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URBAN CULTURAL HERITAGE - A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

While urban heritage is growing its significance in the global urban context, there remains a lot of ambiguity in its perception. This article conceptualises the evolution and the various approaches to urban cultural heritage, understand its meaning, values and significance in the society and underlines its relationship with urbanisation in a developing city.

Keywords: Urbanheritage; Conservation; Heritagemeaningconcept; evolutionmeaning culturalheritage; urbanisation

Cultural Heritage: Understanding the evolution of the concept

The concept of culture is diverse and has been defined in different ways by different Bodies at different time. For this research, restricting to the definition provided by UNESCO, culture has two specific approaches: the functional approach, indicating its "diverse manifestations- past and present - of human intellectual and artistic creativity and comprising individuals, organisations and institutions responsible for their transmission and renewal. The arts and cultural expressions, together with these individuals and institutions, constitute the "cultural sector". The other approach is the anthropological approach referring to people's way of life, their values, norms, and knowledge, skills, individual and collective beliefs. Here culture is distinguished as a stock of intangible renewable resources which inspires people (UNESCO, 2014)[(1)].

As Professor Greffe underscores a more wholistic designation to cultural heritage by describing it as ". the sum-total of historic sites, neighbourhoods, art collections and practices that a society inherits from its past and tries to preserve for future generations" (Greffe, X., 1999). Culture can both unite and divide society. It possesses absolute intrinsic, aesthetic and numerous intangible values that unify and create a society and at the same time distinguish it from other societies. While heritage, in common parlance, is the legacy, which is handed down from the older generations to the new. According to the English dictionary, heritage is "property that is or may be inherited; an inheritance", "valued objects and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions that have been passed down from previous generations", and 'denoting or relating to things of special architectural, historical, or natural value that is preserved for the nation" (Oxford English Dictionary)[(2)]. Pearce (in GCI, 2000:7) refers to the cognitive construction of the cultural heritage and points out "the notion of cultural heritage embraces any and every aspect of life that individuals, in their variously

scaled social groups, consider explicitly or implicitly to be a part of their self-definition"[3].

Over time, the understanding and acceptance of the term cultural heritage have shifted from an "existence-centric" concept to a functional concept. Up to 20th-century, cultural heritage which was acknowledged as inheritance had their significance manifested through its presence. However, with the evolution of its perception today, the definition of cultural heritage goes much beyond just historical and includes its functionality, uniqueness, contribution to the society and much more.

Acknowledging cultural heritage and urging to preserve it is initiated in the west, which is now being conceded globally, as cities are urbanising faster and cultural landscape is transforming even more rapidly. In France 'Patrimoine' primarily referred to all "possession and property" and "inherited heritage" however the concept broadened after the French Revolution with nationalising of private commodities into public (Vecco, M, 2010)[4]. The 24th Declaration by André Malraux, in 1959 adopted the expression of Patrimoine culturel, which was explicitly limited to the public or artistic property and included everything that conventionally belonged to the fine arts (Vecco, M 2010).

The primal urges for 'preservation of cultural heritage', came through Article 27 of Hague Conventions of 1899, 1931 Athens Conference, and 1935 Roerich Pact of Washington, all emphasising on the preservation of heritage buildings. While the 1899 Hague Convention and the Roerich Pact of Washington in 1935 stressed on the prevention of damage to any historic monuments during times of wars[5] where the Roerich Pact broadened the horizon of cultural heritage properties by including buildings of scientific, artistic, educational or cultural significance in addition to those historically significant[6]. The Athens Conference of 1931, on the other hand, expanded the protection status to the surrounding landscape along with heritage property. Thus, in piecemeal, the concept and context of cultural heritage started to evolve through successive summits, treaties and conventions. The Hague Convention, 1954, was one of the early multilateral treaties that were efficient in safeguarding the historical and cultural monuments held significance across art, architecture, archaeology and science. It also included properties exhibiting or storing movable cultural properties such as museums, libraries or depositories[7]. thereby extending the meaning of cultural heritage further. It mainly targeted all buildings or sites destroyed during the Second World War. The International Charter of Venice 1964 once again underscored "time" to be a significant factor in the recognising cultural heritage, irrespective of their style of work, i.e. whether modest or intricate or rural or urban setting.

In 1972 UNESCO delivered a detailed classification of heritage, categorising them into natural and cultural heritage. The UNESCO Convention on the protection of the world, cultural and natural heritage (1972) classified the cultural heritage further into monuments, group of buildings and sites and emphasised that any of these with an outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view should be hailed as a heritage. Thus, slowly shifting from select historical value to values based on their functions and its aesthetic-ness. The European Charter of Architectural heritage of Amsterdam, 1975 and The Burra Charter of 1981 (ICOMOS, 1981), both emphasised on the relevance of character of the building/site and its surrounding while defining cultural heritage. Building/site embodies a specific character that represents a particular era, work of art or style, irrespective of whether it is outstanding or not can be identified as a heritage; similarly, the adjoining areas associated to a specific heritage site should also be protected because all sites have a context value and any damage to the surrounding will destroy the essence of the heritage site. The European Charter of Architectural heritage of Amsterdam, 1975, however, also made 'time' (like its predecessor) as another defining factor for cultural heritage[8]. The Burra Charter of 1981 also introduced 'fabric' as another factor that embraced the physical material of the place. According to it, Conservation was necessary to retain its cultural significance, which in turn help in estimating the value of places[9,10], thus the economic perspective on cultural heritage started to gain importance too.

The Council of Europe (Amsterdam Declaration), 1975 stressed on the need to conserve cultural heritage to guard future, along with preserving collective past for communities and societies with a shared cultural interest. According to it 'architectural conservation must be considered, not as a marginal issue, but as a major objective of town and country planning'[11]

The Grenada convention for the protection of European architectural heritage of 1985, considered those buildings as culturally relevant, which have exceptional significance in history, archaeology, artistically, scientifically, socially or scientific interests. It integrated homogeneous buildings (irrespective of their rural/urban settings) into groups, which were 'topographically definable units and sites with combined works of man and nature'[12]. In 1999 the Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage, ICOMOS added the vernacular-built heritage in the list of classification, which was a significant addition in the cultural expression in today's fast development[10]and vanishing landscape making cultural built-heritage vulnerable in the hands of urbanisation.

With the gradual progression in the meaning and concept of heritage, from a historical perspective to a more all-encompassing cultural and social type, the meaning got increasingly diversified with the inclusion of the concept of intangibility by UNESCO Proclamation (Masterpieces) of 1997 and UNESCO Convention (Intangible Cultural

Heritage) of 2003. With the gradual evolution of the cultural heritage concept, the idea no longer restricted to a built-up property or a site or a piece of artefact. It included living expressions and traditions that were handed down through generations, such as social customs, oral traditions, rituals, performing arts and practices, and even age-old festivals, which signified traditions and cultures. It also included knowledge to produce specific art and crafts inherited from our ancestors. Thus, the inclusion of the intangibility factor gave a new dimension to the breadth of cultural heritage and its meaning.

With time, human and natural factors act on cultural landscapes, helping in integrating and blending of the intangible quality with the built physical space, fostering a connection and a sense of identity and attachment, upholding their respect for cultural diversity and human creativity. This led to the concept of living heritage in an urban space. The living heritage is the intangible representations in a society that defines its character and give its identity. As per UNESCO definition, it is "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills - as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith - that communities' groups and in some cases individuals recognise as a part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity" (UNESCO 2003).

Following is a simple chart illustrating the Heritage classification.

With time, the scope and understanding of cultural heritage have expanded to a more inclusive concept, though the evolution is still in progress. Time is still an essential discerning factor, but in addition to it, factors such as its social status, religious purpose, economic worth, aesthetic character are also considered in identifying cultural heritage. Hence, understanding the diverse nature of cultural heritage and realizing its value and significance in societal sustenance, cultural heritage is essential for sustainable development and growth.

"Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity is found"[13].

Within this ever-growing field of cultural heritage, two of the most crucial additions have been the living heritage of historic urban landscape and the vernacular built heritage. Their significance emerges from their vulnerability and struggles to sustain the growing population and developing world.

Vernacular Built Heritage

According to the Charter on Built Vernacular Heritage, it is the fundamental expression of the culture of a community, its relationship with its territory and expression of the world's cultural diversity. Vernacular buildings are assumed to be the core of cultural built heritage that modestly or lavishly characterises the society, giving its unique identity. These buildings, in reality, are more illustrative of their society at large, its art, age, economy, politics as compared to the more monumental structures that may indicate a specific art type or period or an event. The vernacular buildings are like open books enlightening about situations much more in-depth and broader more-ordinarily and humbly. They give open access for interpretation to not only history but also on the evolution of the society, and their transformation. However, the global socioeconomic shift is putting them at the risk of ruin.

According to the Charter on Built Vernacular Heritage (1999)[13], "vernacular buildings are the traditional and natural way communities house themselves. It is a continuing process, including necessary changes and continuous adaptation as a response to social and environmental constraints". The Charter recognises the built heritage type through there character, the traditional use of technology, traditional expertise in design, coherence of style, form and appearance. The Dictionary of Architecture and Landscapes Architecture (2000) describes the vernacular architecture as "unpretentious, simple, indigenous, traditional structures made of local materials and follows a well-tried form and type".

However, conservation of this most vulnerable heritage may be very challenging as it depletes at a rapid succession all over the Globe. The ICOMOS Charter 1999, also outlines some of the principles of conservation and guidelines to practice. As per the Charter, first, the conservation of a vernacular building must be carried out by multidisciplinary expertise which pays attention to community and cultural identity. Second, any contemporary work on them should respect their cultural values and traditional character. The built vernacular heritage is an integral part of the cultural landscape and should be considered during conservational decisions. Third, the vernacular includes the fabric of buildings, structures and spaces along with their interactions with the community, the way they are perceived and their intangible associations attached to them.

Historic Urban Landscape

Having delved into the meaning and concept of cultural heritage, we must agree that an urban cultural heritage is not a lifeless historic site or a group of monuments, which

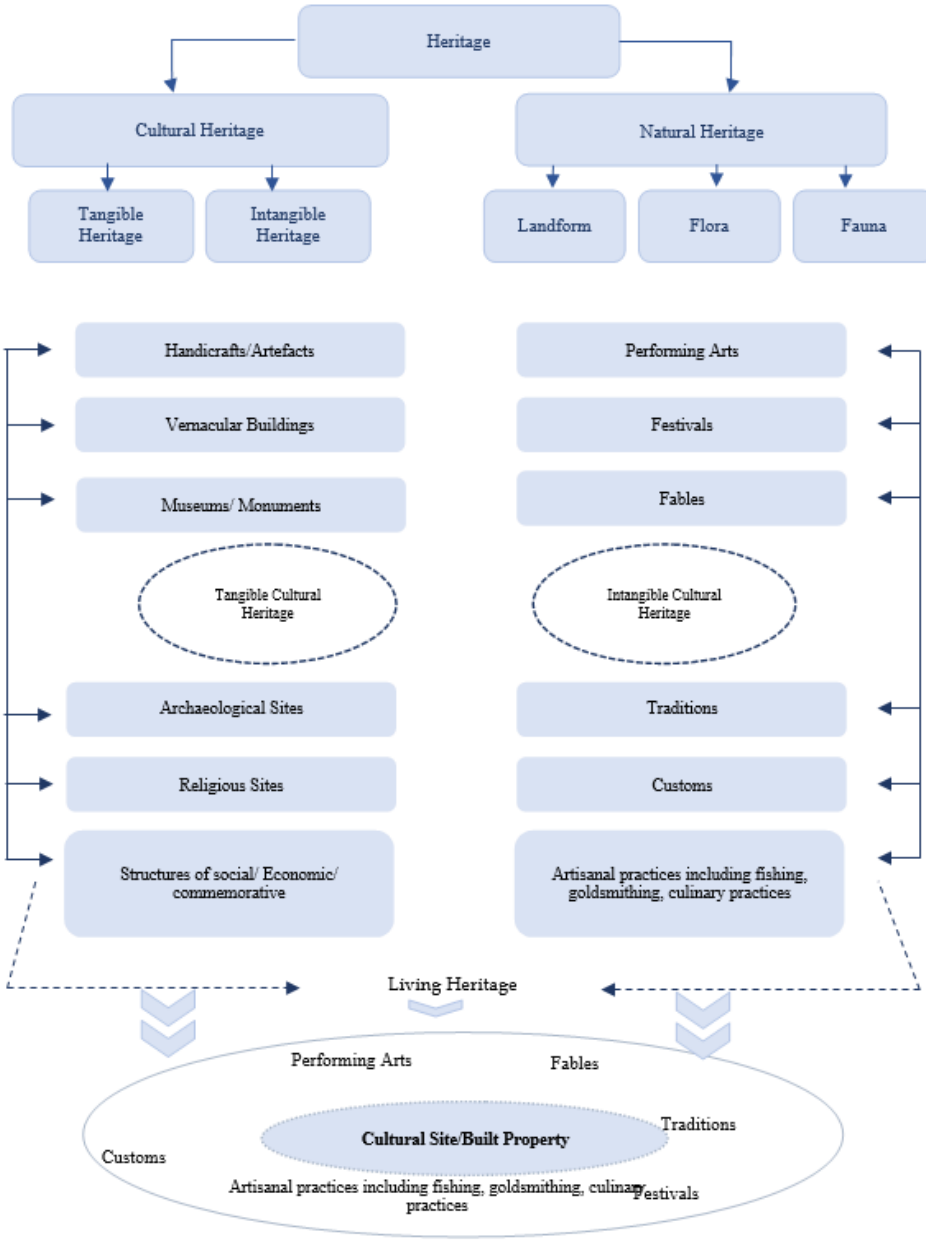

Fig. 1. Classification of Heritage

feed into the tourism industry, but an organic soul that acts as a critical component of a city inciting social, cultural and economic cohesion. There is a hidden story behind each cultural heritage. It is a dynamic force, shaped by its changing environment that drives a city. It is a point of union of art, culture, society, economy and history, coherently and cannot be interpreted through a single lens as Professor Greffe (2018) compares the urban historic landscape to an open book "..which through its tangible and intangible qualities tells us its history every day" [14].

For instance, a 100-year-old temple in a corner of a quaint town is just not a religious entity on its own, it is the surrounding market selling religious items, the Banyan tree which is worshipped by all as a religious structure all qualify the typical heritage site. Thus, it is the landscape and the overall ambience that adds volume and depth to the heritage structure. A city is marked by not only the buildings it holds or the historic structures it is associated with, it is also defined by the richness of its culture, the typicality of its society, the festivals it celebrates, the cuisine it shares and so on. Any attribute which describes the city and distinguishes it from other and complement to its richness contribute as a living heritage. This is what creates a Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) in a modern city, which in most cases are seen to be shrinking.

"*HUL is therefore a dynamic organism*" (Greffe, X)

The importance of ”surroundings” in the identification of cultural heritage has been recognised as early as 1931 (in Athen's Convention) and was also followed in few others such as The European Charter of Architectural heritage of Amsterdam of 1975. These emphasised its relevance, explaining that a cultural heritage means not only the specific property but also the way it relates to its surrounding. Hence, it is not only the old structures but also, it is surroundings and those intangibles characters that qualify a given structure. ”...the aim is not only to preserve increasingly numerous items of the cultural property but also to safeguard complexes which go far beyond single significant monuments or individual buildings (UNESCO, 1995) [15]

A cultural landscape is, thus, a product of the interplay between physical and human intervention, over time, creating a collective identity. As Carl O. Saurer described the cultural landscape as a creation where ”Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result” (Keceli et al., 2014) [16]. The landscape is a kind of symbolic representation of culture, gender, social class, economic and political views that leave a significant footprint of unique identity on all places and communities (Keceli et al., 2014). Religion, traditions, languages, customs play essential roles in developing the culture, which in turn impact on the formation of societies (Keceli et al., 2014). Moreover, when put all these together, both tangible and intangible cultural heritage amalgamate to produce the observed heritage (as found practically) is what the ”living” cultural heritage is. This living cultural heritage is organic and is under constant change with a change in any factor acting on it (i.e. time, human action, physical action, and so on).

According to Baileys, Greffe defines ”The perception of the urban landscape not only presupposes the view of singular elements (those that stand out against the urban background because of their shape, function or position) and constant elements (those that make the urban fabric homogeneous, because of their repetition) but also [...] the integration of the individual experience.” [17] Landscapes are constantly under the forces of a natural and cultural phenomenon, hence modifies constantly [16]. A cultural landscape cannot be stagnant. In the process of development, constant changes in physical infrastructures (such as roads, highways, dams and canals) or cultural infrastructures or social infrastructure (e.g. migration, urban sprawls and slums) are quite universal and unvarying. These are critical factors in shaping and reshaping the urban landscape, however, in the recent times in the fast-growing cities of Developing Countries, this change, is taking place with such aggressiveness that it is not possible to keep up to the pace, hence, calling for urgent preservation.

Even though the origin of the concept of cultural landscape dates back to the late 19th Century, in academia, it came into prominence in the early 20th century in the works of Professor Carl Sauer [18]. While the concept of Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) has been defined in different ways by different authors and authorities, but the crux of the concept has been refined only and have not changed much. The Vienna Memorandum defines the historic urban landscape as: ”ensembles of any group of buildings, structures and open spaces, in their natural and ecological context, including archaeological and paleontological sites constituting human settlements in an urban environment or a relevant period of time, the cohesion and value of which are recognized from the archaeological, architectural, prehistoric, historic, scientific, aesthetic, socio-cultural or ecological point of view.” [17] While, according to the UNESCO ” the historic urban landscape is the urban area understood as the result of a historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of 'historic centre' or 'ensemble' to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting. This wider context includes notably the site's topography, geomorphology, hydrology and natural features, its built environment, both historic and contemporary, its infrastructures above and below ground, its open spaces and gardens, its land-use patterns and spatial organization, perceptions and visual relationships, as well as all other elements of the urban structure. It also includes social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity” [19].

Similarly, Pierre George, in 1960, defined the concept of Historic Urban Landscape as ”The urban past represented a sum of successive inputs over several decades and in some cases over several centuries [...]. Reconstruction - particularly because it is taking place under the pressure of urgency - is, on the contrary, a global phenomenon recorded in a single moment of evolution.” (Greffe, 2018) [17].

Under the works of nature and culture, these cultural landscapes, especially in the developing countries, are modifying such rampantly that in the due process, there is a complete transformation and loss of its original character. Leaving these cities succumb to the high globalisation and modernisation of the present day. Most of the rapidly developing cities undergoing urbanisation are suffering uncontrolled urban growth coupled with lack of planning and implementation, which are intensifying the urban problems. The increasing population and building density are increasing pressure on land capacity, thus leading to successive loss of open spaces and public facilities; inadequate and improper physical and social infrastructure, social malice such as urban sprawl, urban poverty is adding up to this unsustainable use of resources. Also, historic cities usually face major threats from mass tourism and scientific research and development as well. These in the act with the natural phenomenon of the global climate change are infuriating the urban issues universally.

Therefore, in such circumstance, where 'development' and 'urban heritage conservation' seem conflicting approaches, the concept of historic urban landscapes (HUL) by UNESCO,

is one of the principal instruments for heritage conservation. In the given scenario, safeguarding the unprotected heritage, natural/cultural threats weakening the heritage structures (such as monuments or other vestiges of historical importance), and the requirement for conservation and development of the above heritage landscapes are three concerns that take the prime post[17] (Greffe, X. 2017).

Cultural Heritage: A 'value' based understanding

The meaning of cultural heritage witnessed a shift during the end of the 20th century and early 21st Century, where the appreciation of "use-value" of cultural heritage came to light, and there was an urge to preserve cultural heritage because of its possessed value and potential to create revenue, rather than only being a priceless symbol of history and inheritance. Moreover, this shift in the meaning, understanding, and realizing of cultural heritage through a new light was revolutionary in the field of heritage studies a way that it opened many avenues for existing built cultural heritage. As Torre and Mason (in 2002:3) suggested that "It is self-evident that no society makes an effort to conserve what it does not value"[20]. Hence, understanding the significance of heritage is extremely important to value the heritage and understanding its value is extremely important in conserving it.

Appropriating the task of valuing requires first to identify, understand and analyse the worth of the heritage. The values are drawn by studying, along with the heritage object, its functionality and its surrounding context. This evaluative understanding helps to understand the meaning and purpose of the cultural condition further. The values ascribed to heritage are fundamentally essential to decide and instigate its preservation status and protection, without which its importance is negligible (GCI, 2000). Thus, 'value' is the primary crux for conservation where it decides what to conserve, how to conserve and where to set the priorities and also how to handle conflicting interests (Torre, M., and Randall M., 2002).

Consequently, to understand 'this value' it is vital to study its spatial, social, cultural and economic contexts, which may, thereby, highlight the merits of the heritage and its surrounding context[20]. Both valuing and valorizing of cultural heritage are crucial exercises in heritage conservation. While the former appreciate the real significance of a given cultural property, the latter ascribes an added value to the already identified heritage. As Randall (2002) suggested that "process of valorizing begins when individuals, institutions, or communities decide that some object or place is worth preserving, that it represents something worth remembering, something about themselves and their past that should be transmitted to future generations".

We can broadly classify the heritage values into sociocultural and economic types. While the former expresses the non-monetary characters of an asset (e.g. age, artistry, beauty) the later, confers a monetary prize for the asset. Today, the economic value is gradually becoming more of a 'requisite' for conserving heritage properties. As defined by Randall Mason in the Neoclassical economic theory, these are the "..values seen primarily through the lens of individual consumer and firm choice (utility) and are most often expressed in terms of price"[20]. However, within the framework of sociocultural value, the social values are usually associated with a strong sense of belongingness, identity, community feeling, sense of tolerance, responsibility, social distinction or unification etc., while cultural value, on the other hand, is mostly, a more encompassing yet more profound idea which is beyond economic and social values. It may include religious, spiritual, aesthetic, social, architectural, symbolic or authenticity values as well (Klamer, 2001). In the case of social values, there is a strong sense of "place attachment" and social solidarity that is derived from the particular heritage and its environment (Klamer, 2001). However, "A cultural valuation comprises the attribution of sacredness to an icon, statue, or temple" so on and so forth. Further, religious or spiritual values are types of cultural values that establish the sacredness of heritage sites which are significantly religious or evoke beliefs and teachings of organised religion. Similarly, aesthetic value highlights the visual qualities of the heritage and raises the sensory experience.

Thus, the socio-cultural values are essential in assessing the qualitative character of a heritage site while the economic valuation is the key to quantify or evaluate the monetary worth of the heritage. However, it is also true that the economic value of a heritage property depends, to a large extent, on the social and cultural values of the particular heritage. It is likely if a site/property has a high social and cultural value, the demand to save that heritage will be high and vis-à-vis the economic valorisation of the heritage will be more, too.

In addition to the general classification as economic and socio-cultural values, any heritage property is also said to have a use-value and a non-use value. While use-values are assigned to the specific heritage which comprises of goods and services that are tradable and measurable, the non-use value (nonmarket Value), on the other hand, cannot be traded nor can they be directly measurable in monetary terms. The use-value, hence, can relate to the real estate market that exists in the economy (independently from the heritage).

The non-use values can be subsequently categorised into the following:

a. Existence Value, which is ascribed just because of the mere presence of the heritage even though there might not be any direct experience or services consumed.

b. Option Value refers to someone's wish to preserve the possibility (the option) that he or she might consume the heritage's services in future.

c. Bequest Value comes from the wish to leave the heritage asset for future generations. In addition to the cultural and economic values to heritage, there is also Intrinsic value that depends on the inherent and authentic core of a heritage asset. It is based on the assumption that values are fundamentally contingent (Randall, M, 2002).

Following chart (Chart 1.2.) shows the overall classification of values for Cultural Heritage, which in many cases, is multivalent. The value of cultural heritage primarily depends on its evaluator. Different stakeholders and groups, based on their respective interests, are inclined to conceptualise these values in their way, which satisfies their interests and thereby creating different bases for management and conservation decision. As Lourdes Arizpe (in Torre and Randall 2002) opines, that a specific heritage property may be valued differently by different sources such as Government, elite national groups, local populations, academics, or businesspeople.

Relation between 'cultural heritage' and 'urbanisation'

According to the United Nations, urbanisation "is a complex socio-economic process that alters the built environment, converting the rural into urban settlements. It includes changes in dominant occupation, lifestyle, culture and behaviour and thus alters the demographic and social structure of both urban and rural areas. As per the UN report (World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision) approximately 55% of the global population are in the urban areas which are expected to increase to 68% by 2015 and 90% of this increase to take place in Asia and Africa[21]. The future urban population is like to be concentrated in countries such as India, China and Nigeria that is likely to account for 35% of the projected growth rate between 2018 and 2050[21].

While on the one hand, gentrification, urban sprawl, urban poverty and unemployment are some of the socio-economic malice, manifesting concerns, the cultural dimension of urbanisation, on the other hand, is relatively flouted. This attitude, thus, is resulting in steady and unnoticed attrition of built heritage with the advent of urbanisation, marking one of the major problems of urban societies of present times. Therefore this underscores the significance of understanding the relation between "built heritage" and "development" advanced as communities started facing challenges economically, socially, culturally and environmentally.

Acknowledging various definitions of 'development' and referring to UNESCO which defined it as "... the process of enlarging people's choices [that...] enhances the effective freedom of the people involved to pursue whatever they have reason to value". Development involves a pattern of prosperity and is indicated through the positive economic condition, level of health, food, water security, social equality etc. Sustainable development, on the other hand, is the "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundt land definition). From the current development pattern (both in the Developed and Developing countries, it is to be analysed whether or not, this development is taking place in a culturally sustainable way.

'Growth' being a prerequisite for development and 'Development' is an aspiration for all society, we need to understand the way cultural heritage gets affected by growth and development in the urbanising cities of the Developing Countries. As observed, when urban growth and development take place without keeping the cultural landscape in mind, we eventually lose it. And this is one of the significant concerns of today as the historic urban landscape diminishes with the advancement in economic and social development.

Over the last six decades, the world experienced rapid urbanisation from about 30 per cent in 1950 to 54 per cent by 2014. The rate of urbanisation[22] is highest in Asia and Africa, where currently the proportion urban population is increasing by 1.5% and 1.1% per annum, respectively[23]. Regions with relatively high levels of urbanisation are urbanising at a slower pace, i.e. less than 0.4% annually[23].

Urbanisation led to an overall increase in the proportion of the population living in urban areas, as well as the process by which large numbers of people have become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities (WHO and UN-HABITAT, 2010:4)[24]. Therefore, it is very important to understand how the historic urban landscape getting affected due to this effect of urbanisation and expansion of modern cities.

The growing cities in the developing countries are generally marked by increasing population followed by ever-rising demand for land resulting in an increase in building density. A combination of these two processes is, therefore, leading to either drastic short-term planning or experiencing a lack of planning, hence resulting in uncontrolled and unmanaged growth in such cities.

Today, more and more Governmental and Nongovernmental organisations, Universities and advanced research institutes are coming together to protect the cultural landscapes for sustainable development. Thus, conservation of cultural heritage is slowly making its way into societies. Advanced data-collection, resource mapping and referential analyses are taking place in many historic cities in the technical sphere, thereby integrating urban and regional planning and identification of types of intervention permitted in different urban settings.

The solution to the following problems is located in the place - the issue, therefore, is learning to understand the place which addresses the need to better frame heritage

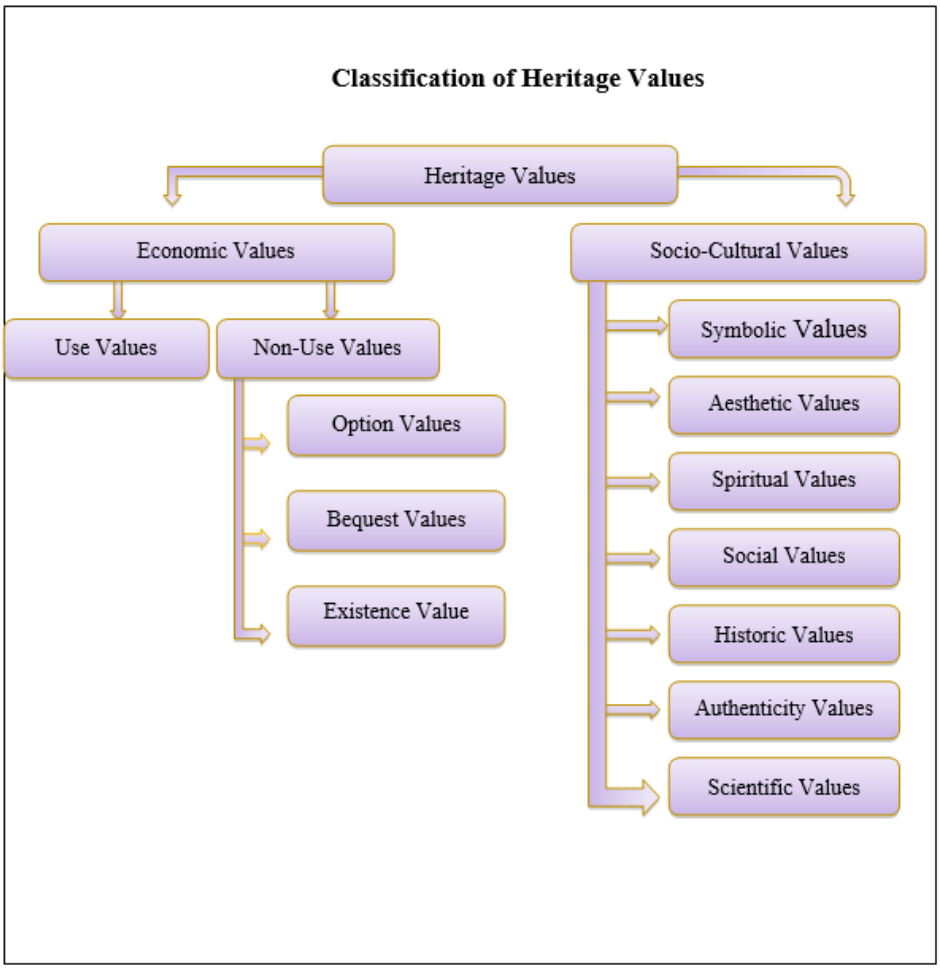

Fig. 2. Classification of Heritage Values Source: referred to and adaptedfrom Randall Mason, AssessingValues in Conservation Planning: Methodological Issues and Choices; Assessingthe Values of Cultural Heritage, The Getty Conservation Institute, 2002

conservation strategies within the larger goals of sustainable urban development, to support public and private actions aimed at preserving and enhancing the quality of the human environment.

However, in many cities, which are inflicted by crucial social problems such as increasing unemployment, poverty, social injustice, high rates of crime etc., conservation of cultural heritage is seen as an "elitist concept". It is therefore extremely essential to establish the economic, social and cultural benefits of conservation by drawing from understandings of cities and best practices who have already mastered the Conservation process with successful results.

Conservation of Cultural Heritage: An Economic Approach towards a sustainable development

Heritage conservation and economic development are interdependent. As scholars and economists, over the years, have argued on the preservation of cultural heritage as an essential tool to drive an economy, the reverse is also true. Heritage, whether it is a monument or a handicraft, have a monetary value in the market, and similarly, there should be money flow in the market to purchase these products which will be expensive than regular mass-produced items. To preserve one's cultural heritage, the appropriate financial investment is a prerequisite. Without proper financial resources, maintenance and preservation of culture are barely possible. Thus, it may not be too simple to assess the sustainability of heritage goods and services in the market, which also implies a certain level of uncertainty on how it may affect economic development.

On the advantageous side, heritage goods in the market initiate local production and consequently increase its potentiality as an economic resource catering to various sectors within the economy such as tourism industry, hospitality, handicrafts industry etc. While some use it to affirm their solidarity, others use it for profit maximisation. Greffe (in 2004) has emphasised on "heritage-based ecosystem" as one of the methods of establishing interdependence between the quality of monument and between heritage-based consumer and seller and establishing if heritage is an asset or a liability.

Economists and Conservationists argue that a society's cultural heritage is a form of an economic asset. It is the core of a productive ecosystem benefiting to the entire so economists and Conservationists argue that a society's cultural heritage is a form of an economic asset. It is the core of a productive ecosystem benefiting to the entire society. However, not always do revenues generated from cultural heritage can compensate entirely for the maintenance and the conservation of heritage sites (Cominelli and Greffe, 2014). They also argued that preservation of cultural heritage, chiefly, benefit only certain category of people (such as conservation enterprises, craftsmen, hospitality sectors and so on) without having much come back to cultural heritage itself. Besides, potential incomes due from tourists are often manipulated by Government promotional schemes which are affected by the trade-offs between private and public objectives. Thus, true cultural heritage can be used as a tool to stimulate economic development but to what extent can it create revenue and whether the revenue generated is applicable enough or not is something that needs further investigation.

Heritage preservation is an expensive activity; the availability of financial resources for heritage conservation is insufficient for most societies. Mostly economic crisis shrinks the budgetary allocations towards culture and heritage conservation, in particular. Typically, in developing countries economic and social problems are seen as far more acute than those of cultural heritage and the possibilities of accruing financial benefits from cultural heritage face constraints as delineated below:

First, it is difficult to estimate before consumption the quality of the good or service and the satisfaction that will be generated from uses of cultural sites. This is a general characteristic of the economy of cultural goods and it means that to validate the quality of a good or service that flows from cultural heritage (e.g. a visit, a guided tour, a concert, a hotel or a restaurant in a heritage site, a publication, a design object...), a significant number of people must experiment it and share their satisfaction. When the quality level is confirmed, new consumers and customers can be involved, and investors can expect to earn profits. Second, even when some uses of heritage appear able to create incomes, the development process (e.g. restoration and rehabilitation works) may be complex and the payback period long. Third, profits generated can benefit to other actors, rather than the ones directly involved in the conservation process. This dissociation between the activity cost on the one side and the capture of benefits on the other side creates a problem of externalities within the economy of cultural heritage, which can lead to sub-optimal situations.

Conclusion

Conservation and preservation of urban heritage are very important in attaining sustainable development. It recognises the base for analysis by reflecting on the current concerns related to cultural landscape and development for the rapidly urbanising cities of today and interpreting it in the light of economic and social paradigms of development.

An inappropriate understanding or a lack of understanding of the concept of culture, cultural heritage, development, sustainable development and the subsidiary concepts related to them, on the other hand, is fundamental and crucial to conserve urban heritage. Where conservation follows a lack of knowledge and understanding it backfires the process of development and conservation, both.

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