

IDENTIFYING CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH RELIGIOUS BUILT HERITAGE- TEMPLES AND SHRINES OF SOMWAR PETH, PUNE

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ABSTRACT

The religious built heritage of Pune in Maharashtra, India contributes to the cultural kaleidoscope of the city. They form the living heritage existing as physical evidences of the past within the urban landscape of the city. They represent the indigenous character of the people and context. The places of worship not only exist as physical form and character but imbibe values in terms of social organization, belief and faith, ritual activity and associative art. Presently, religious built heritage comprises of thirty-eight percentage of the total built heritage of Pune thereby creating an opportunity to conserve the cultural assets. The present inventory for mapping is generic and does not reflect upon the set of multiple associations that worship places hold intrinsically. Considering the above fact, a need for identifying criteria for assessment of these unique and integral components of built heritage is observed to bring forth integrated conservation at area level.

Keywords: Assessment, Values, Religious Built Heritage, Criteria.

I. INTRODUCTION

The terminology of religious built heritage is applied in relation to the definition of "Religious property", as used in the ICOMOS study titled Filling the gaps – An Action Plan for the Future which defines "any form of property with religious or spiritual associations: churches, monasteries, shrines, sanctuaries, mosques, synagogues, temples, sacred landscapes, sacred groves, and other landscape features, etc." The significance of this term encompasses built environments with specific attributes governing the setting, form and character. They manifest dynamic cultural responses and associations in continuum hence they need to be safeguarded and cared for present generations to relate to their origins and roots of existence.

The primary attributes that define the Religious built heritage are Form, function, human inter-relationship, host culture(cultural context) and time. According to the Merriam-webster dictionary criteria is a plural for criterion meaning a characterizing mark or trait. Criterion is also implied as standard on which a judgement or decision may be based. Hence, it is very important to identify appropriate criteria that will bring forth the holistic and comprehensive character of the built environment and further assist in formulating the tool of assessment that will help to take guided and coherent decisions for safeguarding it for future.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study reflects the aspects of the religious built environments as expressions of intrinsic values in terms of institutions of faith, indigenous to the land and people situated in traditional neighbourhoods presently situated in urban context. The methodology for the study is divided into two parts

- 1. Literature Review :** To formulate the theoretical framework of defining the unique characteristics of religious built environment.
- 2. Field Studies :** Listing, documentation and inventory Delineation of the study area was based on selected temples and shrines based on defined parameters. Mapping and Listing the temples in the traditional Peth, Classification as shown in Table 2. Co-relation and interpretation of values as established in the theoretical framework has been done based on content analysis. The defining attributes of religious built heritage serve as a guideline to identify the criteria for assessment of Religious built based upon field documentation and observations. Literature Review helped to formulate reasons behind selecting set of criteria against the corresponding values to understand the operational aspects of the typology as a living process.

III. MODELING AND ANALYSIS

Reviewing the Term Value and Defining Values in Religious built Heritage:

Religious built heritage demonstrates the following unique characteristics integral to the typology of built:

1. Cultural Expression: Continuum of tradition (activity: Function and use of Space)
2. Architectural Expression: (FOOTPRINT, PLAN FORM, BUILDING TECHNOLOGY AND MATERIAL,)
3. Social Expression: Association with people (owner ship- Public/Private), organization of people in places depending on established socio-cultural norms)

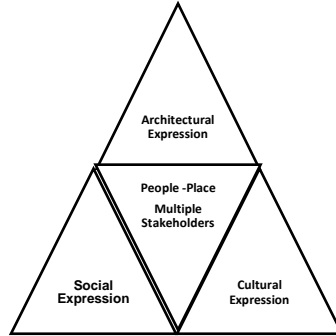


Figure 1: Religious built -Place Anchors

Source: Author

Value association has helped with the understanding and representation of heritage in order to nominate it as an asset beyond the physical existence. The knowledge of values imbued with specific characteristics has helped in the process of Conservation and heritage Management to take informed and guided decisions in a holistic manner.

Values here are referred as qualities and characteristics seen in things, in particular the positive characteristics. (Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage, Getty Research Foundation 2002). Values congruent to religious built heritage can be summarized as : **(characteristics/qualities of any entity :Burra Charter 2013).**

Table 1: Representation of Values for Religious Built heritage-Theoretical framework

HERITAGE VALUE TYPOLOGY	BUILT ENVIRONMENT Represented by	COMPONENTS OF RBH	PARAMET-RES	ATTRIBUTES
HISTORIC+ ARCHITECTURAL	ARCHITECTURE	ENCLOSURE SYSTEM	Age, Character, Form	Area, Components, Material ,Techniques
USE VALUE	RITUAL SPACE	TRADITIONAL ACTIVITY IN ASSIGNED SPACE	Space and corresponding activity	Action, Tradition, Continuum,Symbolism
SOCIAL VALUE	SOCIAL SPACE	RELATIONSHIP WITH PEOPLE AND SURROUNDING	People -place interaction	Participation, Inter-Dependance And Cohesion,Roles And Responsibilities
CULTURAL VALUE	CULTURE	MEDIUM OF OPERATION RESOURCES	Systems and organization	Context, time ,expressions,Shared experiences,

Source : Author

The Value typology as depicted in the table is referred from Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage (2002) , edited by Martade la Torre. The components of the religious built heritage are associative qualities representing the sacrosanct nature of environment within the study.

Identity of Religious Built Heritage of Somwar Peth- PUNE, Maharashtra, India

Somwar Peth is a traditional neighborhood of the city of Pune. Peth is a terminology evident in the morphological structure of historic Maratha towns. These traditional neighbourhoods are generally nomenclated based on particular days of week assigned for bazaar (market activity). A few are also named after their founders. The Somwar Peth initially also termed as Shahapura was established during 1637- 1662 along a stream called as *Nagzari* .Initially the neighborhood was predominantly inhabited by Gosavis or money lenders. Presently amidst the residential neighborhood exists community clusters of Koshti, Gosavi, Bhramins, Maratha and Jains . The religious built heritage comprising of major typology of temples and shrines are intertwined within the fabric. Like most of the historic precincts, inspite of surrounding changes in the immediate context, the religious built heritage continue to exists as anchors for place, time and people.

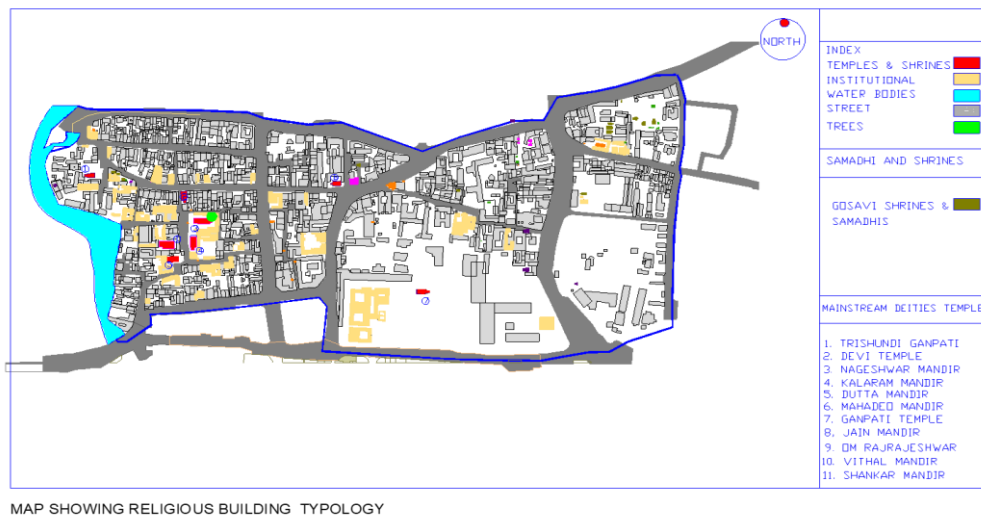


Figure 2: Mapping the Religious Built Heritage of Somwar peth, PUNE

Source : Author

The study area is delineated based upon the selection of temples and shrines existing in the neighborhood based upon following parametres:

1. Patronage
2. Ownership
3. Setting
4. Built Character
5. Community structure

The built environment in relation to the religious built heritage cannot be studied and understood in isolation. Recognizing the host culture in which it operates is fundamental to the knowledge and existence of the typology under study. The typology also encompasses the notion of sacred due to which the spatial vocabulary operates beyond the functional requirements. It addresses to a specific human behaviour within the defined space guided by ritual which leads to the experience of physical environment differing from the other typologies of architecture.

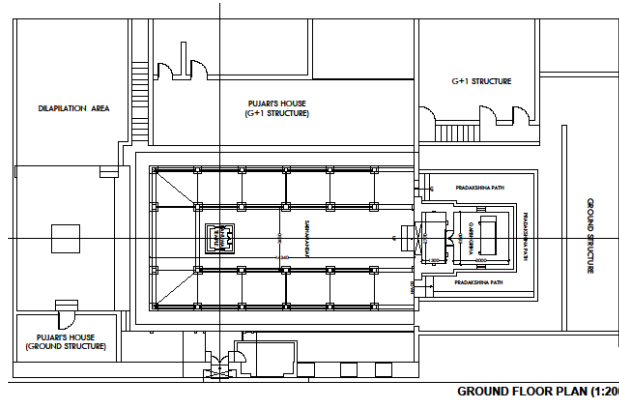
Character of Temples and Shrines Built in Somwar Peth

Organization and layout is a significant aspect of the built heritage of the religious built typology. There are five typological variations of organizational layouts of temples and shrines present in Somwar peth

1. Temple complexes :

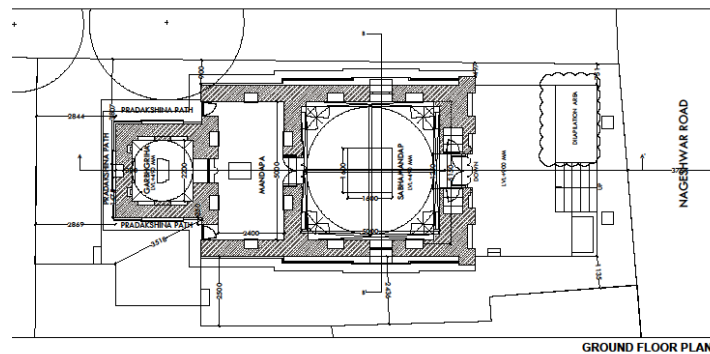
The plan form of complex is oriented East -west. The main shrine is enclosed in the stone enclosure along the western side. The semi-open mandapa is surrounded by a circumbalatory passage. The surrounding cluster is residential. These complexes show presence of associated trees bearing sacred importance . Also a notable feature of such complexes is enclosure walls bearing "*ovaris*"- resting places for temple visitors. vernacular

structural systems and materials are employed. The material palette consists of Stone for the sacred sanctum, wood and tiled roofs for semi-enclosed congregational space and bricks with lime stucco for walls.



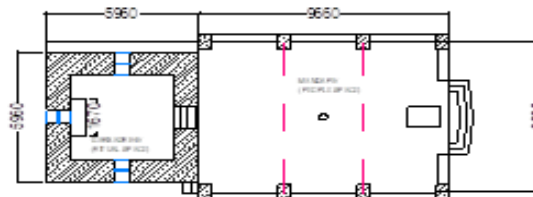
2. Temples dedicated to mainstream dieties:

The temples dedicated to mainstream dieties are similar in the character except stand as singular entities with or without a foreground space. Most of these temples are built in stone masonry of thickness ranging in between 450mm and 550mm .



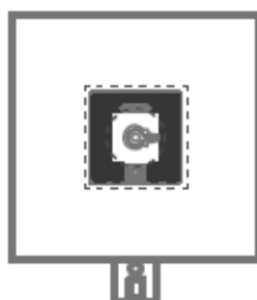
3. Temples dedicated to cult dieties:

The temples dedicated to cult dieties often enclose the main shrine in masonry enclosure whilst the mandapa is constructed as an extension of the cella for various associative ritual performances and offerings. Within the fabric of neighborhood, these are very subtle footprints.



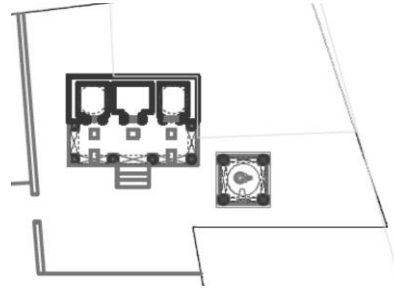
4. Samadhis:

The Samadhis are single cellar memorials commemorating the dead. They are built in honor to respect the saints, spiritual teachers and reverred men within the community. Most of the samadhis in Somwar peth belong to Gosavi .



5. Temples with Samadhis:

This organization and layout is unique as the memorial is located in close association of the the temple , the later elevated on a high plinth and comprising of three cella enclosing primarily the shiva phalus .



IV. DISCUSSION

**Identification of Criteria for Assessment
RELIGIOUS BUILT OF PUNE (WORSHIP PLACES)**

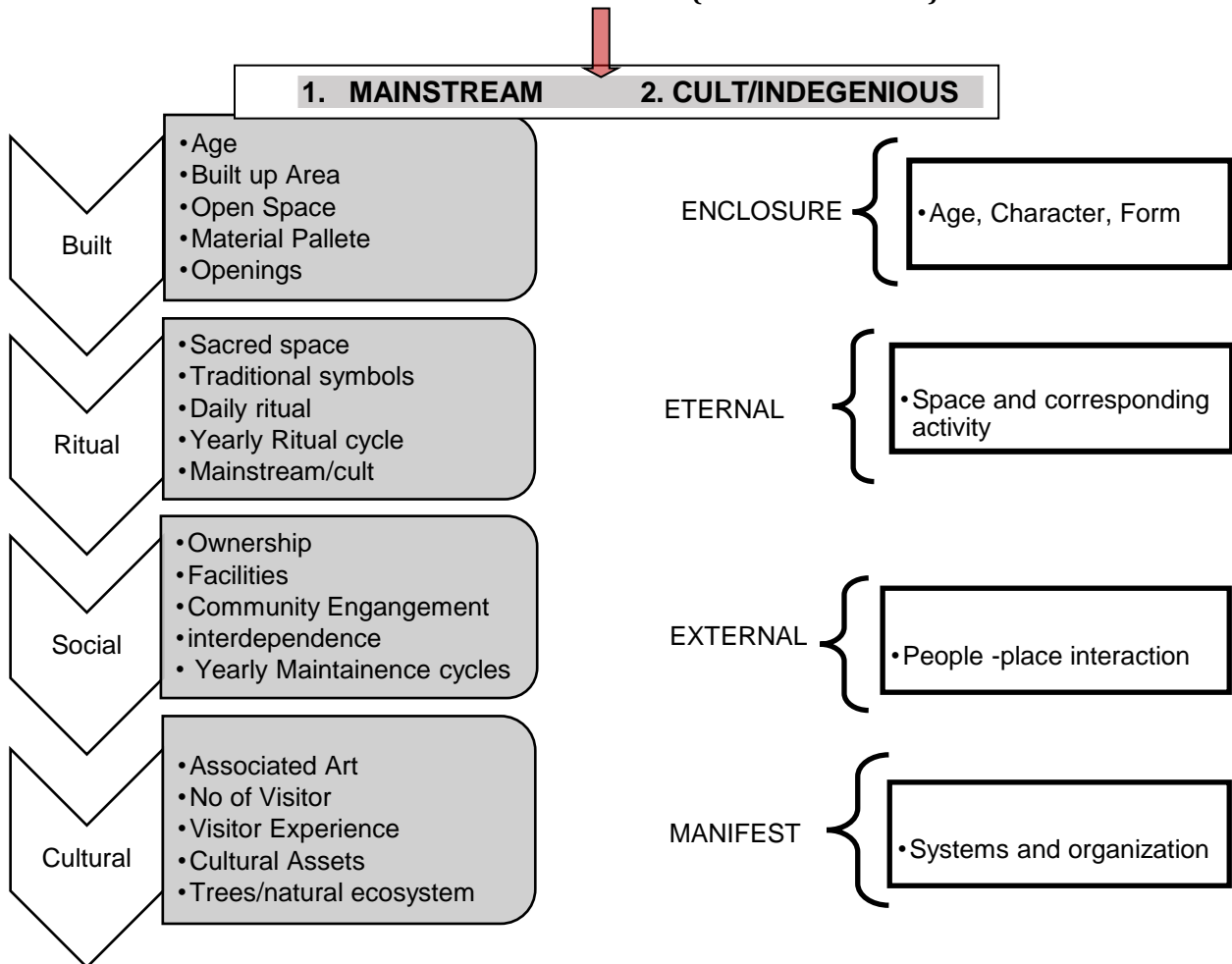


Figure 3 : Identification of Criteria for Assessment : Representation of values within worship places- (Religious Built Heritage: RBH)

Source : Author

Over the past decades, the assessment of built heritage has focused upon two major dimensions of heritage – Significance Assessment and Impact Assessment. The objective of the first being to understand the importance in terms of its the potentials and characteristic features whereas the later delves in to identifying the threats to the heritage. The process of assessment is a significant component of the Conservation Management Plan thereby assisting the decision-making process so that the inherent values of the cultural heritage are retained and proactive measures taken in anticipation of the nature of foreseen and identified threats.

V. CONCLUSION

The places of worship and intuitions of faith within urban landscapes are currently threatened due to the global scale of urbanization. The case of Pune is no different but the religious built heritage within complex networks of neighbourhoods are significant constituents of the living heritage representing multiple values and continued traditions. These local and regional footprints are unique to the setting and people of Pune. They are major destinations for rituals and celebrations for the people of Pune and continue with the thriving cultural and social responses for the well-being of the society. Understanding the importance and significance of these distinct footprints, it is necessary to protect the religious built heritage within the context of their setting.

The objective of the assessment would serve to:

1. To create a database for specific heritage resources by identifying appropriate criteria.
2. Evaluating the same on a reference scale for diverse set of values.

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