on while chowks have lost prominence except Chandni Chowk which still thrives as Old Delhi but is not an urban village. Arakpur Bagh Mochi⁶ is a unique example of toponymic transformation and palimpsest.

Unlike other baghs (gardens) which bear the name of the rulers, this bagh bears the name of a mochi (cobbler). Some stories state that a thirsty Jahangir was offered water by a mochi resting in the Arakpur bagh and as a prize, the Mughal emperor gifted the bagh to that mochi followed by the bagh's name being suffixed by mochi (Smith, 2012). In an old source, Moti Bagh is described as a garden in its inception and manifestation built by a cobbler named Ramdas and the garden is suffixed by his title of Mochi. At the turn of the century, the area came to be known as Mochi Bagh rather than Arakpur Bagh Mochi in practice, urbanscape and cartography. But, following the process of land acquisition for government accommodation in 1970s, the toponym Mochi Bagh (cobbler garden) exhibited a negative social connotation for a high end government accommodation and hence was renamed as well as transcultured into Moti Bagh (garden of pearls) for a sophisticated reference in practice, urbanscape and cartography. From a cobbler's property (Mochi Bagh) to a pearl in the upholder's eye (Moti Bagh), a definitive erasure was performed from the contemporary memory and from history because since then it was, is and will be referred to as Moti Bagh (Kanaujia, 2015). If Okhla stands in stark contrast of toponymical abundance, manifestation and articulation and furthers its prominence by providing names to urban infrastructure and suburban siblings, Arakpur Bagh Mochi presents a story of toponymical erasure. The myriad toponymic transculturations have occurred due to diversity of cultural influences, contemporary needs, dynamics of power and politics and significance of a particular place and toponym in Delhi.

4. Transcultured Toponymic Identities and Spaces/Places

The urbanscape of Delhi, with its myriad urban villages is an exemplifier of diverse, interrelated and interactive toponymic identities as microcosmic reflections of the macrocosm of Delhi in context of nature, people, functions and patterns. The challenge/problem/issue in erasure or transformation of a toponym is that any name is the primary insight and requisite to any one's identity and being a toponym it becomes even more complex and problematic because toponyms are what enable any one to find a place on a map. If the toponym is transformed or erased, maps would not be able to allow us to find a place and since maps also

continuously change; it would take a very short span of time that the place/toponym would be forgotten or erased from the larger public memory which in turn would lead to the toponymical death of the place as the place would no longer exist. If one traverses to East Delhi, there is a cluster of urban villages with a common name of “Ghonda⁷” and this problem is already manifesting since the boundaries of erstwhile villages have merged and suffixes removed, it is no longer decipherable on map as to which is what Ghonda (Kanaujia, 2015).

The toponymy of urban villages of Delhi is rooted in transculturations (refer Fig.1) with myriad manifestations. With diverse toponymic transculturations as well as toponymic palimpsests, the resultant transcultural Third Spaces/Places (Soja, 1996) are not only Heterotopic (Foucault, 1984) in nature but are embodiments of hybridized Abstract spaces (Lefebvre, 1991) as well; that are dynamic, interactive and resilient in nature. The carriers of such toponymic transculturations and palimpsests are recorded in the contemporary urbanscape and cartography producing a hybrid and transcultural version of reality that is also based upon and subjected to transcultural processes of transformation, negotiation and mobility. This toponymy does not exhibit a simple, generalized or coherent facade rather is entwined in class, caste, spatial location, resistance and acceptance to stereotypical norms of development, changing times and reality. The toponymy of these urban villages began in rurality, in social structures and stratification, entwined in socio-cultural topographical space and which is now subjected to the influences of politics, power and urban development.

5. End Notes

¹ Kotla Mubarakpur, an urban village in South Delhi is known for location amongst some of the richest areas in Delhi. It refers to the small fortified location settled by the Sayyids. Kotla Mubarakpur Complex is a medieval village which at present is an upscale market place with a residential colony in South Delhi whose history can be traced to the prominent tomb of Muizud Din Mubarak Shah, son of Khizr Khan of the Sayyid dynasty of the fifteenth century Delhi Sultanate that ruled in India, and its adjoining mosque. Kotla Mubarakpur is named after him.

² Hauz Khas is a village in South Delhi and is named after an ancient water reservoir by the same name, which is at present a part of the extensive Hauz Khas Complex. In Urdu language, 'Hauz' means “water tank” (or lake) and 'Khas' means “royal”, giving it the meaning - the “Royal tank”. The large water tank or reservoir was first built by Alauddin Khalji as recorded in history to supply water to the inhabitants of Siri Fort. Hauz Khas village is a historic habitation around the Hauz Khas Complex, dating before to the establishment of New Delhi city. It existed as an urban village at the edge of larger Hauz Khas area, developed by DLF after the 1960s. The success of Hauz Khas village has led to the development of Shahpur Jat and Lado Sarai as fashion and design markets also in the South Delhi area.

³ OKHLA is an acronym for Old Kanak Housing & Land Authority. K for Canal was used since CH would have a different sound. Across the river Yamuna, in Uttar Pradesh, NOIDA was set up in post independence era to promote and diversify industrialization which was no longer supported within the Delhi city limits due to rules and regulations. OKHLA as an identity emerged in 1871 with the initiation of Agra canal works by the British.

⁴ NOIDA was set up for industrialization in the face of out migration of polluting and hazardous industries situated in Delhi to outside the boundary of Delhi. But it has in present day emerged as a rapidly expanding residential suburb, attractive due to cheaper property rates than Delhi.

⁵ Karkardooma on the other hand, was urbanized very recently (Khandekar 2013) and was earlier known as 'Karkar Dooan' as shown in an old Delhi map of 1912 but was always called 'Karkari' in popular usage. About 150 years ago, there was a twin Karkari village, just across the border in present day neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh. This Karkari was inhabited by people belonging to 'dom' or 'dum' community so the name 'Karkar Dooan' evolved."

⁶ South Delhi's Moti Bagh has become synonymous with government accommodation and a prominent flyover. Situated on the fringes of Chanakyapuri, the colony has derived its name from a bagh (garden) and the area's name, which was Arakpur Bagh Mochi. Till late 1960s, it was all agricultural land and a few houses. The people who were well off left the area to buy kothis (houses) elsewhere. Ironically, what remains of Arakpur Bagh Mochi is an unauthorised cluster awaiting regularization (Gupta 2011).

⁷ Ghonda cluster of villages include Ghonda Neemka Bangar alias Patparganj, Ghonda Chuahan Bangar, Ghonda Chauhan Khadar and Ghonda.

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