

Role of conservation professional in designing educational initiatives which results in establishing a sensitive approach towards the development of heritage zones in the old city of Nagpur.

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ABSTRACT

Indian cities portray the picture of varied characters. Each of these variety shape India as the most diversified country in the whole world. Since many of Indian cities and its citizens, possess the unique cultural and traditional practices which are inherited among the people of a particular city. Each of these practices contribute in creating a character and flavor of the cities. These characters such cities are enriched with the presence of unique qualities which are also reflected in the attire, cuisines, cultural and social practices of people formulating a unique character of respective city.

Indian cities today are transforming rapidly, taking a case of Nagpur as a city, which is witnessing the advent of modernization which include the development of metro transit corridor which is laying its network across the city, which proves as an important catalyst to the massive development taking place in city, which somehow leaves a greater impact on harming the old city core character, as the old structures which provide the key role in establishing this heritage character of old city core of Nagpur are being lost and forgotten, various such examples are documented by author which city authority and local people couldnt conserve. This draws an attention towards a forgetting character of Nagpurs historic core, which we may lose in coming years because of such a rapid development.

Therefore, to safeguard the city character and its heritage structures, which formulates as the prime evidences of past and patronage that city possess from centuries. Thus the author aims to share his designed workshops one of which is titled as 'documenting the undocumented' the prime objective of the workshop is to conduct architectural documentation of the undocumented heritage structures, majority of which are in private possession. Also there are few educative initiatives, which attempt to 'Redefine the conventional heritage walks into a heritage dialogue' which are conducted with an intension to develop a dialogue in the presence of professionals from various disciplines such as history, archaeology, architecture, sociology, government authorities etc. also in the presence of students, academicians and royal decedents with similar objective of conducting a dialogue. another initiative which demands the involvement of ones hobby and the practice of same helps to develop a strong association among the local residents with the heritage structure of a significant value in the historic core of Nagpur city. The paper aims to share few of such models designed towards the safeguarding of heritage, by providing a participatory and educative model which involve workshops, initiatives, series of interaction, multi-disciplinary professional participation, conducting a dialogue among students, professionals, academicians etc. these models of workshop and educational initiatives are also designed keeping a futuristic application of them with the development strategies.

1. Introduction :

India is a land to multi-culture, multi-lingual, multi-social structure, with varying belief systems and practices. It is land of variety of architectural style and construction material and techniques. It holds diverse cultural characters, which carry a unique identity in itself. With the existence of layered historic narrative in terms of events that occurred in past. The country builds an impeccable premise for significant historic tales. Having a prospect of working as a conservation professional especially as a qualified conservation architect, the country has several opportunities to offer especially in the cities with considerable scale in term of its population, called as tier-2 cities, the heritage as a property and practice is often neglected or is in endangered conditions in these cities. Taking a case of such a city, paper aim to discuss the practice by author as young conservation architect where author have established few participatory models of educative initiative, social partaking programs, interactive and documentation workshops, etc.

Nagpur

Nagpur, the second capital of Maharashtra, is an administrative cultural and educational center of resource rich Vidharbha region. It is one of the, major cities of central India and it hold a significant historic narrative, which begin from the era of Gond around early 18th century. Bakht Buland, a Gond king, led to the foundation of town, by amassing the nearby hamlets, joining them with streets. The dawn of Gonds, establish significant activities in city as city was linked with the Gondwana province, which led the influence of Gond art, culture and way of life. Thus city and its neighborhood areas are rich in terms of numerous examples of Gond forts, which recite the magnificence, brave,

defensive and comparatively a low articulated Gond architecture. Architecture wise the gonds crafted several gateways, tombs, palaces which stand still even today in the neighboring cities like Chandrapur, Bhandara and Gondia. The region even today describes the essence of Gond belief system and culture in its festivals and lifestyle.

By the end of reign of Nawab Chand Sultan, in

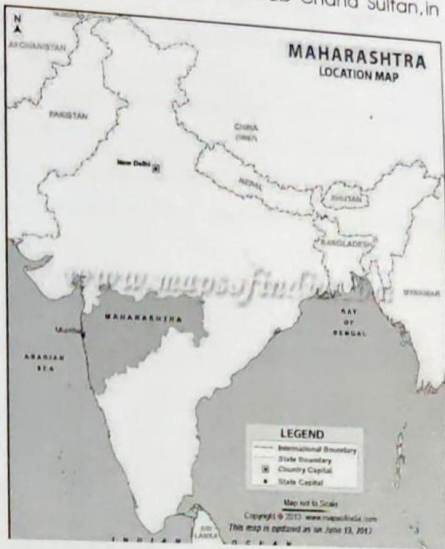


Figure 1: Map of India showing Maharashtra and map of Maharashtra showing Nagpur and neighboring district. Source: Map of India

1940 AD, the region lost control from Gond and in 1743 AD, it became a significant kingdom to Bhonsales and added as an important center to Maratha kingdom. Raja Raghuji Bhonsale I and his successors governed and led to the

expansion of kingdom of Nagpur under the Maratha rule. The city witnessed its golden era as the city witness fortified and ceremonial gateways, Temples, Palaces, Lakes, Boalls, wells and several traditional dwellings which possess striking architectural style carrying an image of Maratha characters In its overall form and ornamentation building an exceptional architectural identity of its own. The city even today offers a narrative upon several monuments, buildings, waterbodies and open spaces, which holds the superlative impression of rich Maratha Empire. By 1817 the city came under British influence. In 1853 the city lapsed into British control and further in 1861 it became the capital of the

from colonial and Victorian architecture. The character of civil lines Nagpur is still integral, with a loss of few buildings the context offers a bold narrative on city under British rule.



Figure 3 Map of Central Province under British rule. Source: From map of India by Dodd, Mead and Company, 1903. Library of Congress Geography and Map Collection. Call Number G7650 1903 .D6 TIL

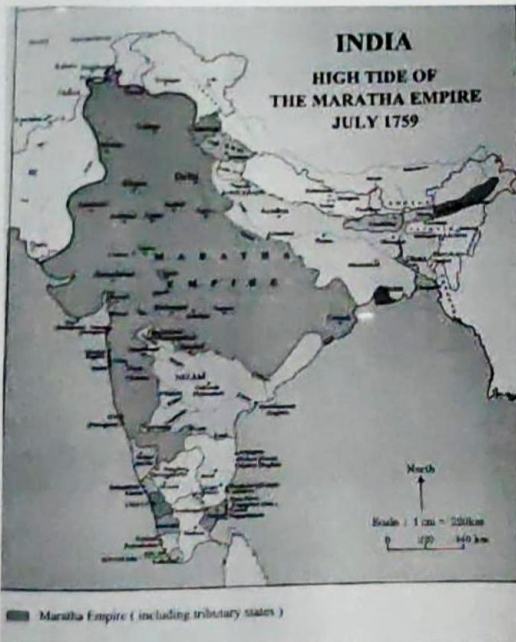


Figure 2 Map of Mmaratha Empire, 1759 Source: atlas and Maps

Central Provinces. Thus the city expanded under the British control, which led to the establishment of an area called civil lines, hosting the public and civic buildings, majority of which were post offices, collectorates, judiciary courts and other civil buildings. Each one of them holding the architecture style which carry the elements

With advent of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway in 1867 city sensed the greater development in terms of trade and commerce, Construction of the railway spurred commerce and agricultural production, especially the growing of cotton in the regions rich soils. Cotton production not only strengthened the areas traditional hand-loom industry, therefore it emerged as a significant trade Centre. After Indian independence, Nagpur was briefly the capital of Madhya Pradesh state, until 1956, when it was included in the newly formed Bombay state, and then in 1960 it became part of what is now Maharashtra state, Awarding Nagpur the status of second capital, which is a prevalent destination for winter sessions of legislative affairs of Maharashtra government. In the 1970s the city expanded to absorb the nearby towns with the rise of several factories, warehouses that supported the activities of mining and production of various resources such as coal and manganese. The city, situated at the strategic junction of road, rail, and air routes from Mumbai (Bombay) to Kolkata

(Calcutta) and from Chennai (Madras) to Delhi, also developed a flourishing trade sector. More recently, With the development of modern public transit corridors like Nagpur metro rail project the skyline of city had taken a contemporary character. Not only the skyline but the overall character of city is taking a modern silhouette. The transformation in multi-level development have led tremendous pressures on city today, on one hand the city is growing in terms of its real estate values, rapid modernization with ventures of high rise structures and shopping mall, Cooperate and IT-parks etc. The lost can be felt in cities existing historic character, which possess the distinguished evidences from past.

II. Role of a conservation architect:

As a conservation architect, the initial studies brought down challenges which existed in many ways, first due to its geographical position, the city witnessed a rapid transition all along the north-south, east-west frontiers because of which a greater overlay in terms of city administration, kingdoms, trade and culture can be seen in the city of Nagpur. The multi-layered exchange of trade, culture and architecture was good on one hand in the development of town, but had left adverse effects on historic cores of city, which created either a neglect, leaving the properties in partial or complete ruins or it overpowered which resulted demolishing of the heritage structures which are the strong narratives of Nagpurs glorious and golden past. After a great brainstorming, and studying to the publications on citys historical tales and few on-site surveys, the broader idea of creating an educative scheme of workshops was felt. Each workshop is designed with an agenda, to meet the ultimate need of awareness among people about the heritage, the prime agenda of these workshops were elevated, as a step forward which tries to involve people participation with

an agenda of educating them, building a strong sense and association about citys heritage.

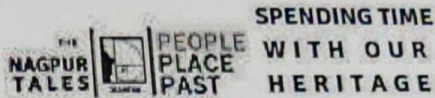


Figure 4: Logo or Identity of several models of workshops and educative participatory programs devised by author.

III. Documenting the undocumented

The author devised the model of summer studios, for the students with an aim of documenting the undocumented, the workshop included a 10 day long (23rd May 2018-31st May 2018) documentation program lead under the expertise of author, where student participants aim in documenting the unlisted, undocumented heritage properties majority of which are in private ownership and are unlisted as a

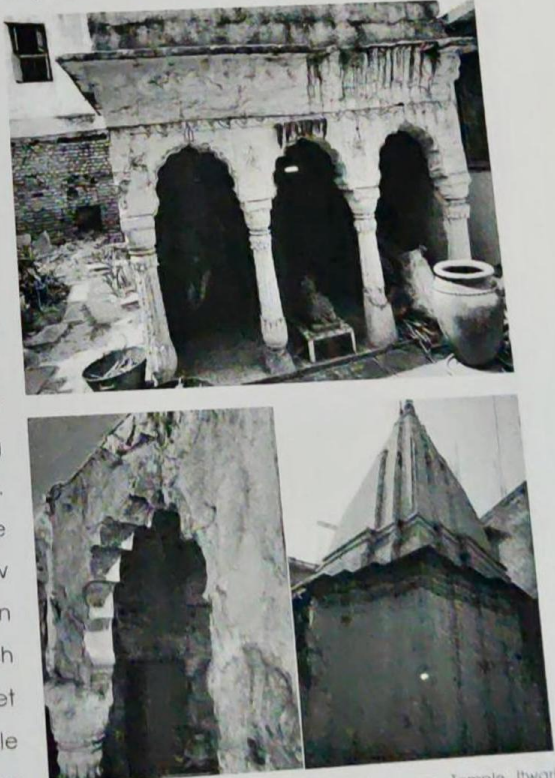


Figure 5: Photographs showing Laxmi Narayan Temple, Itwari, Nagpur. source: author

significant heritage of city. The documentation of 300 year old Laxmi Narayan temple, situated at Bapurao gall, Itwari, Nagpur was taken. The temple which is under the ownership of Mr. Govindroa Patrale, poses a significant history of its own. The workshop produced the documentation drawings, interaction and recordings of oral history narrated by owner of property, overall photographic documentation, with series of interaction sessions of senior conservation professionals discussing the overall need of conservation for such heritage structures. Thus the workshop proved as a win-win model every stake holder, conservation professional on one hand have drawn attention on the unlisted, undpcumented heritage, whereas an awareness was generated among the owners of heritage, also student participants, discovered an opportunity of learning something new under the discipline of architecture.

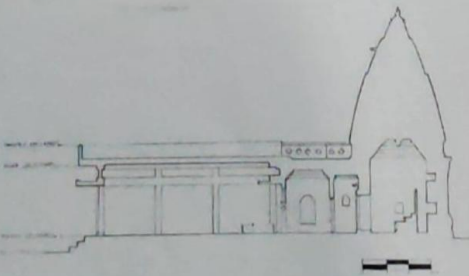


Figure 6: The student participants interacting with the owner, Mr. Patrale, the documentation drawings produced by students, the onsite documentation work in progress.

IV. The Nagpur Tales.

Heritage walks, which are one of the popular and easy means of generating heritage awareness among people, were redesigned by author, adding an element of interaction

among participants and the local residents. Therefore, it led to the establishment of a unique model of conducting a heritage walks,



Figure 7: Event poster of The Nagpur Tales, held at various locations.

named as The Nagpur Tales, the model aimed in taking these ordinary walks at extraordinary levels, by establishing a platform of conducting a dialogue among the student and professional participants, the local residents, heritage property owners, invited scholars, professionals and academicians. Which not only narrate its glorious history but also build a dialogue on its present conditions, building a study which can be seen as a base for futuristic developments for these heritage cores in the city of Nagpur. With series of such heritage dialogues conducted so far, which include the heritage dialogue held at Chitar Oli on 02nd September 2018, Chitar meaning chitakar and Oli meaning lane or street is the traditional lane which house the clay idol makers with a significant historic narrative popular in city for Ganesh idol making, the dialogue at Chitar Oli which witnessed the participation of 110 participants. Few more such Heritage dialogues were conducted at the Gond palace (held at 14th October 2018), at Nagpur narrating the historic tales from the Gonds era in city. The festive lanes of Junishukravari (held at 13th January 2019) which delivers a narrative upon citys traditional market culture.

The Heritage Dialogue is made more interesting and associative by distributing a Ticket called as Heritage Ticket and a knowledge bag, named as Itihas ka jhola which carry leaflets, information brochure and postcards and

other souvenirs which accentuate and build an interest among the participants about the heritage which they are going to experience with The Nagpur Tale program. The program is just not an educative initiative but also act as a catalyst in developing these pockets inside the city core, with a documentation of each dialogue held between professionals, academicians, municipal officers, students etc, which build a strong argument in preparing models which contribute the preservation, protection and overall conservation of such areas, which conveys the significant value in terms of city's historical character. The Nagpur Tale is held in academic association with IDEAS (Institute of Design Education and Architectural

Studies) Nagpur, which distributes certificates for participants.



Figure 8: The heritage tickets



Figure 9 The Photographs from the narratives of The Nagpur Tales.

V. Spending Time with heritage

Spending time with heritage is another unique type of workshop which was, designed by author in building an association with the heritage structure, using the concepts from sociology, the concepts which emphasized upon creating an involvement of individuals by using ones hobbies such as painting, sketching, photography and writing. using these hobbies to strengthen the bond between an individual and heritage. One of such social participatory event was held on 3rd February 2019, at Old High court, Nagpur. The structure which is the cities first and only national monument. The entire event was done in association with the archeological survey of India, Nagpur circle. The event produced number of great poetries, paintings, and photographs as an outcomes of spending time with old high court, Nagpur. The entries produced by participants shall be

exhibited at the heritage building. Such an innovative initiative not only brings awareness but also builds a strong association among the citizen and its heritage.

VI. Conclusion

With the medium of paper, the author intends to draw attentions in designing innovative ways of workshops and educative programs for students, professionals and common citizens which lead to the foundation of fundamental associations of users with the discipline of architecture. The overall idea is to practice respective disciplines with user or human centric approach, to make architecture an easy and interesting commodity for user, and similarly the intention is not only draw attention toward the neglected heritage sites and structure but also to think, create a futuristic approach which will contribute in its development in coming ages.



Figure 10 Photographs from the event held at Old Highcourt, Nagpur on 3.02.2019

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