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Jawaharlal Nehru, Le Corbusier and an Attempt to Construct the ‘Ideal City’ in South Asia

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In this article an attempt is made to sketch the history of Chandigarh as the new ideal city in India and the capital first of Punjab and later of Punjab and Haryana. The analysis of the personal role of India’s Prime-Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and world’s leading architect Le Corbusier in the construction of Chandigarh is made. It is argued by the authors that the role of Jawaharlal Nehru in the planning and construction of Chandigarh was vital for its success. The importance of Chandigarh as the ideal city and the pattern for construction of new cities in India is investigated. The good sides and the bad sides of Chandigarh are studied. The authors stress the importance of Jawaharlal Nehru’s role as the initiator of the construction and the person who chose first Meyer and Nowicky and later Le Corbusier as the main architects of the city. It was Le Corbusier who made Chandigarh famous. The authors argue that it was Chandigarh that helped Le Corbusier With the most ambitious plan of the construction of a new modern city, the ideal city and the city of the future. Political turmoil, however, put the ideal city of Chandigarh into the fire pan of dispute over it between the new states of Punjab and Haryana. The authors trace the origins and the main stages of the conflict and suggest their own solution of the ‘Chandigarh problem.’

Keywords: Chandigarh, ‘ideal city’, India, Jawaharlal Nehru, Le Corbusier.

Introduction

The conception of an ideal city had already occurred to the great thinkers of antiquity, such as Plato and the titans of the Renaissance, recall the “Utopia” of Thomas More

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and the “The City of the Sun” of Tommaso Campanella. However, building a city of the future was seldom possible, both in terms of new architectural principles and building materials, and in terms of social harmony, which rejected the negative sides of historical heritage. Two great persons of the 20th century — Jawaharlal Nehru and Le Corbusier, a politician and an architect, attempted to build the city originally designed to be “ideal” — Chandigarh, a new capital of the Indian state of Punjab. This project, its implementation and implications are reviewed in the article. Research questions formulated in this article are as follows:

Why was it important for Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, to build a city of a new type, intended to become a model for other new urban settlements in the country?

What was the role of an architectural innovator Le Corbusier in constructing this city?

Was this project successful and did the Chandigarh experience impact the further urban construction in South Asia?

Chandigarh was addressed by both Russian and foreign authors. In 1972, A. A. Korotkaya published a booklet dedicated to Chandigarh [1] and in 1986, the same author published a special monograph on the modern architecture of India [2], where most place of Chapter III is given to this city. A special monograph reviewing the role of Le Corbusier in the construction of Chandigarh was written by V. Prakash, the son of Le Corbusier's assistant responsible for the construction of government buildings in Chandigarh. Certain problems related to the establishment or functioning of Chandigarh as a new capital of Punjab, as well as the dispute over Chandigarh between Punjab and Haryana are highlighted in the works of F. N. Yurlov and E. S. Yurlova (2010), Ishant Anand (2013), Balasuriya (2016). However, the historical aspects of Chandigarh construction and the territorial conflicts are not fully covered in published studies and this article aims to fill the gap, with view of the identified goals and objectives of the work. The primary goal of this study is to examine and analyze the causes, circumstances and outcomes of the construction of Chandigarh, a new type city in India, as well as disputes over it. The research subject is contemporary history of India.

The concept of a new capital of Punjab

Construction of a new capital of Punjab, the city of the future, was initiated by Jawaharlal Nehru, who invited the major architect of modernity, Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris) to implement this architectural miracle. As Nehru said, “in a country like India... we hold fast to traditions... but no tradition which makes you a prisoner of your mind or body is ever good” [3, p.222]. In this regard, referring to the new architectural trends in the 1950s, he stated that he warmly welcomed the architectural experiment implemented in Chandigarh by the French architect Le Corbusier. “It hits you on the head and makes you think... and imbibe new ideas, and the one thing which India requires in many fields is being hit on the head so that it may think” [3, p.215]. And further, “I like the creative approach, not being tied down by what has been done by our forefathers, but thinking in new terms, of light and air and ground and water and human beings. We probably would not have built the Taj Mahal today, even if we had the opportunity. It does not fit in with the modern society... In the ultimate analysis, a thing which fits in with the

social functions is beautiful” [3, p.215]. Indeed, Nehru’s plans did not include the construction of a mausoleum. He was preoccupied with building the city of the future, a city to be the capital of the Indian state of Punjab, in replacement of Lahore, the ancient capital of the region left to Pakistan.

This unconventional approach to cope with city planning in the setting of a dynamic political situation, in combination with innovative ideas of the team of architects created favorable conditions for the uprising of one of the most unusual cities in India — Chandigarh.

Many phenomena in the history of newly independent India are reflected in the history of Chandigarh. The inverse observation is also true: the experience of building Chandigarh influenced the urban planning policy of the young state, the Indian Union (the Republic of India since 1950). Despite the aspirations of modernists, Chandigarh, which became a symbol of New India in politics and architecture, failed to break free of the century-old problems related to the religious, social and political life of the country.

All the advantages and disadvantages of an Indian city and any city in general are seen in Chandigarh. A city, as observed by Russian socio-geographer Lappo, is “a special, incomparable creation of the human mind and hands. It is a living environment of the ever-increasing number of people and a place of concentration of increasingly diverse activities. Cities were named the engines of progress. They are places of birth and propagation of new ideas. They are creative laboratories, spiritual workshops of mankind” [4, p.3]. A city, in the interpretation of A. A. Suvorova, “opposes an open space, unbounded and unstructured, “untamed” space — the symbol of chaos. The foundation of a city is fencing off a humanized space and unlocking the calendar nature-weather cycle, under which a peasant lives” [5, p.13]. All this is especially characteristic of the Punjab, both the Indian and Pakistani, a region where cities are present, but life there was determined by the rural environment for centuries, giving the main means of subsistence and perceiving a mixed feeling of love and hatred towards a city. S. A. Sidorova’s observation reflects the influence of the living place on human: “Here, it is appropriate to refer to the place identity theory being developed since the late 1970s, which focuses on the influence of the environment on human self-preservation and self-consciousness. In its context, a person’s attachment to or dependence on a particular place (place of attachment/ place of dependence) is defined as “a set of memories, concepts, interpretations, ideas and feelings in relation to a well-known physical environment” [6, p.454]. We should add that the city in the contemporary history of India is the arena of the main political events, the engine of progress, the source of social problems and political upheavals. Hence, the Chandigarh phenomenon can be understood only against exploring the unprecedented experience of building a new “ideal city” in the history of India and under consideration of the severe dispute between two states (Punjab and Haryana, originating from division of a single Punjab in 1966) for this city.

Predecessors to Chandigarh

A special place in the history of medieval architecture of India is occupied by Fatehpur Sikri, a “ghost town”, located forty kilometers off Agra. This town was built in the 16th century and was meant to be a new capital. The architecture of this unique town built of red sandstone has become an example of synthesis of the Mughal and local architec-

tural traditions [2, p. 46]. As in many Mughal towns, gardens were paid special attention in planning. Trees, flowers, pavilions and impoundments decorated the town. However, Fatehpur Sikri proved unfit for life due to the lack of water sources and was soon abandoned.

In modern times, Jaipur was considered a model of the ideal city. The capital and the largest city of the state of Rajasthan was founded by (and named after) Maharaja Jai Singh II in 1727, as the capital city of the Mewar principality. Construction of the city was directed by the famous Bengali architect Vidyadhara Bhattacharya. Jai Singh was an architect and astronomer, so Jaipur planning took into consideration the concepts described in *Vastu Shastra* and the astronomical principles.

The layout of this unique city represents a rectangular network of streets dividing it into equal sectors, which bears resemblance to the ancient cities of the Indus Valley and Chandigarh. Each quarter provides for the necessary elements of urban infrastructure — bazaars, religious buildings.

The tradition of the ideal city was further developed in the creations of English architects who worked in British India. The complex of the new capital, New Delhi was created here by the efforts of the architects E. Lutyens, H. Baker and others, as well as the work of 30,000 Indian laborers. According to K. Z. Ashrafyan, Moscow indologist and an expert in Delhi architecture, “New Delhi was constructed upon the radial pattern. Ensemble of Government buildings was raised on an artificial platform (4.5 m high) erected on a natural hill and dominated the city” [7, p. 238].

Both before and after the construction of New Delhi, but before India gained independence, the British built model settlements for the “white population” — “white towns” or cantonments that existed in almost every large administrative center of British India. Cantonments were located on a dry, elevated soil area placed in a way to avoid wind-spread dampness or putrid vapor flows, odors, and the accompanying diseases from “native cities” [6, p. 453].

Independent India incorporated the architectural experience of different epochs and cultures, as well as the theoretical legacy that found expression in the science of “*Vastu Shastra*” and the “*Shilpa Shastras*” treatises [8, p. 71–80].

Jawaharlal Nehru and the construction of Chandigarh

From the early inception of independent India (1947), Jawaharlal Nehru, its first Prime Minister and the “architect of independent India” strived to facilitate the modernization in the country and building modern cities of the new type, the first of which was Chandigarh.

Nehru viewed the future independent India as a modern socialist state that assimilated the best from its own past and the past of other countries, first and foremost — European countries, and at the same time, abandoned all past mistakes and sins, such as national and religious discord, caste system and untouchability. In earlier days, during his imprisonment in the Ahmednagar jail, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote “An Autobiography”, where he expressed his ideas on the history of India and its future. Nehru’s other work, “The Discovery of India”, contains his reflections on the future organization of the country. The letters to his daughter Indira (published in Russian in three volumes entitled “Glimpses of World History”), also provide interesting information about his vision of the past and the

future of humanity. Analysis of his philosophical legacy allows to place Jawaharlal Nehru among the outstanding thinkers of that time [9, p. 3].

These works, as well as Nehru's articles and speeches give us an insight into his vision of the future of India and the role of cities in it. In "The Discovery of India", Nehru writes about the ability to synthesize: "...for our cultural tradition, we see in the past that some inner urge towards synthesis, derived essentially from the Indian philosophic outlook, was the dominant feature of Indian cultural, and even racial, development. Each incursion of foreign elements was a challenge to this culture, but it was met successfully by a new synthesis and a process of absorption. This was also a process of rejuvenation and new blooms of culture arose out of it, the background and essential basis, however, remaining much the same" [10, p. 77]. In "Glimpses of World History", Nehru welcomes the ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and "his novel and rather daring social and political theories set the minds of many afire with new ideas and new resolves" [11, p. 101]. Finally, in "An Autobiography", Nehru confides that he was and still remained a bourgeois [12, p. 61]. We will see that his creation, Chandigarh, is the nearest to the western city, where the bourgeois class, literally, the class of citizens, was formed. Already in the 1930s, Nehru acted as a proponent of progress in social relations and in the vision of the future Indian city. E. N. Komarov notes: "His statements dated to the mid-1930s reflected both the need to overcome resistance to social transformation and the commitment to compromise" [13, p. 63].

Moreover, Nehru's pioneer approach to social problems declared itself in his attitude to architecture and to Chandigarh. In an Inaugural Address presented at the Seminar on Architecture, Nehru said, in particular: "I do not like every building in Chandigarh. I like some of them very much. I like the general conception of the township very much but, above all, I like the creative approach, not being tied down to what has been done by our forefathers, but thinking in new terms, of light and air and ground and water and human beings"[14, p. 176].

Construction of Chandigarh. Underlying factors and backstory

Independence came to India the other way than it had been envisaged by Jawaharlal Nehru and his companions in the struggle for independence. In 1947, India was divided into two independent dominions — India and Pakistan. This partition led to the separation of Assam, Bengal and part of Punjab on a religious basis. The former British province of Punjab was transformed into West Punjab and East Punjab, with the capital Lahore going to Pakistan. The city of Shimla was designated the temporary capital of the Indian Punjab and remained the formal capital until 1960, when Chandigarh was built. However, it was obvious that neither Shimla, nor other Indian city existing at that time were capable of performing the metropolitan functions over this vast and strategically important territory.

The idea of establishing Chandigarh was put forward in 1948, almost immediately after the partition of India. The psychological trauma of the Punjabis caused by the loss of Lahore was great.

Moscow researcher Kashin wrote an article dedicated to the Punjab partition in 1947 and the loss of Lahore for India, where he provides an accurate description of complex confessional and other problems faced by Punjab: "According to the 1941 census,

7.6 million (26.6%) of 28.4 million population of the province were followers of Hinduism. Historically, districts of their predominance were located in the eastern part of the province, whereas their economic interests covered mainly the cities of Central Punjab, where Hindus held strong positions in industrial production, commerce and banking The Muslim majority numbered 16.2 million, or 57% of the population, which made it the second largest province after Bengal.... In the western districts of the province, Muslims made more than 80% of the population, and in the central districts — from 47% to 63%. These districts hold most of the province's irrigation facilities, 80% of irrigated land, and the major industrial capacities, including Lahore, the historical and cultural center of Punjab. ... The third largest religious denomination were Sikhs — 3.8 million, or 13% of the population. They were mainly aggregated in districts and principalities of the Central Punjab, ranging from 10 to 40% of the population. Jats Sikhs were known as enterprising farmers. They owned the largest land plots and contributed up to 46% of land tax revenue in the Lahore district. The British particularly valued their combat quality and willingly recruited Sikhs into the special regiments” [15, p. 164–165].

Lahore was one of the Indian capitals under Akbar and Jahangir ruling, for many years served as a capital of Ranjit Singh's state, later became the center of the British province of Punjab, contained holy places of Sikhs and Muslims, as well as most sacred Hindu shrines, was the center of Hindu money-lending and capital, and the headquarters of Hindu socio-religious and political organization “Arya Samaj”, which strived to “return” the Muslims to Hinduism. The loss of Lahore came as a tremendous disaster for India. Without Lahore, Indian Punjab was seen as a miserable cripple and Shimla, as a temporary capital, could not solve the problem.

The newly formed government of Jawaharlal Nehru was concerned about the problem, what a city of independent India should be. For several decades after gaining independence, this problem has occupied the minds of leading Indian architects, urban planners, and even Western professionals. They offered various solutions for large cities and designed new ones. One of the most important phases in the development of Indian architecture was the birth of a new city in the Himalayan foothills, which was destined to become the capital of the Indian Punjab, and starting from 1966 — of two Indian states, Haryana and Punjab. As envisioned by Jawaharlal Nehru, this city was a symbol of the new time, a sign of strength and development of the newly formed state.

In 1948, Jawaharlal Nehru decided to build a new capital for the Punjab on the territory near the temple devoted to the Hindu deity Chandi, which became Chandigarh (“the Chandi Fortress”). The Government of India allocated a territory previously occupied by over 50 villages for the construction of a new capital. On April 2, 1953, Nehru laid the foundation stone for the new capital of Punjab [16]. Drafting the city project was originally tasked to the American architect Albert Mayer and his partner, Polish-born architect Matthew (Maciej) Nowicki. During the Second World War and in 1946–1947, Mayer worked as an engineer in North India, knew personally Jawaharlal Nehru and thus received an assignment to build a new city. The Chandigarh planning project developed by Mayer and Nowicki represented a quarterly city with a green zone, with emphasized cellular areas and traffic separation. This plan considered specifics of the historical and cultural development of India and the regional climatic conditions. Since the Mayer — Nowicki plan was not implemented, we do not discuss it in detail but will mention that climate characteristics were also taken into account by Le Corbusier, who used many ele-

ments of the original plan. However, the Meier-Nowicki plan envisaged the construction of shopping centers in the form of public squares (piazzas) in residential areas. Le Corbusier replaced this element of the plan with standard “market streets”.

Mayer discontinued his work on Chandigarh after developing a Master Plan for the city when his architect-partner Matthew Nowicki died in a plane crash in 1950. Le Corbusier succeeded this work.

Le Corbusier. Chandigarh city project

During the period of independence of India, the concept of a new phase in its history generated interest in innovative architecture presented by Le Corbusier. Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris, is known to the entire world under the pseudonym Le Corbusier (“raven”) assumed in 1917. He was born in the small Swiss town of La Chaux de Fonds in 1887. His father was an artisan who enameled watches. Charles-Edouard did not receive professional education as an architect, he was a self-educated person. The young architect designed his first project when he was 18 and used the earning to travel across Europe. Upon returning from a trip, Le Corbusier becomes a teacher at Arts Décoratifs (Arts School) and opens his own architectural practice. Here one of the first innovative ideas will be born — the Dom-ino House, or the “modulor” — a prototype of the future mass production houses, where every panel-part can be replaced or removed. A few years later, the architect leaves his hometown and moves to Paris, where he opens a workshop [17, p. 37].

In Paris, Le Corbusier voiced his famous five principles of the modern architecture, referred to as “five points of a new architecture” or “five principles of Le Corbusier”. These principles are:

1. First, the house in Le Corbusier’s vision was raised above the ground with reinforced concrete columns. Thus, the land occupied by the building was released for the construction of a garden, a parking lot or other needs.
2. Moreover, the architect did not only free the space under the house. His concept of building flat roofs –terraces doubled this area.
3. The third principle proposed by the architect — the free ground plan — was made possible by using reinforced concrete in the building framework.
4. The same also allowed using ribbon windows that provide better illumination.
5. The free façade also did not depend on structural support and could be made of any material. The walls were no longer the supporting structures. A total freedom of form and expression [18, p. 7].

A particular feature of Le Corbusier’s style is the use of concrete and reinforced concrete. This material was gaining popularity in the early 20th century. Note that concrete and cement were expensive in India and thus, many buildings in Chandigarh had to be built of brick, despite Le Corbusier’s plan. At the same time, the principles of Le Corbusier were not alien to India. As noted by A. A. Korotskaya, “if not all the five, at least four principles of modern architecture suggested by Le Corbusier as far back as the 1920s, are not new or alien to traditional Indian construction and are successfully applied in these specific conditions of nature and climate, interpreted in their own way in various parts of India. For example, these are: flat roof-garden, roof-umbrella, framing system, free construction plan, a house on columns, all widespread in India” [2, p. 118].

Having visited India for the first time, Le Corbusier was greatly discouraged by the local climate and dirt. He agreed to come twice a year and perform general management over construction. He transferred the supervision of construction projects to his cousin Pierre Jeanneret. The friendship and strong support of Prime Minister Nehru were particularly helpful to realization of Le Corbusier's dreams and architectural ideas in India. Nehru wanted Chandigarh to become a modern city symbolizing faith in the freedom, democratic and scientific independence of the new country.

Chandigarh: construction and layout

In conditions of economic chaos, financial distress, lack of qualified builders, industrial base, mechanical equipment and materials (cement, steel), the modern city was mainly built in three years (1952–1955). Chandigarh is located 100 km off the Bhakra Nangal Hydroelectric Power Station, which supplies the city with electricity, provides a background for its further growth and transformation into a major industrial and commercial center of an important agricultural region. However, the size of the city and its population were supposed to be limited. The population of Chandigarh should amount to 150,000 by the end of the first construction phase and in the next phase it was expected at 500,000 [1, p. 5].

A picturesque place near the Himalayan mountains was selected for the new capital. The architect added the artificial water body — Lake Sukhna to the natural beauties of the place (groves, rivers) The city, as viewed by Le Corbusier, is “a symbol of man's struggle with nature, a symbol of his victory over it, a man-made organism designed to protect man and create conditions for his work; this is the fruit of human creativity” [18, p. 156].

Formally, all works were guided by Le Corbusier, but his team included his cousin, Pierre Jeanneret, English architects Maxwell Fry and his wife Jane Drew, local architects J. K. Chowdhary, S. D. Sharma, J. Malhotra, A. B. Mathur, P. P. Varma (Chief Engineer) and others. Le Corbusier designed the Master Plan of Chandigarh, landscaping project, as well as the Capitol complex: buildings of the Parliament, or Legislative Assembly, the Secretariat, and the High Court. The metaphor of a human being, or the “modulor” system of Le Corbusier was employed in the plan.

In accordance with Le Corbusier's view of the city as a developing organism, the designers divided it into functional zones. The administrative zone with the Capitol and government buildings is placed on the elevated plateau, towards the mountains and near the lake. It is adjoined by the zone of educational and sports facilities with a large park and the “Leisure Valley”. Here, the university, stadiums, museums, clubs, and a library are located. The zone of industrial enterprises is separated from the city by a green belt.

The system of dedicated transport arteries ensuring the maximum traffic safety formed the basis of Chandigarh's layout. This system includes seven types of roads. A rectangular network of high-speed transport passages divided the city into 30 urban districts. The main highway leading to the Capitol cuts the city into two almost equal parts. At the intersection of the main highway and the transverse street connecting the city with the industrial zone, there is a business center, T-shaped in plan, with the adjacent large green space intended for trade fair. In addition to this center, there are “market streets”. All districts are landscaped, with bicyclist and walking paths inside. Every urban district has its individuality: a free picturesque layout, landscaping and architecture. The quarters

designed by J. Malhotra, P. Jeanneret, and Jane Drew are particularly indicative [1, p.7], each section of space is used rationally, both in the social aspect and in terms of visual perception. Notably, Le Corbusier suggested attributing names to the streets according to their functions, which was not supported — like everywhere in India, streets were named after the prominent political figures and important events in Indian history [1, p. 12].

Designers endeavored to adjust the buildings to summer heat by applying traditional methods: closed internal courtyards creating microclimate, flat roofs often used as terraces, and a traditional Jali — a window lattice covering window openings and loggias instead of glass. Innovation was presented by “brise soleil”, brick and concrete corbels on the outer walls of buildings, placed in such a way that the wall surfaces are cooled with their own shadow in summer, and do not lose solar heat in winter. Brise soleil and Jali became the main eye-catching decorative motif forming a fancy geometric pattern on the facades of houses. [1, p.21].

Concrete and reinforced concrete structures were used in Chandigarh for the construction of government buildings. Here, the main building material is baked brick, due to the low costs of handmade brick, as well as the need to scrimp on cement.

Chandigarh became one of the most ambitious urban sites of its time and the center of contemporary Indian landscape art. The Master Plan prepared by Le Corbusier envisaged many gardens and parks for comfortable living of residents. The man-made Sukhna Lake is surrounded with gardens and a wide promenade area. The largest rose garden in Asia was opened in Chandigarh in 1967 under the guidance of Dr. M. S. Randhawa.

A prominent Indian architect Charles Correa noted that Le Corbusier’s buildings stimulated the creativity of a sound galaxy of Indian architects, that the echoes of medieval Indian cities, such as Jaisalmer, can be heard in his creations [2, p. 118]. The influence of Le Corbusier is perceived in the works of Indian architects B. Joshi and G. Sarabhai. The school of Le Corbusier lists A. Sharma (Chief architect of Chandigarh, after the departure of Le Corbusier and P. Jeanneret), B. P. Mathur, J. P. Malhotra, S. Mehta, A. Gupta [2, p. 131].

Chandigarh in politics

A cruel irony is that Chandigarh, the symbol of the new independent India, became the “bone of contention” between the states of Punjab and Haryana that emerged in 1966, and it still remains their capital city. By 1965, much of the administrative complex and residential buildings of Chandigarh was built. The city took over the metropolitan functions from Shimla and was famous worldwide as an ideal city, garden city and City Beautiful. At the same time, neither the urban space structure, nor the status of the Punjab capital suggested the presence and influence of the religious factor. The city plan had no temples, mosques, or gurdwaras, though they were built in private. Chandigarh, constructed by the efforts of the entire country, became a bone of contention between forces, which, according to Nehru, had no place in modern India.

In his famous speech on August 14, 1947, Nehru said: “At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom” [19, p.393]. It was assumed that the traditions would remain but not interfere with the beautiful future of India, being only a cultural background, a baggage to keep and to pick out a requisite when required. Meanwhile, the reality indicated that tradition has a huge impact on the pop-

ulation and religion in Punjab remains among the major factors of politics. And Punjab Province of British India was divided in 1947 upon the religious principle.

In the Indian part of the Punjab, over half of the population was Hindu, about one-third — Sikhs. Until some time, the Sikhs were not disposed to secede from India, but the split of Punjab was perceived as a tragedy. Their belonging to India was viewed as a better option than the absorption of the entire Punjab by Pakistan. In the 1960s, the danger of a religious-based split reappeared. The main buildings of Chandigarh were completed by the second half of the 1960s. Jawaharlal Nehru was adamantly opposed to separatism in the frontier state of Punjab. But in 1966, after his death, his daughter, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, allowed the division of the Indian Punjab into Haryana and Punjab, as well as the separation of part of the mountainous Punjab territories with Shimla into Himachal Pradesh. In the newly established Punjab, the majority of the population was Sikh, while in the neighboring Haryana — the Hindu.

Chandigarh, the former capital of the great Punjab, became a union territory — the capital of both states, administrated from Delhi. However, this was unacceptable for the Sikhs in Punjab and the Hindus in Haryana, both claiming Chandigarh as their capital only.

The search for a special identity by Sikhs reflects a worldwide trend to (over)emphasize religious or ethnic identity and, if possible, to form a claim to a national authenticity, “sameness”, “nativism”. According to Benedict Andersen, the prominent Asian expert and theoretician who proposed the term “imaginary communities,” Sikhs are an “imaginary community”, “imagined as hereditary and sovereign” [20, p. 6]. Another prominent theoretician, sociologist of religion Malcolm Hamilton, when reflecting on the definition of religion, acknowledges its ethnic component and sees the possibility of religious nationalism [21, p. 22], as shown in the case of Sikhism. In the 1920s, the powerful Akali movement led to the politicization of the Sikhism religion and the religious connotation was assumed by every political party in Punjab. The law on the Committees of Sikh Temples (The Sikh Gurdwaras Act) adopted in 1925 by the Legislative Assembly of the Punjab transferred the Gurdwaras under the control of Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Kamiti, an extremely politicized organization. The Gurdwaras Committee took control over the Sikh temples in the cities and settlements of Taran Taran, Nankana Sahib, Sialkot, Anandpur, Khadur Sahib, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Peshawar [22, p. 116]. At that time, Chandigarh city was yet inexistent and the village was known only for the Hindu shrine.

The division of Punjab on linguistic principle failed to solve the problems of the Sikh state but gave rise to those new. As noted by H. Oberoi, nowhere except for Malwa (Amritsar region) Sikhs made up the majority. The division of Punjab meant the presence of large minorities in the Sikh Punjab and the Hindu Haryana [23, p. 44]. Belsky and Furman note that “the turbulent period of the late 1966, with the flaming struggle around the delimitation between Punjab and Haryana, the Acali demand that Chandigarh, the capital of the old Punjab, is to be transferred to the little Punjab ... ends with the elections of 1967” [24, p. 81].

In 1973, the Akali Dal Sikh religious party adopted an important Anandpur Resolution in the Holy city of Anandpur. This resolution reiterated in a systematic way all the demands of the Sikhs, which were proclaimed to be a special nation. The Anandpur resolution also required the transfer of Chandigarh to the Sikh Punjab as the capital of this state exclusively [24, p. 83]. The participation of Sikhs, including thousands of the Akali

Dal members, in antigovernment riots prior to declaring National Emergency in India, set the Central government against them. Thousands of Sikhs were arrested during the years of Emergency in 1975–1977.

The political crisis in Punjab in the first half of the 1980s, which in the summer of 1984 led to the military assault of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Indian army and the assassination of Indira Gandhi by the Sikhs on October 31, 1984, also affected Chandigarh, though chief events took place in Amritsar. A severe and rigid assessment of its core content was given by F.N. Yurlov and E. S. Yurlova who wrote: “the events in Punjab ... did not happen in isolation but against the background of multiple continuous clashes and conflicts, primarily on economic grounds, but also assumed a religious-community shape. The gist of these events was that the Punjab, enriched through the “green revolution”, did not wish to share its wealth with other, poorer and subsidized states...” [26, p.386]. The Rajiv Gandhi — Longowal Accord signed on July 21, 1985, “covered a wide range of Sikh demands. The government took commitment to release the arrested ... to prepare the All-India Gurdwaras (Management) Act... Chandigarh was to be transferred to Punjab in exchange for some Hindi-speaking villages adjacent to Haryana, and it was decided that the territories passing to Haryana would be determined by a special commission by December 21, 1985, and Chandigarh will be exchanged for these lands on January 26, 1986” [24, p. 94].

However, the transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab did not occur. Shortly after signing the Rajiv Gandhi-Longowal Accord, Longowal was killed by two young Sikhs who accused him of betraying the “Panth” way (the Sikh religion. — *E. A., Yu. K.*). On January 6, 1987, the Sarbat Sabha (Sikh meeting) was convened in Amritsar, which was followed by the seizure of the Golden Temple by radicals. On May 12, 1987, Rajiv Gandhi requested the President to introduce the Presidential rule in Punjab for 12 months [24, p.103]. In May 1988, the Black Thunder military operation was conducted; unlike the Blue Star operation of 1984, the Golden Temple was not assaulted, but the complex was taken in a siege and was finally liberated from terrorists. It is noteworthy that in the 1970s and 1980s, Chandigarh was a key topic for both Punjab and the center, but direct hostilities took place (on this and other occasions) in Amritsar.

Obviously, the Chandigarh specifics, the presence of huge open spaces, a large proportion of Hindus and other people loyal to the center made the seizure of Chandigarh by terrorists hopeless. However, the terrorist attacks in Chandigarh happened. “In December 1990, one of the Panthic Committees (Sikh activists. — *E. A., Yu. K.*) led by terrorists issued instructions to the Indian media. From now on, the terrorists must not be called “terrorists” or “extremists”, but only “militants”, and the awarded general’s and colonel’s ranks must be referred to without quote marks [24, p. 108]. The Director of Chandigarh Station of Radio India, who did not obey the orders of terrorists, was killed in 1990 [24, p. 108].

From 1987 to early 1990s, Chandigarh survived through a wave of the Sikh terror. Extremists forced girls in Chandigarh to change skirts and blouses to traditional Shalvar Kamiz and Sikh boys were forced to wear turbans and beards. A gurdwara was erected in the University campus center, where Granth Sahib was read without interruption [24, p. 108].

In November 1989, the coalition government of the V.P. Singh United Front took power over the center, and in Punjab, the Akali Dal group headed by Simranjit Singh Mann got domination in the Legislative Assembly. V. P. Singh soon arrived in Amritsar,

made a tour around the city in an open car, visited the Golden Temple, and gave his word that the promise of the center to transfer Chandigarh to Punjab would be fulfilled. He became increasingly popular in the state but the inability to transfer Chandigarh exacerbated the conflict between the center and Punjab again [25, p. 500]. An active role in the conflict was taken by the state of Haryana, where the strong Jat Lok Dal peasant party appeared, whose leader Hari Lal demanded Chandigarh for Haryana. Indeed, there are large cities of religious glory in Punjab, such as Amritsar and Anandpur, which may well be designated as the capital of Punjab. But Haryana had actually no cities in the 1990s, small towns, such as Ambaly and Faridabad, could not qualify for the metropolitan status.

In the 2000s, the situation in Punjab was improved, and Chandigarh returned to the peaceful life. However, free circulation of weapons during the peak of terror resulted in numerous criminal city gangs that appeared and were separated upon religious or territorial principle.

The dispute over Chandigarh. Prospects for the evolving situation

In this complex, almost dead-end situation, as we see it, two possible solutions are offered by the rapid urbanization of India, with Chandigarh as its first case and symbol. The rapidly growing suburb of Delhi (formally, an independent city within Haryana), Gurgaon (Gurugram), a millionaire city with its own metro network that also links it with Delhi, can become the new capital of Haryana instead of Chandigarh, which would go to Punjab. At the same time, urbanization offers another possible scenario. Since the delimitation between the states occurred more than once and Haryana with Hindi as an official language loses its position of the linguistic state, possible solution is either merging it with Uttar Pradesh or its transformation into a part of Big Delhi.

The influence of Chandigarh on the South Asia urban planning policy

Striving for renovation of the capitals and main administrative cities was observed throughout South Asia since independence of India and Pakistan. It is interesting to compare the construction of an ideal city in India and in Pakistan with its capital Islamabad. Islamabad was built in the period 1960 to 1980s, and like Chandigarh, it was intended to be the new capital of Pakistan instead of Karachi. The political decision to build a new capital of Pakistan near the Punjabi city of Rawalpindi was made in 1959. Islamabad was to become “a symbol of national pride and people’s aspirations”, while the transfer of the capital far inland (1,200 km North-East of Karachi, near Rawalpindi) was caused not so much by a more favorable climate as by the strategic and social causes”. The construction project for Islamabad was developed by a team of Pakistani and European architects headed by Greek architect Constantinos Apostolos Doxiadis (1914–1975). Doxiadis is considered the leading architect of Pakistan; he also designed the Teacher-Student Centre, University of Dhaka (East Pakistan, currently Bangladesh). Doxiadis was a supporter of the “open city” concept (open-ended), that is, unlike Chandigarh, the city was not locked in a ring of greenery, but had an exit in one of directions for further development.

Doksiadis developed the theory of ekistics as a science of human settlements, where the key element was the house, the same as Le Corbusier. As in Chandigarh, houses were arranged in quarters, but Doxiadis gave more consideration to local traditions than Le Corbusier.

We should also note the similarities and differences in the architecture of Chandigarh and Ahmedabad, two Indian cities. Their architectural appearance was significantly influenced by the work of Le Corbusier. However, in Chandigarh, Le Corbusier had an opportunity to develop a Master Plan for the entire city, whereas his scope in Ahmedabad was restricted. Ahmedabad has a historically established urban node. Le Corbusier got orders for the construction of residential and public buildings in the existing urban space.

In the 1960s, when the construction of main buildings in Chandigarh was completed, building of Gandhinagar, a new capital of Gujarat, was launched on the Sabarmati River bank not far from Ahmedabad. The construction of Gandhinagar was called by the same reasons as Chandigarh. On the one hand, partition of the huge state of Bombay into Gujarat and Maharashtra (1960), on the other hand, striving for modernity/ modernism prevented by the medieval housing system of Ahmedabad. These two major objectives were resolved by the construction of the new capital of Gujarat in the immediate vicinity of Ahmedabad and, at the same time, near the “Sabarmati Ashram” — the historic headquarters of Mahatma Gandhi, after whom the city was named.

Gandinagar was designed by Indian architects H. K. Mewada and Prakash M. Apte. Both received education in the West, both assisted Le Corbusier in the construction of Chandigarh and took advantage of this experience. Gandhinagar has a layout of squares with alphabetical designation. The city is crossed by straight avenues and boulevards located parallel and perpendicular to each other. The city has a good public transport system and in the future it will be connected with Ahmedabad and be served by two metro lines. Here is a classic case of the development and successful promotion of Le Corbusier's ideas.

The construction of Auroville made no less significant event in India and globally as that of Chandigarh. However, politicians played a smaller role here, as compared with philosophers. Its construction was initiated near Puducherry (Pondicherry) in 1968, by the enthusiasts from around the world guided by the Frenchman Roger Angers [2, p. 184]. The city has a concentric system, somewhat similar to the Chandigarh system, but instead of quarters there are autonomous villages poorly connected to the center, where the main buildings and the headquarters of the movement named after the great Indian thinker Aurobindo Ghosh are located.

In recent decades, the “temptations of Chandigarh” in rapidly urbanized India are particularly great. “Cyber-cities-gardens” are constructed around the old capitals, Gurgaon/ Gurugram and Noida — near Delhi, Cyberabad — near Hyderabad. In 2015, the construction of a new capital for Andhra Pradesh — the city of Amaravati (near Vijayawada) was announced, which is built upon the Chandigarh experience.

Conclusion

Constructing a new city of Chandigarh in India represented an important social experiment, which, on the one hand, continued the traditions of ancient architecture and ideal cities in India, and on the other hand — was intended to show India the way to the

radiant future. This experiment was implemented under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, the “architect of New India”, and the outstanding Swiss (French) architect Le Corbusier.

In the establishment of Chandigarh, Nehru was guided by the ideas of liberation from caste and class prejudices, his desire to liberate the city of new India from slum areas. He succeeded to some extent: Le Corbusier designed an ideal city, free from the social evils of the past, allowing for the natural and climatic conditions of the country.

Unfortunately, the nightmares of the past impersonated by religious movements reminded of themselves in a dispute over Chandigarh between the Sikh Punjab formed in 1966 and the Hindu Haryana.

However, the influence of Chandigarh experience on India is enormous; in the 1960s, Gandhinagar, a new capital of Gujarat and the “ideal city” of Auroville were constructed.

In recent decades, the “temptations of Chandigarh” in rapidly urbanized India are particularly great. “Cyber-cities-gardens” are constructed around the old capitals, Gurgaon/ Gurugram and Noida — near Delhi, Cyberabad — near Hyderabad. In 2015, the construction of a new capital for Andhra Pradesh — the city of Amaravati (near Vijayawada) was announced, which is built upon the Chandigarh experience.

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Джавахарлал Неру, Ле Корбюзье и попытка создать «идеальный город» в Южной Азии

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В статье дается очерк истории создания Чандигарха — новой столицы индийского Пенджаба, анализируются роль премьер-министра Индии Джавахарлала Неру и главного архитектора города Ле Корбюзье в создании Чандигарха, роль Чандигарха как образца для подражания при создании новых индийских городов, а также негативные аспекты создания новой столицы — превращение Чандигарха в «яблоко раздора» между Пенджабом и Харьяной, незавершенность отдельных объектов и провал ряда идей и принципов, которыми руководствовались Неру и Ле Корбюзье при создании «идеального города». Авторы отмечают, что потеря старой столицы Лахора (отошла к Пакистану) для Индии и для руководства страны стала огромной травмой. В этой ситуации правительство Индии во главе с Джавахарлалом Неру приняло решение о создании новой столицы для индийского Пенджаба. Интерес Джавахарлала Неру ко всему новому, его желание построить новую Индию, свободную от негативных явлений прошлого,

определили смелое решение строить новый столичный город в Пенджабе силами западных и индийских архитекторов. Сперва создать план нового города близ деревни Чандигарх было предложено А. Майеру и М. Новицки, однако после гибели последнего и отхода Майера от дел Джавахарлал Неру пригласил в Индию для завершения данного градостроительного проекта всемирно известного зодчего Ле Корбюзье. Несмотря на известность, Ле Корбюзье не имел возможности реализовать большую часть масштабных градостроительных проектов. Это удалось ему только в Индии, где он создавал важные архитектурные комплексы, и главным образом — в Чандигархе, который можно назвать детищем Джавахарлала Неру и Ле Корбюзье. Ко времени завершения строительства основных комплексов в Чандигархе, призванном стать новой столицей Пенджаба, в этом штате началась кампания за создание лингвистического штата для пенджабиговорящих сикхов, закончившаяся разделом индийского Пенджаба на собственно Пенджаб, где преобладали сикхи, и Харьяну с преимущественно индусским населением. Авторы анализируют продолжающуюся борьбу штатов за Чандигарх и предлагают свое решение проблемы.

Ключевые слова: Чандигарх, «идеальный город», Индия, Джавахарлал Неру, Ле Корбюзье.

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