

# Transformation of Historic markets in Nagpur

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Architecture is to make us know and remember who we are.

- *Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe*

## **Abstract**

Transformation is a part of life, a seed transmutes to a sprouts, a sprout develops to the plant and later plant gets transform to the gigantic tree. With this process of transformation, development of a seed to the tree happen, development occur with the result of changes in various elements may it be biological or physical elements of seed, sprout, plant and tree. Similar kind of the transformation occur in our cities. With change in time, change in living styles, change in the socio-political, socio-cultural, socio-economic aspects occur. This change leave a greater impact on 'Architecture' of city.

History becomes the subset of 'Transformation' as transformation is a process which has a beginning point, also the milestones where it develops and all such events of change becomes 'Historical' and due to its role in transformation it entitle to a certain 'value.' On similar lines every city has to compulsorily go under transformation, which changes the 'Image' of that particular city.

As it is said that city gains its appearance, character or pattern by its citizens, 'People' are the catalyst in shaping the character of the city. With change in life of people, change in character of city occur. With time newer technologies, newer discoveries become the part of day to day life of people. This all the aspects leaves greater impact on a city fabric. **Nagpur**, the second capital of Maharashtra, also known as 'Orange city' is rich in terms of heritage, with lots of historical events taking place in its past, makes Nagpur 'Historic city' The city has dual character in terms of Architecture, The East part has influence of Bhonsle's and Gond's styles of Architecture whereas west has a greater impact of British style of Architecture.

Old core of city, which is also the walled part of city, now known as 'Mahal' is famous for its commercial character, having variety of shopping opportunity since long time for citizens of Nagpur. This CBD of city is fortunate to have various old build structure with the architectural influences of the time of Bhonsle.

**The building element can be seen as the evidences, helping to decode the time period of its emergence. The building elements itself narrates the story of their existence over a period of time.**

With the 'Transformation' occurring in the city of Nagpur, the old core part is also affected. The change in the material use or the technology of construction, changes the 'Architecture style' altogether. With use of aluminium claddings, glass the buildings are losing their 'Historical Character.' The building which earlier use to embellish the teakwood building elements are now buried under the contemporary materials

**Losing the style, will be like losing the era, as the traces which here are the building elements are being transformed, forgetting its roots can be an endanger for coming generation. Because losing of mere building element will result in losing the entire knowledge of that 'Architecture style.'**

Key words: Change, evolution, transformation, architectural evidences, Nagpur.

## **Change is the part and parcel of life.**

Several theories of science use these words, 'change' 'evolution' or 'transformation' repeatedly whether it may be theories or the fundamentals of science. Transformation is defined as the, 'A marked change in form, nature, or appearance' <sup>1</sup> similarly, the elements in nature transforms, like a seed changes its form, behavioural, or the appearance into a plant or tree over a period of time, in the similar way, if buildings or architectural manifestations may consider as an organic element which are placed in the ecosystems, which can be taken as communities, villages, towns or cities. With change in time, change in various factors occur, the change may be due to the change in the ideology or the beliefs that one follows and the multiple people following the similar belief becomes, the ideology for the same community, village, town or a city. The building of ideology itself is the process of transformation. It's never the same from which one had started building a community. A community evolves with time, understanding various political, climatic, social and with these understanding the community build a kind of strategy which results in the survival of entire community. The transformation of thoughts and ideology has equal impact on the lifestyle of individual. The understanding of public and private spaces are itself a result of change.

To study 'change' as a factor, one should study the various types of change, Changes can be classified into major three types, first one is called as Development changes, the developmental change is the simplest type of change: it improves what you are currently doing rather than creates something new. Improving existing skills, processes, methods, performance standards, or conditions can all be developmental changes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of 'Transformation' from oxford dictionaries.

<sup>2,3,4</sup> What is Transformation, and Why Is It So Hard to Manage?, Dean Anderson

Linda Ackerman Anderson <http://changeleadersnetwork.com/free-resources/what-is-transformation-and-why-is-it-so-hard-to-manage#sthash.SAIEYt1a.dpuf>

Second one is the Transitional change replaces “what is” with something completely new. This requires designing and implementing a “new state.” This means that the community should dismantle and emotionally let go of the old way of traditional while the new state is being put into place.<sup>3</sup> With change in the life style of individual or a community the change in it’s in culture or behaviour pattern occur. The transitional change is a kind of change which is evolving with the time, which inculcates the new ideas, thoughts and often influenced with the foreign ideologies and customs. The use of glass facades in today’s architecture is an example of transitional change, which is the influence of western style which uses glass predominantly for reason of percolation the sun inside the environment.

The third type of change is the ‘Transformation’, however, is far more challenging. Because the future state is unknown when you begin, and is determined through trial and error as new information is gathered. This makes it impossible to “manage” transformation with pre-determined, time-bound and linear project plans, the future state is so radically different than the current state that the people and culture must change to implement it successfully. New mind-sets and behaviours are required. In fact, often leaders and workers must shift their worldviews to even invent the required new future, let alone operate it effectively.<sup>4</sup>

Without these “inner” shifts of mind-set and culture, the “external” implementation of new structures, systems, processes or technologies leaves their imprints on the architecture as the art also the science as it develops a lots of techniques and technologies in the field of construction.

The transformation is a phenomenon which occur in architecture as well. The transformation in architecture can be well studied by the change in the style of architecture from region to region, place to place, also the change in the predominant architecture style of a particular place over period of time, example can be the absence of courtyards in today’s architectural works are due to the economic purpose, because the affordable area of land is not available to every individual. Therefore inculcating the functional element of courtyard is not always possible for an architect.

The cities if seen as the ecosystems, and building as the elements of these ecosystem. Like a biological body is affected by the environment surrounding to it. Also with the change in the surrounding environment the change in body can be also witnessed. Similarly the cities undergoes various transformation, the prime and the most important change which a city undergoes is the growth, which is the result of its evolution. The cities evolve due to various

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<sup>3,4</sup> What is Transformation, and Why Is It So Hard to Manage?, Dean Anderson

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socio-economic, socio-cultural, and socio-political factors. The cities evolve with people and there means of evolutions, one of its example is the migration of people. With the migration the new ideas, customs, traditions and culture get introduced into the community. This evolution has its influence on the Architecture as the subject of art. The alterations and additions on particular architecture style is the part of the transformation which occur. The change in use of material, skills of craftsmen, the use of tools and machineries. All these are the results which ultimately leads to the Transformation into the architecture style of the particular place. They may also affect the utilitarian requirement of the user. And the aesthetic acceptance of people. Transformation plays a vital role in setting the current trends of a city. For example the cities often derive its name due to the transformation through it went. Pink city Jaipur, got its title because of the colour of the stone exclusively used for the construction of all the structures. The pink colour has its own history. In 1876, the Prince of Wales and Queen Victoria visited India on a tour. Since pink denotes the colour of hospitality, Maharaja Ram Singh of Jaipur painted the whole city pink in colour to welcome the guests. The tradition has been sincerely followed by the residents who are now, by law, compelled to maintain the pink colour. This transformation of merely a change in the colour gave altogether a new identity to the city of Jaipur.

The advent of various new style is also another aspect of this transformation into the cities. The transformation of a historical city has its own problem as well. As these cities has undergone various historical events which are significant to various group of people. The events are often emotionally attached with the users. These transformation becomes more important, as the historic cities contains the relics of a past event. These relics further get developed as the evidence of past. The study of Nagpur is taken as an example, that how the transformation had occurred over a period of time. And how the markets, becomes the space which witness various transformations.

## **Nagpur: Introduction**

Centrally located Nagpur has always enjoyed the status of being the winter capital of Maharashtra. It celebrated its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002. The total area of the city is 217.56 square kilometre, but only about 90 square kilometre has been developed.

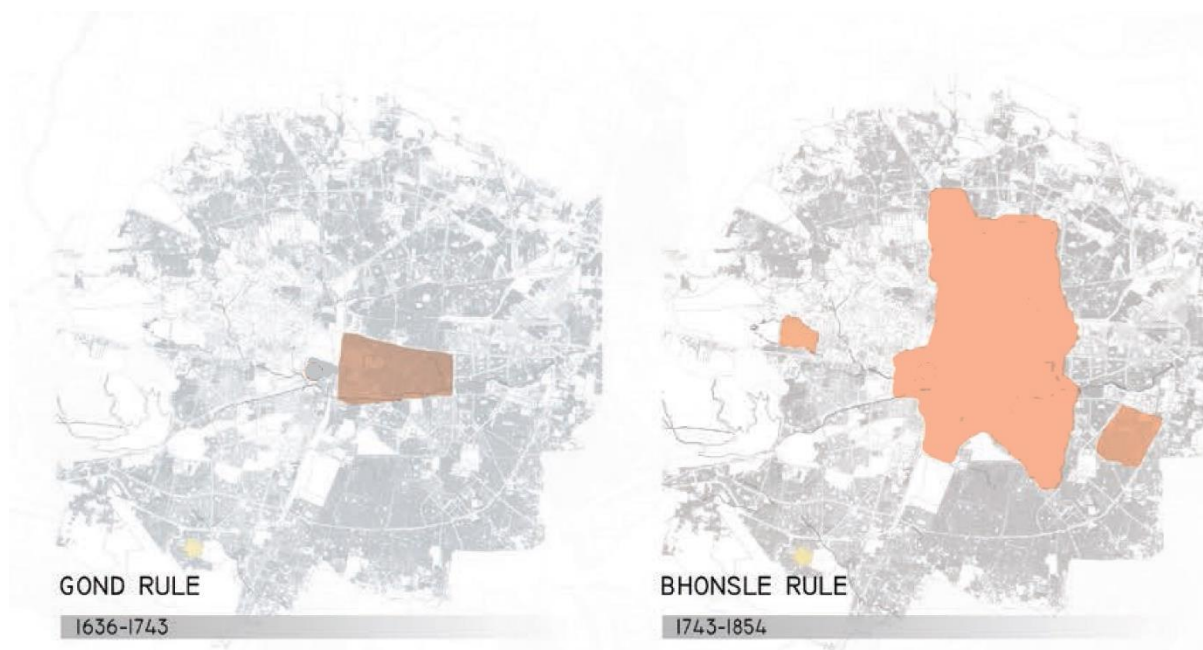
Lying on the Deccan plateau of the Indian Subcontinent, Nagpur is the geographical center of India. Supported on the North by the Nag River and on the South by the Pilli River, Nagpur is an important commercial, political, and educational center and has significance for the Dalit Buddhist community movements. Nagpur is linked to all major industrial centers of the country through road, rail and air transportation.

Nagpur's central location generates economic opportunities and attracts migrants coming from nearby Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh. Plans are underway to construct an international airport for cargo flights, bringing with it both tremendous opportunities as well as challenges.

## Nagpur: The historic Narrations

The present city of Nagpur was founded in the early 18th century by *Bhakt Buland*, a Gond Prince of the Kingdom of Deogad in the Chhindwara District. Seeing the advantage of civilized life in Delhi, he started to build Nagpur as his new capital. His successor *Chand Sultan* in the early 18th century by *Bhakt Buland*, a Gond prince of the kingdom of Deogad in the Chhindwara district. Seei continued the work. On Chand Sultan's death in 1739, disputes regarding succession arose and *Raghuji Bhonsle*, the Maratha governor of Berar, helped to restore the elder son to the throne. As the dissensions continued, Raghuji Bhonsle again intervened in 1743, and the control of Nagpur slowly passed on from the Gonds to the Marathas. It became the capital of the Bhonsles.

With the Bhonsle dynasty came the vast class of cultivators in Vidarbha. Raghuji's successors lost some territories to the Peshwas of Pune and the Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1803, Bhonsles (along with their allies Scindias [Shinde] of Gwalior) at Assaye and Argaon (Argaum). In 1811 Pindaris attacked Nagpur. Bhonsles again lost to the British in 1817 and Nagpur came under British influence. In 1853 *Raghuji III* died without an heir to his kingdom. As a result, the city lapsed into British control under *Lord Dalhousie's* Doctrine of Lapse.<sup>5</sup>



**Development of Nagpur under Gond and Bhonsle's Rule**  
**Illustration Courtesy: Ar. Ahsaas Tarwani**

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<sup>5</sup> This policy was one of the reasons which led to the *Indian War of Independence* [Sepoys' Mutiny : as referred to by the British] in 1857



**Development of Nagpur under Pre-independence and post-independence**  
**Illustration Courtesy: Ar. Ahsaas Tarwani**

In 1861, Nagpur became the capital of the Central Provinces. The advent of the *Great Indian Peninsula Railway* (GIP) in 1867 spurred its development as a trade centre. After Indian independence, Nagpur became the capital of Madhya Bharat state (C.P. and Berar). In 1960, the Marathi majority Vidarbha region was merged with the new state of Maharashtra and Nagpur was designated the second capital of Maharashtra state, alternating with Mumbai (Bombay) as the seat of the Maharashtra state legislature. Nagpur had witnessed various layers of political authorities. Which has been the result for various transformation which occurred in city over a period of time.

The above illustration depicts the changing pattern of the city of Nagpur over a period of time. The walled city of Nagpur, popularly known as 'Mahal' which initiated its growth in the period of Gond, and further developed in the reign of Bhonsle's. Further the city got spread due to the introduction of industries and railway under the colonial rule. The city now shares two different architectural faces one which was divided by the railway. The eastern one was the walled city of Nagpur and the western side was the extension of city done by Britishers

## **Changing Markets of city.**

Markets are the places which resemble more of transformation. The trends of a community is mostly linked with the market. The way of dressing, the cuisine, the popular cultural activities, the political hierarchical setup, changes over a period of time. These day to day activities as these are linked with the respective build masses, and their transformation has its impact on the respective Architecture as well. The planning pattern of a shop changes with the notional requirement of owner. Example with the transformation in the time, the competitions can be seen of various other factors. Factors may vary from place to place people to people, and time to time. There may be a particular place where the market may have the wholesale character, where the competition exists with the quantity of a particular commodity. On the other hand there might be another place where the showcasing once eminence may be the leading trend. As architecture in past had been one of the popular tool to showcase once status and power is used in the shopping buildings. The shopping mall which are the contemporary markets of today's community are the perfect example of the transformation which occurred over last decade.

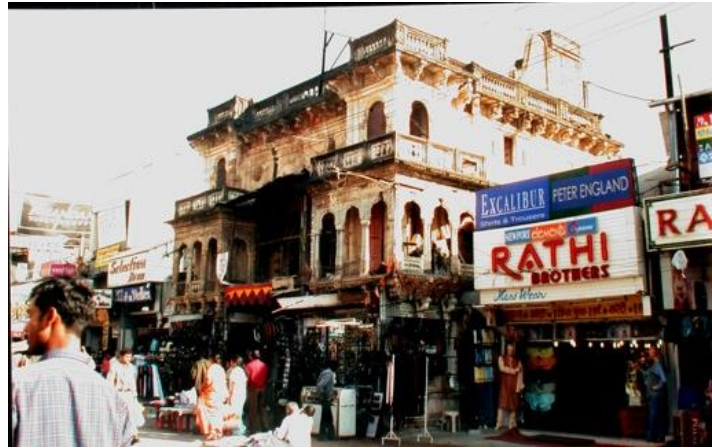
Thus Change in the market pattern, changes the architectures which is required with time to time. Similar example can be seen in the markets of Nagpur. Nagpur being the old city, holds various city core which are known for their traditional use as market. The 'Mahal' area, which was established by Bhosla's still known as the ideal destination for the cloth purchasing. The similar place which got its significance in the reign of Britisher's is 'Sitabuldi' which is known for its street shopping. Today these markets are being transformed in the way of its utilization. The building which resembles the architecture of either Bhoslas or colonial time are now completely getting transformed into popular contemporary style. The semi-circular or pointing arches are now getting transformed into the cubes or flat arch, the stone facades are now being transformed into the glass one. The cross ventilations are now being mechanical with the use of high yield air conditioning units. The transformation also has its adverse impact on the architecture. The introduction of newer techniques changes the 'architectural elements'

The following photographs showcase the transforming face of markets in Nagpur. Photograph 1, explains the change in the façade of the old cloth market, the building is situated at the 'Nangaputla' square at Gandhibagh area. The building resemble the style of art deco, which was predominant in. but today the better half of the same building has attain altogether a new characteristic. The façade which might been of the same art deco style, has attain the contemporary signature. The use of popular materials in faced making, i.e, aluminium composite panels (ACP). Photograph 2 showcase the loss of identity of the 'Mahadwar' due to its impactful neighbouring shops and their advertising policies. The 'Mahadwar' which once use to stand with its glory, today is being lost in the streetscapes of market of sitabuldi.





**Photograph 1: The wholesale Cloth market, Nangaputla, Nagpur**



**Photograph 2: The Historic relic, 'Mahadwar' at sitabuldi market, Nagpur**

## **Role of transformation in Architecture**

Science is a way of life. Science is a perspective. Science is the process that takes us from confusion to understanding in a manner that's precise, predictive and reliable - a transformation, for those lucky enough to experience it, that is empowering and emotional.

**-Brian Greene**

**Architecture is a scientific art.** Which involves both the essence of aesthetics as well as the efficiency of functionality. Aesthetics and functionality together enhances the architectural significance of a structure. Architecture's central problem is the formation of space. The fundamental task of architect to establish an equilibrium, even if full of dissonances, between man and space.

The meaning of architecture has undergone many changes during the process of human civilization. The meaning has changed with change in the social pattern. In aristocratic age Architecture became identified with imperial functions, with the creation of building intended for the display of status and prestige. The shelters of common subject were not considered fit for the architects. In the religious age Architecture becomes subservient to spiritual purposes, and its proper task the creation of buildings intended to arouse emotions and awe. In a communistic society it became one of the instruments of bureaucracy, and given the task of



mass-producing collective housing. These are the example how architecture and its styles had transformed with the change in the political, economic, social and cultural ideologies.

Therefore architecture can be further defined as *'Architecture is the conscious creation of utilitarian spaces constructed from materials in such a way that the whole is both technically and aesthetically satisfying'*<sup>6</sup>

With the changing thought process from 'Less is more' to 'More is still less' the transformation becomes rapid were, people wants more than needed. These greediness of unnecessary competition and over use of resources leaves a greater impact on the environment. Transformation has no time to review on the past incidences. All what it has is the change which it brings with people, place and time.

As discussed earlier change is the part and parcel of life. Every one of us are going to witness a certain change over a period of time. It may happen the change which we envisage may occur in our absence. Because the timeframe of change cannot be restricted or decided. The thing which can be decided is the pattern or the way of transformation. The monitored growth is the development. And this development which is done with the respectable attempt of conserving the significant heritage is recommendable in the historical core of city.

The immediate need in generating awareness among people, for handling the building with rich architectural elements. Which prove as an important evidences to trace out the tales of past happenings. Even the single architecture elements for example the type of arch constructed in a particular building describe its own story of existence. The timberwork, the stone work and the glasswork explains the excellent traditional knowledge of the skills which craftsmen were carrying in the past.

Transformation will surely take place, it's like the flowing river, which flows with its own boldness. We may not stop the flow of the river but we surely can divert the flow by acquainting banks which provide the better directions to the flow of river. Similarly the planning guidelines can take care of the development which should happen in and around the building of old cities like Nagpur.

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<sup>6</sup> 'Design Fundamentals in Architecture', V.S Parmar, Somaiya Publications Pvt. Ltd. Third edition 1997