

Invisible Cities, 1972. Calvino depicts a world of uniformity. While the ease of travel anticipates journeys of discovery, sensation and wonder, the after-taste is that of stagnation. The city of 'Trude' is not only disappointing, it is oppressive, and leaves behind the numbness of repetition. There is an unsettling familiarity in Calvino's haunting realization, "The world is covered by a sole Trude, which does not begin, nor end. Only the name of the airport changes."

World-over, contemporary cities gamble rich histories and extensive cultures to participate in an unthinking surge of escalating aspirations. Urban-fabrics that once reflected a civilization's needs and values, today, become perfunctory environments of contest; architecture becomes a mathematical exercise in density; and the city-aura, a generic entity. In an alternate imagination, the cities live differently. They nourish the classical idea that each city expresses a distinctive ethos. Despite development, they consistently disallow alienation from idiosyncrasies that define their individuality. Here, a city that understands the difference between what it 'needs' and what it 'desires', is a smart city.

India, 2014. The newly-elected government at the centre, proposes the development of hundred "smart-cities" across the country by 2040. The first phase promises seven new cities, and their integration with airports, rail-links and ten-lane highways, within just five years. Something appears fundamentally amiss.

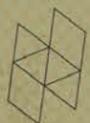
Making sense of India's rich archi-cultural heritage, its post-colonial psychology, and its incessant disregard for its own individuality, the thesis challenges the contemporary notions of what an Indian city should look like. Driven by the apprehensions of an impending 'Trude'-situation, it proposes a database of regulatory frameworks for the preservation of the rapidly eroding 'Identity' quotient in its cities. Through a general identification system and a city-specific compilation of 'Identity-Packets' sacrosanct to the Indian context, it attempts to negotiate the pervasive archi-cultural amnesia that threatens its cities and their unique atmospheres.

Negotiating Archi-cultural Amnesia in Indian Cities.



THE IDENTITY PROJECT

Shalmali Wagle



MDes Thesis Project 2015
Harvard Graduate School of Design
© Shalmali Wagle

MDes Thesis Project 2015
Harvard Graduate School of Design
Advisor: Rahul Mehrotra
Reader: Jana Cephas

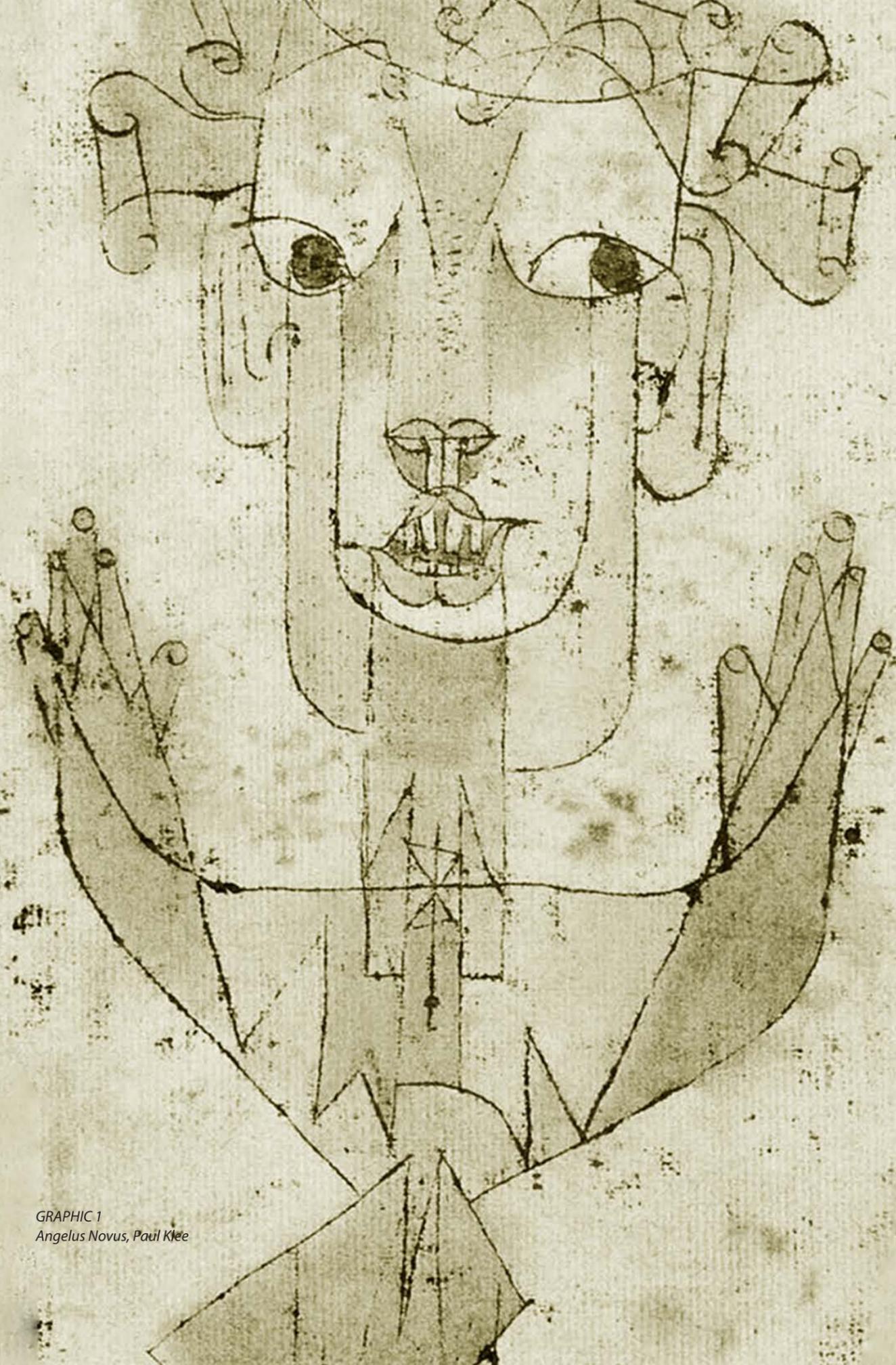


Negotiating Archi-cultural Amnesia in Indian Cities



Shalmali Wagle

MDes Thesis Project 2015
Harvard Graduate School of Design
Advisor: Rahul Mehrotra
Reader: Jana Cephas



"A Klee painting named Angelus Novus shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."^[1]

BENJAMIN'S 'THE ANGEL OF HISTORY'

CALVINO'S TRUDE

"If on arriving at Trude I had not read the city's name written in big letters, I would have thought I was landing at the same airport from which I had taken off.

The suburbs they drove me through were no different from the other, with the same little garnish and yellowish houses. Following the same signs we swung around the same flower beds in the same squares. The downtown streets displayed goods, packages, signs that had not changed at all.

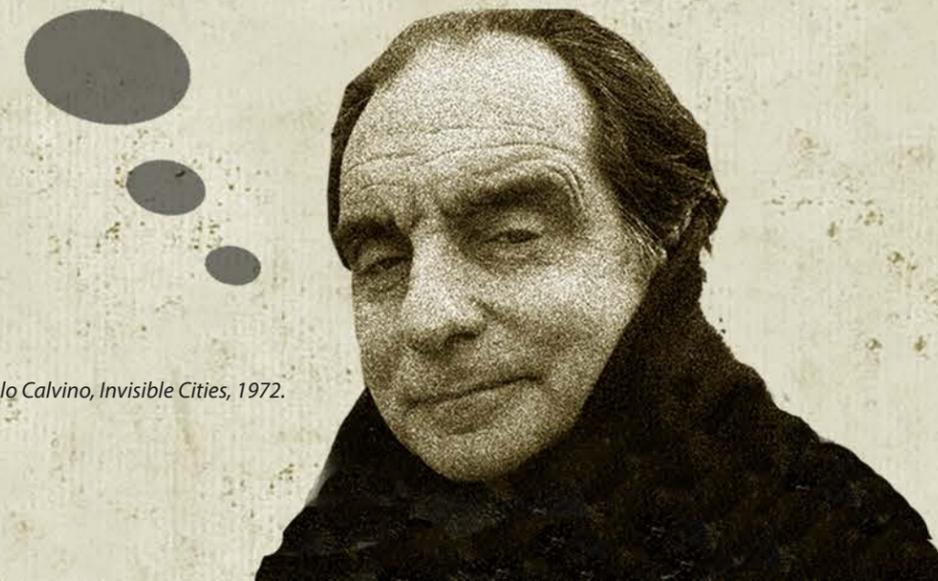
This was the first time I had come to Trude, but I already know the hotel where I happened to be lodged; I had already heard and spoken my dialogues with the buyers and seller of hardware; I had ended the days identically, looking through the same goblets at the same swaying navels.

"Why come to Trude", I asked myself, "if I had already wanted to leave?"

"You can resume your flight whenever you like," they said to me, "but you will only arrive at another Trude, absolutely the same, detail by detail. The world is covered by the sole Trude, which does not begin, nor end. Only the name of the airport changes."^[2]

GRAPHIC 1
Angelus Novus, Paul Klee

Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, 1972.



Dedicated to

*The uniqueness of every city-spirit lost to the negligence of progress;
to abandoned cultures and disoriented peoples;
and to every disappointed traveler, patiently enduring "Trude".*

SPARK PLUG

Last night, yet again, I woke up in an unfamiliar place. The room was dark and the night outside my window, silent. There was no periodic hooting of *rickshaw*-motors as they slowed down into a nearby corner, no laughter of neighbours chattering in the *verandahs* below, and no faint glow of the street-light on the ornate *chabutara* by the sidewalk. The silence of the city outside my twentieth-floor apartment, was deafening. The next morning was no different. As I walked to work, I saw no haggling arguments with street-vendors by the morning-market, no children playing ritualistic *galli-cricket*, and no aged couples feeding birds by the water-fountain in the square. There were no sounds of prayer-calls from the mosque, no fragrance of flowers and flames by the temple, and no familiar faces to smile and wave at, as I passed building after building in utter numbness. And then I realised; that beautiful, crazy, chaotic city from my imagination, no longer existed. That city was gone.

In the new transient and fast-paced city, I was a stranger. While buildings, shooting to the stars had detached themselves from the festivals and processions on the ground below, the cacophony of highway traffic had completely subverted the rhythm of bicycle bells and radio broadcasts at local tea-stalls, and the colourful and animated street-markets had lost agency to glare-free online shopping. Many a time, I would miss the hustle-bustle of the old city's *bazaars*, its beautifully complicated maze-like street networks, its majestic old building facades, and its arbitrary urban shrines with *rangoli* patterns. But the peaceful green parks were now replaced by malls and the inspirational sea-faces hampered by hotels. Even the displeasure of the attention-seeking *mohalla* dogs and the constant battles for public transport, now brought back a sweet yearning. All those small dispersed fragments, pieced together, had formed the patchwork of my existence. Yes, the old city was difficult, at times. But it was home. The new city was simpler, but unsettling. Was there no middle-ground? There were days when I would seriously question why people chose to live in a city so cold, grey and devoid of seduction. I struggled for months to become a machine in this machine. Like countless others, I gradually accepted my love-hate relationship with this new mechanical city. But I was human. I was homesick.

CONTENTS

1
INTRODUCTION

2
SMART-CITIES (?)

3
IDENTITY + AMNESIA

4
THE IDENTITY PROJECT

5
IDENTITY-PACKETS

6
CASE 1: AHMEDABAD

7
THE DATABASE

8
THE DOCUMENTARY

9
ENVOI

10
NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Indian cities today, are no longer what they once were. In a time gone by, they were interactive, intimate, and rich in cultural connotation. Today, they are not only complex, diverse and plural, but increasingly unresponsive and culturally shift. Gradually bringing to life, Georg Simmel's early apprehensions about the impact of the modern metropolis on the mental life of its inhabitants^[1], these cities, are progressively shedding their inherent nature, to embrace the unknown, the foreign, "The Other"^[2]. Once, extremely considerate and communicative, today, they are turning more and more objective^[3], and the significance of their earlier intrinsic inclinations is rapidly diminishing to naught. The human interactions, activities and engagements that they host, are becoming less frequent, limited and impassionate. They are beginning to exhibit an unsettling "lack of emotional involvement from their communities"^[4] - the presence of which was, once, the pride of India's great settlements - their very spirit and essence. Following unwarranted precedents from global examples (in many cases, even blindly aping them), these cities are, bit by bit, becoming extremely predictable, sensually glum, with their "qualitative value reducing into quantitative"^[5] exercises, and their atmospheres turning into what Simmel termed "blasé"^[6] (characterised by "superficiality, greyness, indifference and alienation"^[7]). This "urban indifference"^[8] is manifested in the slowly, but surely, increasing "indifference to various forms of difference"^[9], so that the cities that once flaunted myriad sensory experiences, now, display

themselves such that, here, a highway is a bus-terminal is a residential complex is a hotel is a mall, with rapid flashes of apathy.

There was once an India very different from this. Here, the value of things was measured differently; stone masons carved anonymous sculptures into temple-walls for faith and families decorated residential facades with painting and fabric for beauty and pleasure. *Verandahs* were designed to connect the self with the community, and neighbourhood bird-feeders to connect the community with nature. Here, realities injected value into ideas, while ideas rendered forms with meaning. These were strong forms with strong meanings -- some very big ideas of some very simple people -- that were powerful, mainly because they were home-grown. And so, despite what was happening around the world in terms of widespread "globalization and homogenization of world culture and aesthetic"^[10], these home-grown values were protected by an undeviating pride in its wealth and uniqueness. This pride in the indigenous culture was held sacrosanct by the communities in each city, and this in turn, resulted in vast differences between the different city-cultures in India, a trait that was unquestionably manifested in the built-form of the cities as well. Further, the variety of aspects to this pride were numerous too. Some overlapped. Others were markedly independent. Yet, each city developed a unique and distinct spirit, in combination, ultimately. Of course, it cannot be

assumed decisively that a city represents one thing or another in particular^[11]. But, as pointed out by Daniel Bell and Avner de-Shalit, if we are to look at the two cities -- Jerusalem and Beijing -- the deduction from the contestation becomes rather clear. While both cities have evolved with "a core surrounded by concentric circles, one core expresses spiritual value, while the other represents political power"^[12]. For Bell and de-Shalit, this core is what represents "the spirit of cities"^[13]. And so, although each city's "spirit" may or may not radiate a single unified sensation, it is, in most certainty, comprised of many aspects that work together to craft a "spirit" or, in many cases, a multitude of "spirits".

And it is thus, that the concepts of city-identity derive their definitions. Beyond the mere singular thematic sensation derived from the knowledge or experience of a city, the city-identity, which includes, both, its imagery and experience, makes its presence felt, even in its everyday ordinariness, as the city functions oblivious to the gaze of the observer. It stems from the continuance of a "particular way of life"^[14], followed by the city, in complete nonchalance to this very continuance. It develops by synchronising the multiple "spirits" of a city and the many negotiations, transformations and assimilations that govern them. There is a constant influence of the histories. There is a constant reference to priorities. There is a unanimous internalised acknowledgement of the significance of the home-grown values, as the powerful driving sentiment in its existence. While it could be argued that there is a limit to the influence of architecture, conservation and cultural practices in shaping these sentiments of a city's inhabitants^[15], one could, equally so, counter-argue with fitting examples of powerful cases that reinforce their role in creating them. For instance, in the context of Indian cities, visitors and inhabitants feel instantly blessed by the religious aura of Varanasi or Srirangam owing to its temples, ghats and religious rituals; the idea of Panjim or Darjeeling immediately relaxes a stressful mind owing to its resorts, natural environs and stress-free lifestyle; the Taj Mahal,

almost single-handedly makes Agra the principal centre for thriving tourism; Bangalore's high-rise offices become synonymous with information and technological development, Mumbai's diverse demography with lifestyle, Jaisalmer's residential streets with exquisite craftsmanship, Ahmedabad with entrepreneurial communities, and Lucknow with gastronomy.

One speaks about cities having various attributes or personalities, evaluates and judges them, to arrive at favourites and non-favourites, "almost as though cities were like people"^[16]. Although these city-based evaluations and judgements are ubiquitous, yet, it is extremely difficult to theorize or analyse them -- in general, owing to the complex nature of city-identity. Here, generalisation is not only impossible, it becomes incorrect, as every city is not only different in its overall "spirit", but also in terms of its intrinsic aspects that form this very "spirit". Further, the city, as an organism invariably demanding collective representation in terms of consensus, makes the task of documentation even harder. Due to apprehensions of the complexity of the task or sheer disregard for these incredible natural qualities, the index of city-identity in Indian cities, remains undocumented. And yet, an instinctive intuition, what Malcolm Gladwell calls "thinking without thinking"^[17] -- the human ability of "thin-slicing"^[18] (to gauge what is really important from very narrow experience) -- prescribes that people living in these great Indian cities ought to lobby for and promote their "particular ways of life", as significant aspects in the creation of their city's identity^[19]. Although, such a sentiment is triggered more by a spontaneous impulse, possibly even personal nostalgia, than with a carefully planned and considered decision, the need to express the sentiment of pride in one's own urban identity itself, is relevant to social coherence and seldom met with much disagreement. It is no miracle that the idea of the global promotion of city-identity meets with little opposition, nor is it a coincidence that cities with unique identities attract tourism and international acclaim more than generic ones^[20], nor is the sentiment of city-evaluation a fluctuating or dispersive one -- it is a

reaction that finds its presence in all inhabitants, irrespective of background and awareness. It is, however, unfortunate that the architectural and urban developmental compass navigates cities elsewhere, making them directionless even in the presence of such definite and powerful directions -- forever looking for solutions outside its own self, when solutions lie deep within -- and that little efforts exist as endorsements against any unthinking phenomenon that diverts cities from their innate identities.

Given the right attention and management, the great Indian cities hold the ability to become powerful tools of counter-argument to globalisation trends and their flattening tendencies towards culture. However, the disciplines of architectural and urban research in the country fail to understand them contextually, to recognize the significance of their uniqueness, or to give city-identity equal impetus as, for instance, heritage conservation, seismic response or building by-laws. As a result, there is little revelation of concrete possibilities in terms of preservation approaches, and a lack of informed opinion or decision-making regarding the pros and cons of any such or similar consideration. To start at the very fundamentals ("almost as though cities were like people^[21]"), one begins to develop an idea about the personality of a person (and hence by extension, of a city), through a step-by-step process of discovery and accumulation of information, with respect to their (or its) behaviour. Much like one would first observe the physical appearance and mannerisms of the person, followed by vital inferences through conversation; the personality of an Indian city can be predominantly judged through two broad spheres of their existence -- what Charles Correa calls, the "manifest" (the physical appearance and interactions of the architecture of the city) and the "non-manifest" (the meta-physical meanings that inform the material, lifestyle and culture of the city)^[22]. No doubt, the presence of certain striking and dominant personality traits in every city through a combination of the two, is an established notion, one that is accepted universally. And yet, there are little efforts to document these

two aspects of a city's identity in unison, so that any judgement made regarding the accurate 'heritage' of a city remains considerably deficient -- and it only becomes possible to imagine a city as either a living museum of dead buildings or as a psychology of out-dated values that have little connection with the architectures of the present. A combined study of the dominant physical and the meta-physical personality traits of a city can open up avenues for investigation on the question of the middle-ground. Needless to say, there exists the possibility of inferences, wherein, dominant personality traits of a city may prove derogatory to the sensibilities of its own existence.^[23] For instance, when the mass-submerging of Ganesh idols in the sea becomes a cause for water-pollution, or when extreme religious fanaticism affects community lives in Srinagar, or when the increasing mall-culture threatens to devastate social interactions and exchange in Gurgaon. However, how is one to map these inconsistencies even, without a thorough examination of the city and a comprehensive documentation of its individual quirks, their inter-relationships, which my then execute a sensible informed prioritization? Unfortunately however, little exists in the form of any comprehensive research-database on the cities of India, that registers or catalogues these "manifest and non-manifest^[24]" aspects that make up the city concurrently, to enable the facilitation of such an interpretation.

Jane Jacobs, in 1961 questioned, "*Why have cities not, long since, been identified, understood and treated as problems of organized complexity? If the people concerned with the life sciences were able to identify their difficult problems as problems of organized complexity, why have people professionally concerned with cities not identified the kind of problems they had?*"^[25] While her context of enquiry differed considerably, one cannot help but attempt an application of its implications to the question of city-identities. Are city-identities, truly such mammoth organizations, that any digestion of their aspects into simpler, graspable units is, in fact, impossible? The Identity Project is an attempt to instigate this investigation, in the

context of India. What is it that makes an Indian city what it is? To begin with, the Identity Project sprouts from sheer impulse and instinct. It might be seen as having its foundations in the soul of a traveler even. But with a more professional agenda taking shape, certainly, one concedes that, were such a research-database of Indian cities to be initiated as a bigger project, it would demand the involvement of multiple actors, although with the central aim of deducing a single common idea of what this larger group thinks about its cities. Yet, it is key to establish that the voice of the author becomes a decisive technicality in the documentation. Of course, an ideal scenario foresees an inter-disciplinary team of established and knowledgeable professionals from various fields of architecture, urban studies, social sciences, psychology, geography and history working on the documentation of various respective attributes together. The implementation of its ideologies, as a due consideration in the future development of cities further, lies significantly at the discretion of the political will and economic factors. Nonetheless, at the very on-set, it is imperative to establish the objective nature of the Project. The trickling of any personal or emotional attachments into the catalogue, can become questionable, and hence, problematic in view of the collective consensus. While the following investigation may appear largely determined and limited by personal experience and opinion, in terms of the cited examples and instances -- and in most probability, immensely restricted as the perspective of an architect alone -- it is important to understand the project as a foundation stone to a building process, rather than as the building itself. Intended as the preamble, rather than a conclusive end, of a much bigger project, the idea is to recognize, first and foremost, that it is possible to disentangle the many complexities involved in a city's identity, and that its parts once broken down systematically, become individually comprehensible and graspable, even at the formidable scale of a city. Further, there may be several contestations against the approach to the project as well -- some may prefer a more "flâneur^[26]"-like approach to the documentation,

others a more democratic one with public-participation, and yet others may desire a basis of economic or touristic assessment for exploration -- and no doubt, the approaches employed in two different cities could be entirely different even. But the intention of The Identity Project is to establish a formal and objective platform where a standard academic voice can be developed in due course, to guide each city through its own search for (and preservation of) identity, by the provision of certain elementary frameworks that aid investigation and database assemblage.

The theories developed within this framework or as the framework itself, are with the strong feeling that what the Project describes is, but, common knowledge and that it suggests the dedication of massive research and documentation to expound ideas, which are, in fact, self-evident. However, the Project is, in fact, precisely about bringing into sharper focus thoughts, habits, ways of life, that were arrived at long ago, and dedicatedly followed for years, but are now being lost to a vague form of unwarranted amnesia. It is about following out the consequences of such a phenomenon, to restore that which has been lost in the fissures, and to prevent any further negligence. The theories developed, are also with the acknowledgement that every city has its own unique geographic, demographic, economic, and institutional characteristics that make it different from others, and so a different strategy in the discovery of each city's identity may be in order. It, hence restricts itself to generalisation in terms of the fundamental framework, while aims for specificity in terms of the comprehensive database -- a significant reason for the scale of the project. The Project also takes into due consideration any apprehensions regarding the role of the current urban problems, faced by the cities, in shaping its identity, and the accusations of the existence of an elitist perspective in play, which asserts a premise for identity, while survival might be at stake. The Project hence, assumes the stance of a reference database, rather than indulging in any form of prescription. The Project invites an understanding that while not every city might be equally equipped to develop

and succeed, as a ground for implementation of its corollaries, nonetheless, the fact that they all, in most certainty, do possess certain distinct inherent qualities, cannot be entirely rejected. The hypothesis, therefore, directs all its efforts towards the compilation of a well-functioning regulatory framework, or rather an assessment model for the development of this framework - to empower precise identification, designation, protection, preservation and rehabilitation of characteristics, ideas and elements (both, tangible and intangible), on a individual city-by-city basis (through structures, streetscapes and cultural landscapes), and to encourage their continuation as indispensable aspects of the city's living atmospheres. Devoid of personal biases (besides the overall stance, that recommends the need for such a project) in terms of what requires preservation and where negotiation might be possible, the idea is of an unadulterated objective documentation of the unique tangible and intangible aspects of a city. It is intended that such a city-wise database can perform not only as a medium for advocacy of urban pride, but also as a set of ready reference material for participatory actors in the execution of new developments, so as to ensure more informed, sensitive decisions. The Project recognizes its inherent tendency to shy away from being comprehensive or conclusive. Given the nature of city-identity -- constantly being made, never completely made -- the project concedes to remaining a continuous work-in-progress. And, although the resultant may still be a some-what incomplete picture of the identity of the city, in the light of the current globalization trend, even a small gesture in opposition, may still prove crucial.

The Project understands that the production and management of such a catalogue, that reflects a city's ethos, deserves (in some capacity) a representation of the social realm and its aspirations. However, the very nature of this realm, being highly fragmented in consensus, constantly fluctuating in opinion and inextricably entangled with personal emotions and agendas, makes the inclusion of this criteria highly problematic. The

objective stance of the Project would, therefore, neutralize this pressure of the social-realm, diminishing it to the status of a constant reference and purpose in decision-making, rather than the decision-maker itself. So, to say, one would include the very festival of Navratri, celebrated by the people in Ahmedabad, or the community-market culture of Manek Chowk, as aspects of the city's culture that deserve prolonged life, however, one would refrain from supporting a claim for their preservation with any public-survey based evidence. The database would be mechanically factual. Indeed, it is an irony that to re-associate ourselves with our humane cities, we are forced to assume such a drastically mechanical positioning. Rem Koolhaas, while speaking of the Generic City says, *"People can inhabit anything. And they can be miserable in anything and ecstatic in anything. More and more I think that architecture has nothing to do with it. Of course, that is both liberating and alarming. But the generic city, the general urban condition, is happening everywhere, and just the fact that it occurs in such enormous quantities must mean that it is habitable. Architecture can't do anything that culture doesn't. We all complain that we are confronted by urban environments that are completely similar. We say we want to create beauty, identity, quality, singularity. And yet, maybe in truth these cities that we have are desired. Maybe their very "characterlessness" provides the best context for living."*^[27] In its strategy of locating and bringing forward strong city-identities as alternate "contexts for living", The Project challenges this claim with the offer of variety, experience and aesthetic pleasure.

Indeed, there could be a claim that the desire for an identity is born out of nostalgia for that very identity, and might be less prominent, possibly even non-existent, in the future generations which will remain unexposed to the glories of the past, and for whom 'identity' itself will develop from a new characteristic of this very "characterlessness". The "seemingly accidental blankness"^[28] of Koolhaas's Generic City thus, even if only deceptively so, may appear advantageous even. Here, one would have to take a step back

and peer into a larger question of variety as a source of vital engagement for the human mind, and its resentment towards boredom. Why does a project as this become increasingly important? The aspects of identities in question, contribute to the atmospheres of cities, a variety in which, as concluded by Bell and De-Shalit, makes human experience so "interesting and valuable"^[29]. Partly, this is a "moral case for diversity"^[30]. Partly, it is a hope for the continuity of "aesthetic pleasure"^[31]. Setting aside any guilt-ridden justifications for the current un-undoable phenomenon, it is necessary to accept that the human mind being what it is, and the city, in some capacity being an amplification of the same, the phenomenon of the generic is "usually regretted"^[32] with time.

As nations of the world rapidly speed into their urban future, decade after decade witnesses stimulating changes, and newer and newer technological innovations take city-identities by storm. This comes with a price. Urban fabrics that once reflected a civilization's values, become perfunctory environments of dullness; architecture becomes a mathematical exercise in density. Life is lost in the desire for lifestyle; home to the machine. The attempt to reconciliation or a collapse into rebound seem, but, inevitable with time. Our preparations for the transition then, seem inadequate. Today, the word Identity or Spirit, is being considered more and more meaningless -- often it is only used as a poetic metaphor or elitist jargon or touristic myth, having little to do with objective reality as far as the legitimized, accepted structure of common knowledge is concerned.^[33] There is a lack of awareness. There is a lack of pride. There is a lack of preservation. Contemporary cities, not just in India, but world-over, continue to gamble rich histories and extensive cultures in an unthinking speculative surge. Some aspire to achieve this condition of the generic, others are ashamed of it,^[34] while yet others are completely oblivious to its very occurrence. Nonetheless, a rapid and dangerous process has already begun, and with little tools to counter the phenomenon, architects and urban designers stand paralyzed by the scale of the problem they are facing.

Yes, Indian cities are no longer what they once were. Looking forward, two approaches appear plausible, for recovery. Cities can either assume an optimistic outlook towards this "self-sedation"^[35] and, we as architects, can indulge in the possibility of a gradual recovery through the development of means and methods to safeguard what is left of their identities and revive what is lost of them. Or, cities could align with a more "paranoid critical"^[36] approach, and assume this happenstance to be the end of human culture as we know it. One could then rejoice in the thought of the world as a single seamless "Trude"^[37], where the names and atmospheres of cities signify nothing beyond meaningless signage at airport terminals, where machines colonize the mind and dictate their boundaries, and where, all that remains of culture is the debris of an "ex-city"^[38], after its inhabitants have vacated and migrated away into a virtual, simulated "smart" city^[39]. Maybe then, this would mean that the slow, painful process of the universal abandonment of identity and culture, as we know it, is finally over. And maybe, now, that the world is, in fact, one seamless city, a reverse healing process can finally commence. Built-form after built-form can topple like dominoes, to now abandon the generic, and embrace variety, so that our great cities with their proud cultures can, once more, reprise. In this new surge, cities will live differently. They will fear the "characterlessness"^[40] that made their cities, lives and existences generic in their past. They will carry in their veins, a classical idea that each city ought to express its own distinctive ethos, its own unique identity. Despite development, they will consistently disallow alienation from the idiosyncrasies that define their individuality. They will respect and value their "particular ways of life"^[41], and will work to protect them, for, they will now have known and suffered a world devoid of these values. Either way, an intensive catalogue that provides a detailed documentation of what makes these cities what they are in their pure objectivity, will be the key to salvation, to the revival of what is lost -- one city at a time -- be it to evoke nostalgia, rectification, or renaissance. Maybe then, we can leave "Trude"^[42] once and for all, and finally come back home.

GRAPHIC 2. Indian Cities - From Identity to Amnesia.

"The Generic?.. Identity is derived from physical substance, from the historical, from context, from the real. We somehow cannot imagine that anything contemporary - made by us - contributes to it."

- Rem Koolhaas, *The Generic City*. 1995.



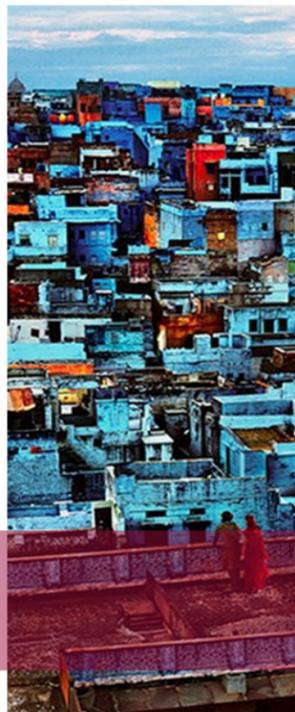
IDENTITY

INDIA

AMNESIA

Older city developments

Developments post-1985



Jodhpur



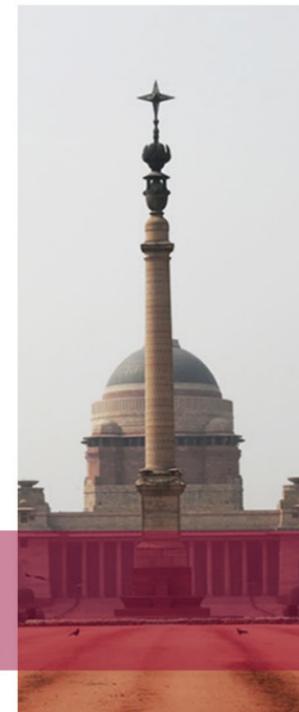
Jaisalmer



Shimla



Dharamsala



New Delhi



Varanasi



Gurgaon



Noida



Ghaziabad

SMART CITIES (?)

Planned developments in cities are not entirely a new phenomenon for a country like India, and its several confrontations with constant flux. From the times of Akbar's design for the city of Fatehpur Sikri to Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II's grand visions for an avant-garde Jaipur, and the more modern imaginations of Bhubhaneshwar and Chandigarh, (Otto Koenigsberger and Le Corbusier respectively) in the post-colonial times, even entire cities have been considered as graspable entities, in a certain sense. Of course, needless to say, the great Indian cities and the approach to their design and planning has undergone several changes since then. While the earlier monarchs and regional rulers undertook confident ventures that initiated new cities capable of natural progressions, the imperial period saw very little contribution of the native imagination to the development of its cities (which were predominantly trade ports or industrial colonies), resulting in a sudden influx of a post-colonial apprehension in the post-independence developments. In part, the imperial rule had transformed the definition of city-design in the country and its myriad functional mechanisms were new to the understanding of the native psychology. With an urgency to define its own identity, in the 1950s, regional-planning and the city master-plans grew in importance, though they remained divorced from the complex realities of a poor, independent, post-colonial country^[1]. While urban poverty rose, master plans fetishised about leisurely, low-density, spread-out cities, and obsessed over the eradication of

slums^[2]. With modernism invited to India, a search for new paradigms began, with plans for newer cities -- Bhubaneswar and Chandigarh developed specifically to represent the ideals of modern India -- as emblems of "India's freedom, unfettered by traditions of the past"^[3]. In the process of yearning exclusivity and modernity, these cities failed to take into the consideration the vast legacy that was being excluded. Outright impositions, these structures were invariably destined to fail, and Chandigarh's aura was soon associated with an "absence of local authority, a lack of understanding of the local culture and values on the part of the planners, and the disregard for the history of the region"^[4], while Bhubhaneshwar, became synonymous with its low scores in "urban capacities and resources as well as in transparency, accountability and participation"^[5]. The great Indian cities exhibited a tendency to reject the imposed utopian visions, and demanded, as powerful underlays, certain deep-structures that could give its living continuities, greater cultural resonance.

INDIA, 2014.

In May 2014, with an ambitious plan to upgrade the existing urban locations and as an approach to deal with the country's newly and rapidly urbanizing population, the Government of India announced the development of hundred "smart-cities" across the country by 2022. At a public gathering in June, the newly appointed Prime Minister declared, "*Cities in the past were built along riverbanks. They*

are now built along highways. But in the future, they will be built based on availability of optical-fibre networks and next-generation infrastructure."^[6] Following this declaration, an allocation of 1.2 billion USD was made to this end in the Budget of 2014-2015, with even more funding expected from private investors and foreign companies in the ensuing year.^[7]

The development is seen as an economic and commercial initiative of the government, intended to boost up the country's manufacturing through the establishment of industrial centres. The key feature of a "smart-city" is envisioned as an intersection between "competitiveness, capital and sustainability"^[8]. By July, in mere two months, the Urban Development Ministry of India had already identified the cities where manufacturing zones, business parks and general "smart" growth was to take place in the country^[9], and the first phase was envisioned to witness seven such "smart-cities" opening their doors to the people by 2018-19.^[10] This phase would only be followed by the next, with seventeen more cities to be developed on the same pattern, making a total of twenty-four such new-generation cities in phased developments across the states of UP, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra.^[11] By the end of 2014, the masterplans for seven of these cities were tentatively ready^[12], in what would become India's biggest urban development project. The first of these cities is planned to be constructed in the Dholera Special Investment Region in Gujarat, 110 km from the city of Ahmedabad. The master-plan for this new city has already been approved and talks are underway for acquisition of land for execution.^[13] Its key features include "compact vertical development, efficient public transportation systems, the use of digital technology to create smart grids for better management of civic infrastructure, recycling of sewage water for industrial use, green spaces, cycle tracks and easy accessibility to goods, elaborate services and activities designed to foster a sense of community"^[14]. Plans are also in place to integrate these cities through new airports, rail links, and arteries of ten-lane highways.^[15] It is true that over

time, national plans have grown considerably more responsive, and have restricted their role to managing things as they are^[16], allowing for the former natural organic temperament to resurface. A sudden break in that approach, the scale and speed of the current push of the "smart-cities" initiative is unprecedented, and of utmost alarm. Further, what appears problematic is that there is no one (and yet, there is not one) straight-forward definition for these proposed smart cities.^[17] The example of Dholera SIR, for instance, appears unbelievably oblivious or inconsiderate to the realities of the locale, almost to the degree, that makes one question its actuality.

THE CANARY IN THE COAL-MINE: DHOLERA SIR

Twice the size of Mumbai, the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (Gift) proposed, and underway, at Dholera nearly 110 kilometre from the city of Ahmedabad, is the undoubted canary in the coal-mine. Circulated widely by the Government of India, in one of those cringe-worthy technological simulations, the proposal for the new city poses a threat to the very idea of Identity in the context. Envisioned on the lines of Shanghai (one cannot help but question why), the imagination of the city begins with the airport, and with quick mobility, swirls through a series of inappropriate futuristic architecture to reach the city downtown - an image that is expected to stimulate the excitement of building a new city?^[18] The proposal exposes, not only the possibility of what might become of a settlement like Dholera, but more alarmingly, the lack of India's understanding and respect for the character of its cities, and worse, its misunderstanding of cities as mere generic entities -- as opposed to the proud legacy of India's natural home-grown cultures. With an inventory of components (transport, information, technology, infrastructure) becoming the dominating thought in most decision-making processes^[19], the sensitive urban form of the city is nonchalantly diminished to cast-off versions of out-of-place architecture thrown together in a technologically generated montage, and there appears little consideration for the city at the level of cultural interaction or human occupation.



Fig1: Stills from the released proposal for Dholera SIR.



"Imagine yourself in an Indian city where every home is connected to internet, gas, water and electricity via a smart grid. All citizens are linked to each other and to civic facilities in real time. The city uses renewable energy and its transport systems are controlled via central command-centres to reduce traffic and pollution. In this city, there are no offensive smells, no noise, no dust, no heaving crowds. It is a smart city, the ideal city. And it exists: on paper. Its name is Dholera, and it is a key part of what you might call India's 21st-century utopian urban experiment."^[20]



"The Dholera that actually exists, however, is something else entirely. A casual visitor might see the small sign along the highway pointing in the direction of Dholera. But they might also, if they take the turn-off, be disappointed: for several months of the year, they will find a vast, low-lying area, mostly submerged under seawater. The rest of the year, they will see the classic cracked-earth look of salt flats. Dotting this landscape are farm buildings, village huts and small reservoirs storing rainwater that is



Fig2: Images of Dholera in its reality.

used to irrigate fields of cumin, millet, wheat and cotton. They will see a vast landscape with about 40,000 people living in an ecological region that loses 1 centimetre of its coastline to the sea every day. They might then understand that Dholera is not even a "place": it is still a terrain of possibilities."^[21]

Something appears fundamentally amiss. The optimistic vision that aims to transform India's developing satellite cities and major urban centres into "symbols of efficiency, speed and scale"^[22], fails to take into account the bitter-sweet realities of its existing pressures, the culture of its demography, or the period of transition -- one that will no longer be the natural slow progression that the Indian cities are familiar with, but a rapid and shocking shift that endangers the survival of its culture. As the concept aims to compete with overseas rivals at a global scale, the term "smart-city", in India's vocabulary, continues to remain extremely broad and loosely-defined. A rather vague website launched by the Ministry of Urban Development of India, celebrates its understanding of a "smart-city" as a convergence of "Competitiveness, Sustainability and the Quality of Life"^[23]. While the Concept Note promises "strong and clear city identity"^[24] rather briefly, its construal predominantly aligns to business cities and industrial townships. Further, the gap between the concept definition and its interpretation in urban form, which becomes the epicentre of archi-cultural amnesia, becomes evident in the proposed development model, for the city of Dholera in Gujarat. One cannot help but wonder, if the proposal is about Indian cities at all, or if it is, in fact, only the "treatment

of some abstract territory"^[25] that has little to do with the reality of a living city. Such a scenario - where blind-folded rapid development refuses to acknowledge crucial harsh realities of a landscape, let alone its nourishing identity - demands strict measures in terms of the advocacy of city-identity and pride, that helps flatten inconsistencies and restore priorities. Given India's diverse traditional pasts and its rich legacy of community and culture, any "smart city" planned should focus, first and foremost, on three fundamentals: culture, community and narrative. Although "smart cities" can make the everyday life easier for residents by automating routine functions, and providing a basic transportation and housing network^[26], it is these fundamentals that give the city its memorable uniqueness, and its "city-zens"^[27], a sense of place. For, the architecture of Indian cities cannot be created in vacuum. The fear of an architect and cultural critic then, is a late realisation of the consequences of the current misplaced priorities. A wingless flight from an undesirable condition to a preferred Utopia, it appears that "the only way Dholera can be a smart city, is if it never gets built at all"^[28].

Indian cities are fragile ecosystems. Today, it is deemed regressive to look back and recall ideals with nostalgia. And yet, it is true that the modern developments that we erect in impatience, have little or no nostalgia to offer. As urban form and content lose priority to infrastructure and commodity, the cities consistently fail at the level of human experience. Even as singular utopian visions of the past, that have disregarded the continuity and significance of our inherent ideas, have inevitably found themselves fade into desolate urban-scapes, the political visions and economic-play continue to bestow their hopes in the hollow promises of external influences, misunderstanding them as decisive catalysts in the transformation of India's urban syntax. But as these institutions aimed to make great Indian cities, fail at the levels of life, attachment and pride, the greater cultural resonance that has been primordial to Indian cities, suffers, and cities, over-promise and under-deliver. Policy becomes their DNA and



Fig3. Website launched by Urban Development Ministry of India.

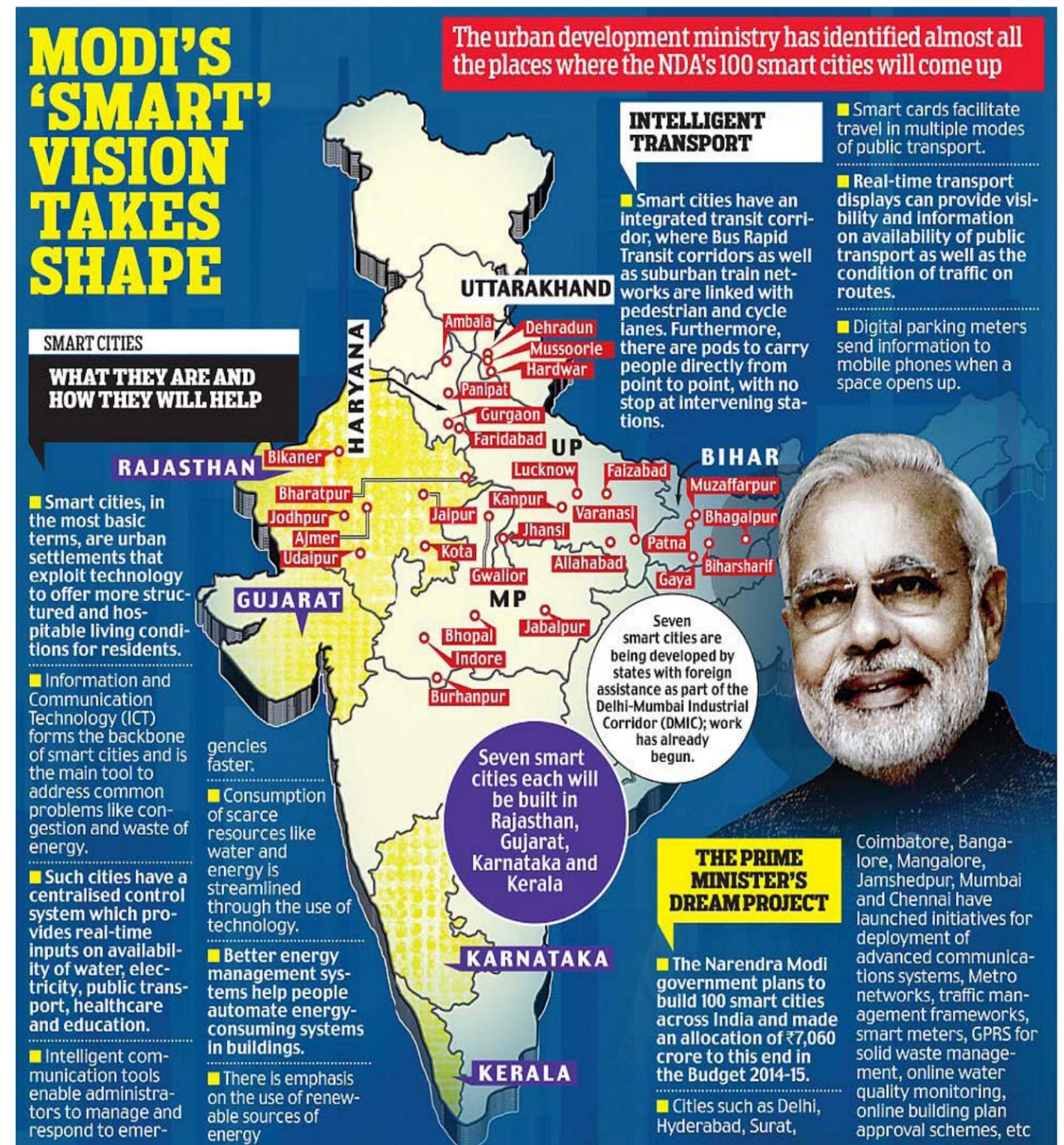


Fig4. Declaration of the 100-smart-cities initiative.

political will, their head rush, as architectural and urban research fail to impose their own agency. Following the European Commission Conference in September 2014, on "smart-cities" in Brussels, Rem Koolhaas wrote, "I had a sinking feeling as I was listening to the talks by these prominent figures

(from politics and technology) in the field of smart cities because, the city used to be the domain of the architect, and now, frankly, they have made it their domain. This transfer of authority has been achieved through a very clever strategy... by calling their city smart, they condemn our city as being stupid."^[29]

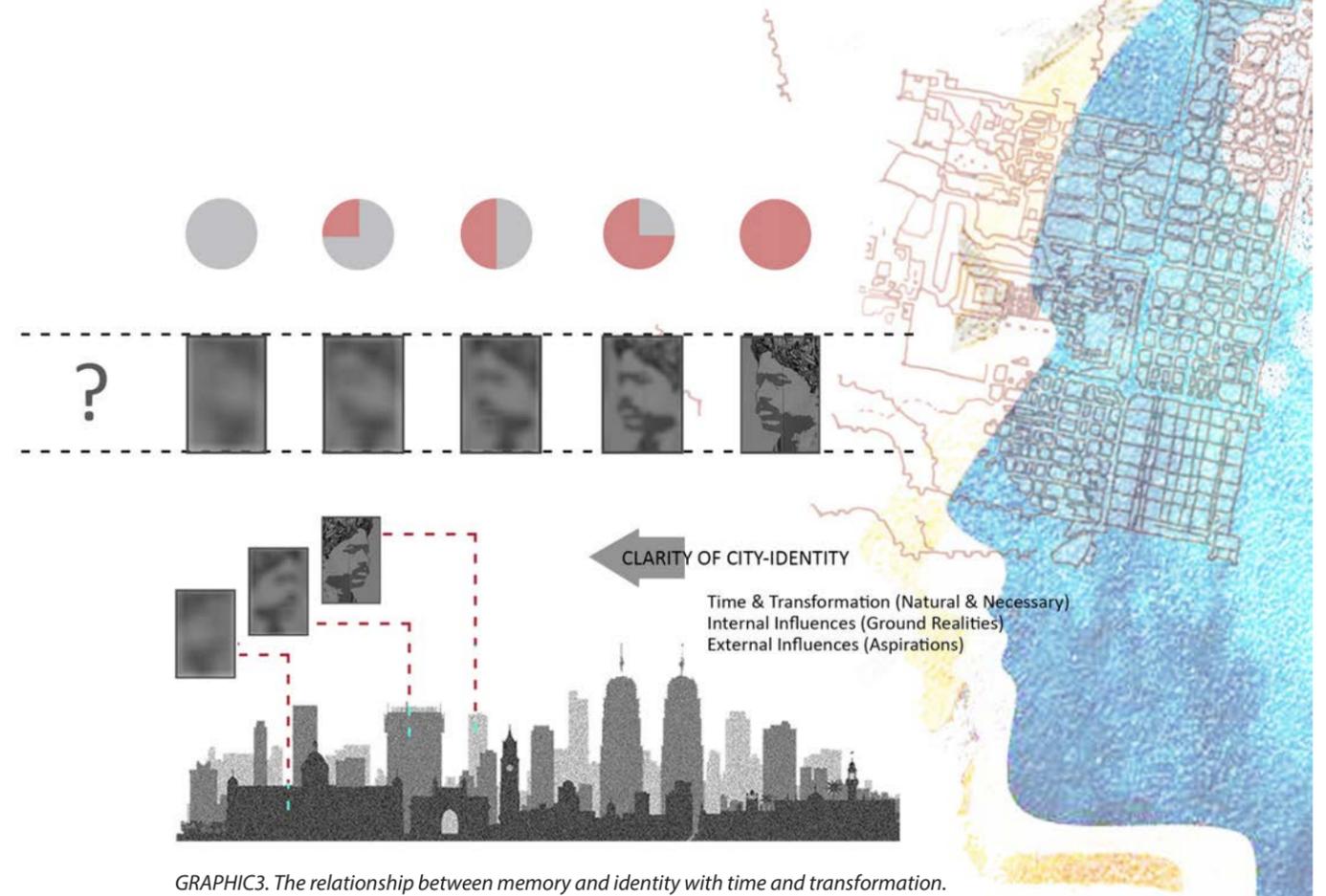
IDENTITY + AMNESIA

India is “an ancient civilization; a young nation”^[1]. Crucial to the understanding of the identity of its cities, is its journey from the former to latter, and the appreciation of the phenomenon of “cross-pollinations”^[2] that occurs within, in terms of its architecture and culture. The histories of the great Indian cities are enriched by an incredible array of influences, and it is in this constant juxtaposition of paradigms that their identities reside. In its millennia-long history, India has always been a country of tradition, community and religion. Its cities have progressed gradually with time, to assimilate the many influences that came to them as a result of global discourse^[3], and these were obediently reflected as ideologies in their atmospheres. Through prosperity or conquest, underlying mythical models, social relationships and historical references seldom failed in establishing a sense of familiarity with all fractions of its population uniformly. While each of the new cultures that intervened into its city-fabrics, brought new elements and ideas with them, they constantly maintained connotations, that the native psychology could inadvertently associate itself with. The identity of each of its cities was, hence, the consequence of a natural evolution - a complex harmonious medley of its own specific traditional pasts, its political currents, its social revolutions^[4], and its architectural assimilations. The continuity of these city-identities depends much at the discretion of its “city-zens”^[5], their psychological ownership of the objects and ideas of the city, and their pride for their own “particular

ways of life”^[6]. For city-identities to continue, the inhabitants of the communities ought to feel that, both, the tangible and intangible aspects of the city belong to them - both, individually, and as a collective. Only then, can a natural progression evolve and ensure authenticity.

AMNESIA

Archi-cultural amnesia in a city maybe defined, on similar lines as “urban amnesia”^[7], that is the urban condition of a city, wherein there is a loss of memory regarding the city’s complete past-identity (in terms of its architectures and cultures), and only an acknowledgement of its most recent pasts^[7], and the aspects of its identity that have developed from these recent pasts. This is allowed to propagate owing to a lack of sufficient demonstration in terms of symptoms, until its ultimate consequence manifests itself, in the image and experience of the city. This condition, thus, through its inconspicuous manifestation, becomes the root cause for the neglect of valuable idiosyncrasies of the city’s character, and consequently its generic built-environments. So, where does this archi-cultural amnesia stem from? Powerful as they are, in shaping the psychology of the inhabitants of a city as well as functioning as the glue that holds the community together, identities are predominantly constituted within, not outside of representation, and arise from the ‘narrativization’ of the self.^[8] In case of cities too, identity is not just about what the city is in essence, or how it has evolved to what it is. It is



GRAPHIC3. The relationship between memory and identity with time and transformation.

also about how it has been represented, and how that representation bears on how it might wish to, or aspire to, represent itself. Scholars have, hence, dissected city-identities, to uncover the key concepts of “city-image and city-positioning”^[9] that inconspicuously function below the complex evolution of its identity. A city-identity in its complete strength, may be powerful enough to single-handedly tackle the development of the generic. However, its weakening due to archi-cultural amnesia is a major cause for concern, for it is this state that separates the inhabitants from their deep-structures, and orients them towards doubting their valuable ethos, and worse, towards aping unwarranted models, only because they are better represented within global competition. In the current case of Indian cities, too, this influence makes its presence evident, in its desire to follow foreign models in the search of its own city-identities.

“Identity is often, and insufficiently so, understood to be something that is natural or innate in an individual or a structure. However, its definitions extend far beyond these boundaries, and reflect the

manner in which individuals and societies establish and internalize various aspects of routine encounter, and which shape their ideas about who they think they are and how they want to be perceived by others. ‘Identity’ is created through a constant interaction with others and the subsequent self-reflection and self-definition, in accordance to these exchanges.^[10] Unfortunate as is, in the reality of the time, city-identity is a concept that finds its nutrition more in the thought of image and representation, than it does in the feeling of ownership and internalization. And yet, this process of representation can occur and persist only with the complete internalization of a certain “narrativization”^[11], without which, the evolution of identity is diminished to a superficial transfer of imagery -- that is, unless the new representations evolve through a gradual process of evolution with time and happenstance, the resultant atmospheres appear alien, for they are restricted to mere representation, and fail to take into account the core contributions that build a city-identity. One can then contend that the claim is not that skyscrapers or repetitive building blocks, as building typologies or forms, are the reason for this sensation of the alien. It is not to say

that these typologies and forms cannot make the identity of a city. But, it is to say that they cannot make the identity of every city. And so, while these built-forms sit perfectly comfortable in New York or Chicago, when conceived as promotional entities in a city like Ahmedabad or Jaipur, they are suddenly no longer at home. They are awkward and uncomfortable, and one can sense this discomfort in their very act of making the inhabitants uncomfortable with their presence. Yet, one never loses interest or fascination with something that is unique in aesthetic output, or reveals deeply ingrained stories, or simply concedes to its realities in all naturalness, or reflects the multitude of human diversity and the simplitude of their ordinariness, or speaks of a quality that cannot be explained, but only experienced as a sensation, an immediate connection or a silent conversation between the built-fabrics and the occupants. And so, whether seen as a representation of the mental life of the built-environment or that of its inhabitants, one thing remains clear. There exists a certain framework, an assembly as a deep-structure that develops city-identities the way it does. These once created as the city-image, then require appropriate positioning or representation, so as to become living continuities of the city-identity, through the proud psychology of its inhabitants. So, how is it that these aspects of a city come to represent its narratives and hence, in due course, become indispensable parts of its city-identity? The following incident from history helps us understand the framework that links psychology with human-identity, and by extension, city-identities, and how their legitimacy may lie, almost insignificant as a consideration or liability.

Easter Sunday Parade, New York City, 1929.

“Edward Bernays, the less-known nephew of Sigmund Freud, set out with a dramatic experiment. There existed in society, a taboo against women smoking and, for his clients at the American Tobacco Corporation, Bernays was keen on finding a way to eliminate it. Through psycho-analysis, he discovered what cigarettes really meant to women - “a symbol of the penis and of male sexual power”. Bernays was

quick to realize that if he could find a way to connect cigarettes with the idea of challenging male power, then women would smoke. And so, Bernays decided to stage an event at the parade. He convinced a group of wealthy debutantes to hide cigarettes under their coats and join the parade. At an agreed signal from him, they were to light up the cigarettes in a theatrical fashion. He then notified the press that a group of young women were initiating a protest, by lighting up what they called “Torches of Freedom”. The incident was flaunted across newspapers world-over. And from that point forward, the sale of cigarettes to women began to increase. Bernays had made smoking socially acceptable, and admirable even, with a single symbolic act.

It was a symbol - with emotion, with memory and, now, with a rational phrase, a narrative. The implication was that if a woman smoked it made her more powerful and independent, an idea that continues to persist, even today, in some capacity. The idea that smoking actually made women freer, was never completely rational. But it gave them the sense of independence. It meant that it was possible to persuade people to behave irrationally by linking objects to their emotional desires and feelings. It meant that irrelevant objects could become powerful emotional symbols of how you want to be seen by others.”^[12]

Needless to say, India is a country of emotions and unconceivable drama. In a country where one sees faith and dedication manifested in the intricately carved anonymous stone-monuments, or urban shrines dotting the streets of modern metropolises, or institution of politics or Bollywood taking national sentiments by storm -- one recognizes that certain habits, here, die hard, for they are emotionally ingrained. Yet, the new urban developments tackle this with a clever strategy, to manipulate the minds of the masses. With local economics and politics as sturdy patronage, the propaganda is of a diminished, almost shameful, value in tradition. And so, design is carried out with a rejection of the same, and with little consideration for the overall effect of the city or its relationships with its occupants.

The study of the complexity of India's historic context brings forth the aesthetic and cultural legacy possessed natively, hence challenging the disorienting notions regarding the kind of models that the cities should aspire to. It questions what one sees as positive in the otherwise plastic and cringe-worthy technological simulations, drawn from foreign inspirations. It makes a strong case for more gradual natural evolutions, rather than the envisioned and proposed drastic transformations of the century. What makes India particularly interesting is that, in its extra-ordinarily rich architectural legacy, several outsiders have striven to impose their own ideas. While some of these influences have been absorbed, others are still seen as unacceptable intrusions.^[13] While partially, this is owing to historical chronology, one cannot help but deduce the “distance between the local and imposed ideals^[14]” as a significant aspect in this rejection -- a trend that is now being aped. As mentioned by the historian and scholar, Romila Thapar, in reference to the education system and agencies of awareness in the country, that fail to instil a pride for India's own culture in its people, “These claims can be interpreted as signs of an inferiority complex. And the most disturbing thing is that many people accept this without questioning it.”^[15]

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: INDIA'S JOURNEY FROM IDENTITY TO AMNESIA

“Histories and cultures constantly intrude on the present demanding transformation through the understanding of cross-cultural relations”^[16].

- Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture, 1994.

The story of India's histories and cultures begins with the “dawn of the civilisation”^[17] in the valley of the River Indus in the second half of the third millennium BC.^[18] Even in their crude forms, one sees the early signs of response to circumstance as well as emphasis on community-life and place-making, ideas that have been deeply embedded in the life of India's cities, ever since. With climatic changes and the changing course of the life-giving Indus River, a large population migrated towards the fertile plains of the Ganges River,

and the Indus Valley Civilization soon met with a tragic end.^[19] But the new location inspired new developments, and prosperity attracted invasions by the Aryans from Turkmenistan, pushing the native Dravidian population towards the south.^[20] Religious faith began to make a strong-hold in the culture and built-environment of the cities, alike. Architecture was envisioned and commissioned by rulers or wealthy patrons and carried out by local free masons and mason guilds, their craftsmanship exquisite in its anonymity. Building was not only known for its relevance as a divine, pious act, but also for the passionate engagement of the community through craftsmanship, in this very act. This came naturally to the communities. The invasion of Alexander The Great marked the foundation of the Mauryan Empire in India, the first evident western impact on its architecture and culture. Buddhism became the dominant religious force.^[21] Greek populations migrated into the country, converted to Buddhism and brought Hellenistic influences with them. Common institutions of religious engagement also became sites of social-bonding, and the city-fabrics became social-acts of religious veneration. The history of the medieval Indian architecture commenced with the invasion by the Delhi Sultanates, followed by the golden period of the Mughal Rulers.^[22] Although the culture of the Muslim invaders was rather similar to the native way of life, the religious and mythical connotations that accompanied the undertakings differed, and soon architecture and city-building was seen as more of an indulgence in beauty and pleasure, than a sacrosanct ritual. The notions of architecture as symbols of power, pride and grandeur, thus entered into its city-identities. Cities became remarkable hybrids that fused the new building forms and decorative schemes with the long-established native practice. The European presence in India began with their desire to capture part of the spice trade, through the establishment of the East India Company.^[23] The Indo-Saracenic architecture of this time combined the features of Hindu, Islamic and western elements. Needless to say, the traditional and indigenous architecture of the people continued in residential pockets, but the Europeans brought

with them concepts of town planning and architecture new to India. In doing so, they introduced into its fabric an elaborate history of European architecture - Classical, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque.^[24] The mingling of these colonial urban and building types with the indigenous hardly occurred (the two being restricted to landmarks and fabrics respectively), but a number of new types of built form responding to Indian conditions were developed in the course of assimilation.^[25] As the presence of the European powers changed from provisional factories, offices and lodges to more permanent forts and settlements, different regions of the country began to adopt different hybrid languages of architecture, under the French, the Dutch, the Portuguese and the British.^[26] With the establishment of British imperialism, the temperament of impatience slowly made its way into the Indian perception of its cities. With urgency, indifference and the deficient understanding of the local ethos, the evolution of the inherent patterns reached a sudden stagnation and the practice of imitation and superficial transfer began. The British architecture in India was always very much influenced, with some time lag, by trends in Europe, and in many cases, the layouts were replicated from already constructed buildings even.^[27] A bulk of the company's design also came from pattern books from builder-architects in Europe, and the native classicism as well as craftsmanship saw a tremendous decline.^[28] With independence seemingly imminent, the imperial dream was paralleled, within a short time-lag, by the growth of Indian nationalism and the efforts of Indian architects to establish expressions reflecting their own and their country's aspirations.^[29] Dwindling under the pressure of the freedom movement, there was a steady decline in the British hegemony over architecture and planning, and with the 1930s, many native architects and planners were hired by the members of the Indian elite to undertake important ventures.^[30] But something had changed in the period of transition. An "inferiority complex^[31]" had inadvertently made home in the native psychology and its own perception of its genealogy. The new generation of architects (India's very first) brought with them, the ideas which were being spread throughout the world by ideologues such as Le Corbusier, Bruno Taut, Walter Gropius and Frank Lloyd Wright.^[32] The decision not to hire Indian craftsmen in construction, further considerably weakened the ancient guild system as well as the previously strong connection of the up-and-coming Indian architects with their heritage of art and craft.^[33] Political independence in 1947 brought new voices to the discussion of policies for the future, and though many institutional mechanisms remained in

place, it heralded a new era when thwarted hopes could be attained, hidden enthusiasms kindled anew and the political, economic and cultural life of India could be reshaped.^[33] And so, there was a collective sense of engagement and urgency amongst architects of India, in creating the future.^[34]

The post-colonial environment was indeed a challenging one, in India. With Jawaharlal Nehru declared the first Prime Minister of Independent India, the impact on its art, architecture and cities, was immediate, obvious and far-reaching.^[35] With the British imperial rule in India, the principal objective of architectural manifestations had already changed. Not only did they bring the frosty practicality of development with them, they were deliberately intentioned to remain aloof from the social realm. And so, somewhere, in the transformation of India, from that of a rich cultural heritage to a dominated industrial colony and back, its city-identities lost agency. With modernism establishing unyielding roots world-over, India was left confused at a cross-roads. Was the infant nation to re-connect with the atmospheres of its 'Identity' or was it to pursue an 'Aspiration' with a more global agenda? India had a choice to make. New developments presented themselves on skylines; and they failed to resonate with or contribute to the unique atmospheres that the city was previously identifiable with. At first, these masterpieces were a novelty, those one-off productions globally admired. But soon, they were ubiquitous, spreading uncontrollably, gradually losing their charm. The new architecture was not only unfamiliar, it was psychologically alienating. Anglo-Indian influences persisted until a whole new generation of architects emerged under the patronage of the Nehru government. The group had been exposed to the thinking of the Bauhaus, either directly through working with the Bauhaus masters or indirectly through journals while studying overseas. They were, further, influenced by the modernist works of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh and Ahmedabad during the 1950s, Otto Konigsberger in Bhubhaneshwar and, Louis Kahn in Ahmedabad a decade later.^[36] Le Corbusier's design patterns became an image and a symbol for the modern India of Nehru's imagination. The search for models of identity in "The Other" had undoubtedly begun. Clear symbols of what Homi. K. Bhabha calls post colonial reactions of "difference, ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity"^{[37][38]} demonstrated unmistakable manifestations in the architectural fabric of the city. The dilemma was complex. Were these new developments still to be considered as the continuing identities of the great Indian cities?

IDENTITY

"There once lived a legendary king named Theseus in ancient Greece. Since he had fought many naval battles, the people of Athens decided to dedicate a memorial in his honour by preserving his ship in the port. This "Ship of Theseus" stood there for centuries. As time went on, some of its wooden planks started rotting away. To keep the ship in shape and complete, the rotting planks were replaced with new planks made of aluminium. If one of the planks of the ship was replaced, is it still the same 'Ship of Theseus'? What happens if two planks are replaced? Would that, somehow, make it less of the original ship, than it was after one plank was changed? What if the ship consists of a hundred planks and forty-nine of the planks are changed? How about fifty-one changed planks? What about ninety-nine changed planks? Is even a single plank at the bottom of the ship enough to maintain the original lofty status of the ship? And what if all of the planks are changed? If the change is gradual, does the ship still maintain its status as the ship of Theseus? And what if one took those hundred rotting planks and built another ship? What is the agency of a physical object? At what point does an object become different from itself? Do things remain the same even after they change? When we talk about a certain object and say that "it has changed," what exactly is "it"?"^{[39][40]}

The questions are endless; so are the hypotheses. And although, the allegory has marked non-alignments with respect to India (in that the Indian city-identities are more like periodic renovations, rather than replacements of parts), however, the story of the mythical ship does provide a vast premise for questions of city-identity in the Indian context. One aspect that appears evident is that the Identity that makes the 'Ship of Theseus', is not purely attached to its physical objectivity, nor is it the essence alone. Identity is a state of being, in constant flux. It is a middle-ground, a calibration of the physical entity with its essence, marked over a period of change. Identities are about the questions of using history and culture, "in the process of becoming, rather than being^[41]". The aura of a city can, thus, be seen as a "transitivity of identity^[42]", that is, it is characterised by transition over history. But this knowledge is not new to the architecture of the great Indian cities. A contextual understanding of its historic evolution helps locate the cross-cultural elements and ideas that constitute its city-identities, and discovering why they represent the city in the manner that they do. It establishes, factually, the legitimacy of city-identity as a representation of a transformation over centuries, thus bringing into question any attempts to construct the same overnight, and the psychology that functions

behind such an undertaking. Three inter-related forces acting simultaneously are of concern here. One, is the lingering psychological aftermath of colonisation, and of the imperial monopoly on any representation of the identity of Indian cities, that further aggravates the associated apprehensions. The second, and more pointedly, is the trend of globalisation that appears to have impacted the developed and the developing world equally, one that forces nations to compete in a surge and abandon their values in the process. The third is the dampening brunt of the internal struggle for intellectual and political hegemony over the direction of India's development, which is increasingly eluding the grasp of architects and planners, to prostitute the losses to the institutions of politics and economy.

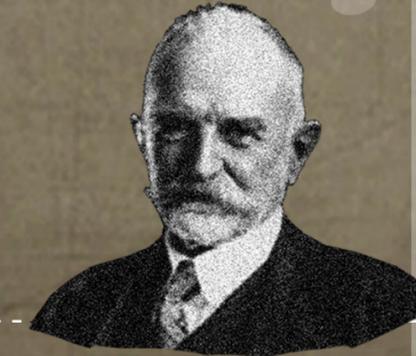
So, where does the identity of Indian cities lie? In 1986, Charles Correa initiated a seminal documentation, Vistara as a part of 'The Festivals of India' Exhibition, to understand simply, what the architecture of India was. He realised that the journey, at the very first, demanded the unlearning of universal conjectures that prescribed where the origins of India's architecture lie. If a home-grown modernity was to be defined, then these assumed origins would require rethinking. Human identity being what it is, and a city, in some capacity, being an amplification of the same, any understanding of a city's identity that excludes either of the two elements, "manifest" attributes or "non-manifest" narratives, would be critically deficient. For Charles Correa, these two vitals converged at the intersection of the individual (manusha), his cosmos (mandala), and their transformations (manthana)^[43]. A casual enquiry into what makes Indian cities what they are, had lead to an incredible discovery of the very "deep-structure^[44]" of their city-identities, one that had been a search for decades after the Indian independence. A long established tradition had resurfaced: in India, the individual had always been seen as the centre of the universe, and "the manifest world as a means to express the non-manifest forces that obsessed this individual^[45]". Cities, cultures and the lives that were organised around it, were mere happenstance in the process. And this knowledge about the "deep-structures" of its city-identities, is as ancient as the identities themselves.

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH HISTORY

Identity in India has always been rooted in its history, culture and tradition. The architecture of its cities has progressed with time and assimilated the many influences that came to them as a result of global discourse, in conflict or in confluence, through its millennia-long past. As India's various histories merge and overlap, its architecture becomes a hybrid of various cross-pollinations.

GRAPHIC 4. The Evolution of Identity.

GEORGE HERBERT MEAD:
Author, 'Mind, Self and Society:
From the Standpoint of a Social
Behaviorist'

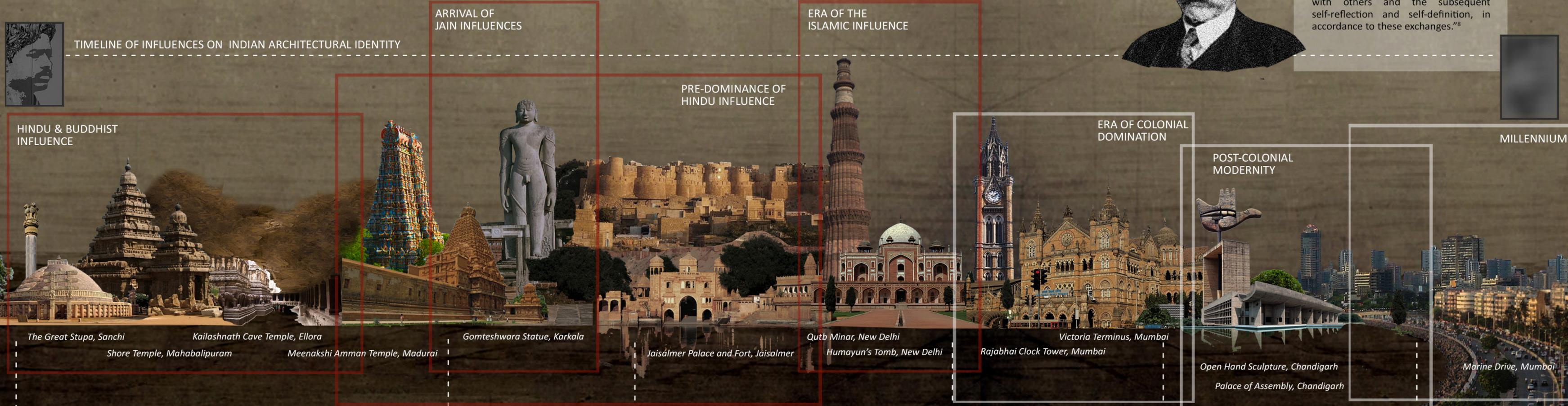


THE EVOLUTION OF THE IDENTITY

"Identity is often, and insufficiently so, understood to be something that is natural or innate in an individual or a structure. However, its definitions extend far beyond these boundaries and reflect the manner in which individuals and societies establish and internalize various aspects of routine encounter, and which shape their ideas about who they think they are and how they want to be perceived by others. 'Identity' is created through a constant interaction with others and the subsequent self-reflection and self-definition, in accordance to these exchanges."⁸

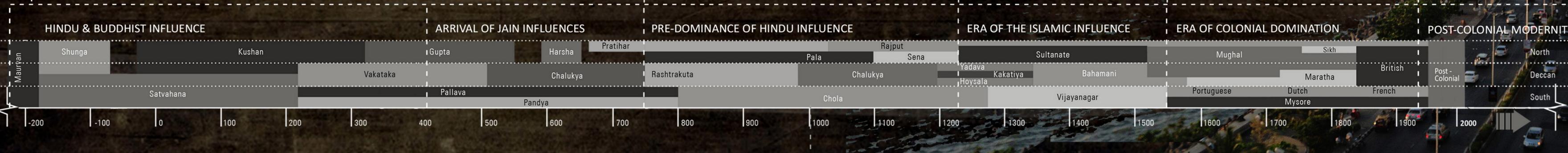


TIMELINE OF INFLUENCES ON INDIAN ARCHITECTURAL IDENTITY



MILLENNIUM

TIMELINE OF SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY



ANALYSIS OF THE POST-COLONIAL SEARCH FOR IDENTITY



Jacques Lacan

The Manifestation of The Other:
Any attempt at 'essentialization' of Identity often becomes a form of nostalgia which has its inspiration more in the thought of the colonizers than of the colonized.



Homi K. Bhabha

Histories and cultures constantly intrude on the present demanding transformation through the understanding of cross-cultural relations.

Difference



1. Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum (Laurie Baker)

Hybridity



2. Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur (Charles Correa)

Ambivalence



3. Lutyen's Delhi, New Delhi (Sir Edwin Lutyens)

Mimicry



4. Assembly Building, Chandigarh (Le Corbusier)



Villa Savoye, Poissy



The Chancery Building, Athens



Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

INTERPRETATIONS

1. Identity through "Difference"
2. Identity through "Hybridity"
3. Identity through "Ambivalence"
4. Identity through "Mimicry"



Sri Ram Center for the Performing Arts, New Delhi



Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur



Indian Institute of Management, Bhopal



THE POST-INDEPENDENCE EVOLUTION OF ARCHITECTURAL IDENTITY (The search for new identity)

INFLUENCE OF LE CORBUSIER: (Emulation of plastic forms and bold, powerful vocabulary)

(1952-60) - The Secretariat, Assembly and High Court, Chandigarh

(1960-66) - Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Research & Education by Jeet Lal Malhotra
(1966-72) - Sri Ram Center for the Performing Arts, New Delhi by Shivnath Prasad

(1959-61) - Tagore Theatre, Chandigarh by Aditya Prakash



INFLUENCE OF WALTER GROPIUS & ALVAR AALTO: (Juxtaposition of traditional elements with modern vocabulary)

(1959-61) - Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi by Habib Rahman

(1951-54) - Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai by Durga Bajpai

(1959-66) - Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur by Achyut Khanvinde

(1959-66) - Azad Bhawan, New Delhi by Achyut Khanvinde



INFLUENCE OF LOUIS I. KAHN: (Continuity of Historic ideas with a modern perspective)

(1962-74) - Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

(1971-73) - Dairy Project, Mehsana by Achyut Khanvinde

(1972-77) - Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore by Balakrishna Doshi

(1970-72) - Pragati Maidan & Nehru Pavillion, New Delhi by Raj Rewal

(1982-84) - Indian Institute of Management, Bhopal by Anant Rajee





THE IDENTITY PROJECT

A city is a composite, temporal organism. Pinning its 'Identity' down to a single dominant trait, is not only unjust to its complexity, it is an impossible task. No subject, object, event, idea or story in a city is independent, nor does it function in absolute vacuum. It is constantly experienced in relation to its surrounding environment, the memory of its past, the realities that constantly modify it, and the underlying narrative that binds them all. Yet, each of these subjects, objects, events, ideas and stories can be just as crucial in serving as the very peculiarities that the city comes to be identified with. And so, one sees the Hula Dancers represent the Polynesians in Hawaii and an architect Antonio Gaudi, become a symbol of Barcelona's pride; or Paul Landowski's Christ the Redeemer invariably bring back the imagery of Rio de Janeiro's skyline and the Colosseum make one long for the calm, intimate streets of Rome; or Berlin's troubled past persist in the fabric of its everyday life, even today, and the Ganesh Festival become a reason for thousands of people to visit Mumbai every year in festive celebration. Even within each of these peculiarities, every city is unique with respect to the characteristics of these individual peculiarities themselves, further contributing to the complexity of why and how each city is experienced so very distinctively. Nonetheless, each of the descriptions invariably brings about the 'feeling' of a particular city to the imagination, in most certainty. Quick to be absorbed in experience, extremely difficult to theorize as a concept, this 'feeling' of 'familiarity', what Freud calls the *Heimlich*^[1], is the comprehensive sensuality of the atmosphere that the city radiates. It results from the components

of the very imagery that one carries in their mind, the essence gathered from the various aspects and attributes of the city's experience - almost like a "cognitive-collage"^[2] of its quirks. It becomes an amalgamation of many different 'identity-packets', that target each of our senses separately, and which then, collectively construct an impression (of the city), one that lingers in the form of a 'sensation'. Our reactions link to it through the medium of emotion, more than they do through the act of recollection, thereby making it undeterminable, at first glance. How many times have we associated -- the colours and compositions in the built-environment (the bright colourful facades of Burano or the intricate stone carvings of Jaisalmer or the glistening skyscrapers and mushrooming malls of New York City); the sounds and smells of vitalizing activities (the evening prayer calls in the Blue Mosque of Istanbul or the patient transactions in the Floating Markets of Bangkok or the rush-hour delirium of Local Trains in Mumbai); or the situation that conditions existence (the steep gradients that form the roads of San Francisco or the lush tropical greenery that freshens Bungalows in Colombo or the snow-covered slopes that inform the life of Shimla) -- to our idea of the city? Environments, activities and narratives become the hosts that breed culture. These elements, numerous and fragmented in the city, are compiled through "cognitive-collages"^[3] in the collective memory by the subjects of the city. The Identity, hence derived, becomes the representation of the individuals, their context, their culture and the negotiation of the many transformations that occur within.



Fig Set1. In order, Rio de Janeiro (where an object comes to signify the identity of the city), Berlin (where histories come to signify its identity), San Francisco (where the natural realities become the symbolic trait), Barcelona (where a single subject represents a city), and Jerusalem (where a myth comes to shape the city's reality and identity alike).

In *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn compiled a list of 164 definitions of "culture".^[4] Irrespective of what these myriad definitions come to signify individually, as a collective, the statement declared is rather powerful. By definition, identity becomes, in the very least, a set of myriad cultural aspects that function in unison. While the symbolism and meanings of these aspects vary with context, their identification becomes crucial to the definition of city-identities. Anthropologist Leslie White asked (with reference to Boasian cultures): "What sort of objects are they? Are they physical objects? Mental objects? Both? Metaphors? Symbols? Reifications?"^[5]

Assuming the origin in the deductions of Vistara, any understanding of a city's identity that excludes either of the two elements, "manifest"^[6] attributes or "non-manifest"^[7] narratives, would be critically deficient in the Indian context. If one wishes to locate something close to the original spirit of the city and reorient the direction of its augmentation (in terms of newer developments) toward it, first and foremost, there has to be an acknowledgement of the importance of this city-identity in its representation. Yet, it is impossible to rally to fight for a city's spirit if one cannot reach a consensus on what that spirit is.^[8] The complex procedure of the derivation of identity in the context of Indian cities, at the very first, demands the unlearning of all conjectures that prescribe where the origins of our architectures and cultures might lie -- be it Marc-Antoine Laugier's philosophy of the Primitive Hut, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the myths of the Golden Age, or Vitruvius's claim that Architecture (with a capital A) begins with the classical orders! If a home-grown modernity is to be defined, then



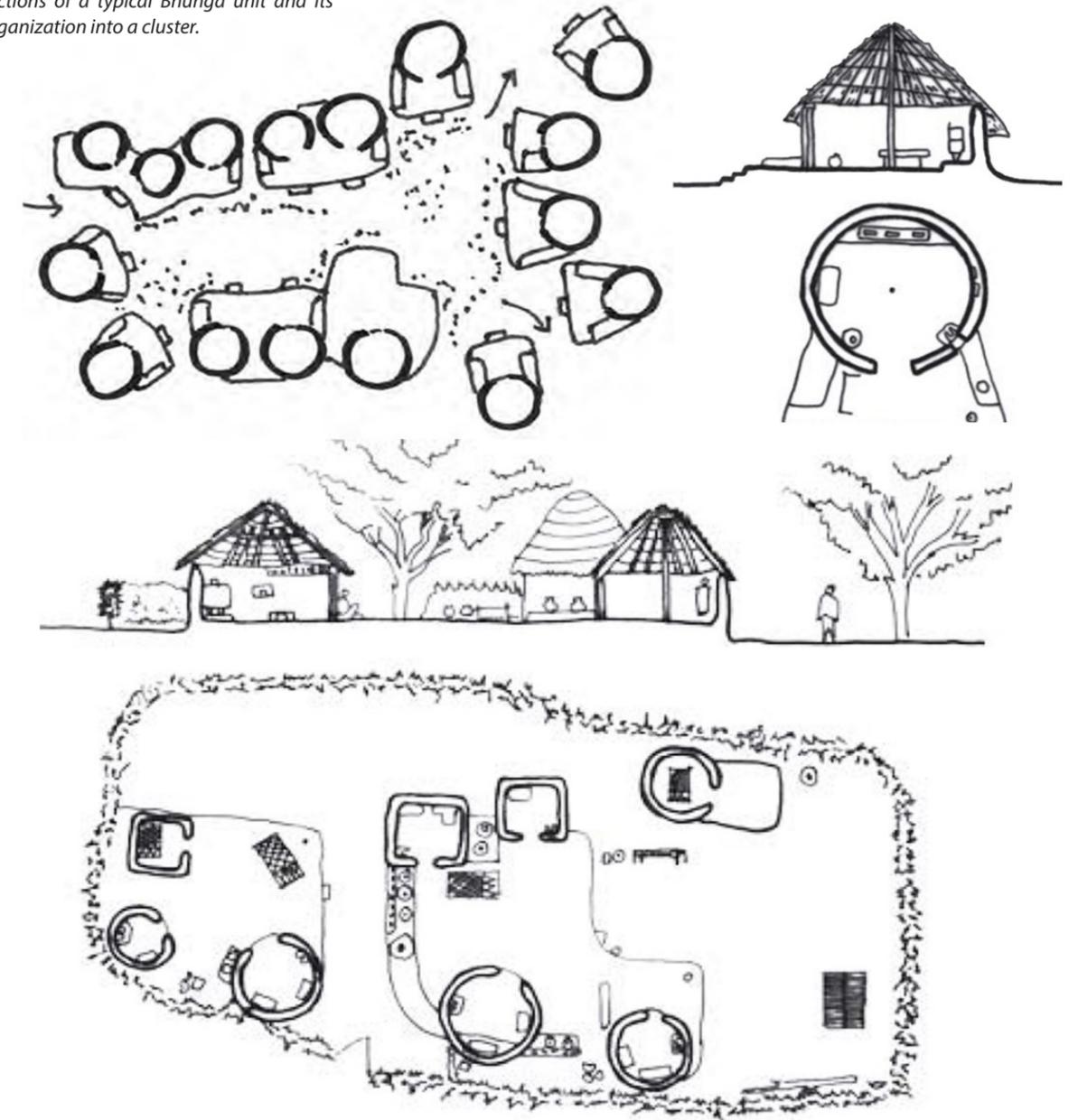
these assumed origins require rethinking; and our discoveries need not necessarily lie deep in the layers of history.

To catalogue the various 'identity-packets' of city's spirit, let us briefly explicate the "cognitive-collage"^[9] of a simple elementary settlement of habitats in Banni in the western Indian state of Gujarat. Spread over in the arid deserts of the Kutch District, the Bhungas (or the mud-hut living-units) are typically traditional houses, with circular walls and thatched roofs, constructed using locally available materials like clay, bamboo, and timber. Mud, which is the prime material used in its construction has been creatively integrated in the socio-cultural life of Banni for centuries. The Bhunga is typically designed to be structurally stable for earthquakes, and climate responsive for protection against the harsh sandstorms and cyclonic winds of the desert. The thick mud-walls keep the interior cool, the framed windows are set at a lower level to allow for cross-ventilation, and the low hanging roofs cover the walls against direct sunlight. At times, the bhungas have additional semi-open spaces or raised courtyards (chowkis), immediately outside, used as an entrance or as seating areas with simple two-way sloping roof structures. Artistically elegant, the



Fig Set 2. The Bhungas (or the mud-shut living-units) in their context of the desert, depicting ideas of place-making and innovation within the offered natural circumstance.

Fig Set 3. Sketches showing the plans and sections of a typical Bhunga unit and its organization into a cluster.



exterior walls are adorned with brightly coloured geometrical and floral patterns, while the interiors are decorated with intricate mud-and-mirror inlay work and exquisitely embroidered fabrics. These are a representation of the many communities and tribes in the region and their distinctive styles in textile, embroidery and handicrafts. Twenty years ago, when Banni was a lush grassland the thatched roof of the bhungas were made from bamboos and grasses. Today, there are more modern versions of

bhungas in which the thatched roofs are replaced by clay-baked tile roofs and the twigs are replaced by stones.^[10]

Explicating this description, and then mentally analysing what lingers of its idea (what makes bhungas what they are, and what distinguishes them from habitats and settlements elsewhere, beyond its boundaries), there are five things that one can list in conclusion, with utmost certainty.

First, at the level of the unit, the mud-hut, in its very objective form, is distinct in its choice of shape, size, colour, texture, openings and ornament. It is a direct response to its context and an implication of the culture it hosts. For instance, the round shape and low-down positioned windows are a reaction to the cyclonic desert winds, the locally abundant mud demonstrates natural cooling properties, and the exquisite mirror-work and painting shows the owner's place-making skill. The forms develop as specific responses to specific needs. At the level of the cluster, a more elaborate system of interaction is revealed, with organizations and articulations responding to the culture of the community, itself deriving its individuality in the collective individualities of its units. The lesson derived is of the "imageability^[11]" of the built-environment, both as units and as clusters -- "that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer^[12]".

Second, even in its fundamentality of form, the basic shelter witnesses an evolution, not just with the additions of the covered seating areas or semi-open spaces or raised courtyards, immediately outside the hut; but also with the replacement of early materials like bamboos and grasses with newer, more dependable ones like clay-baked tiles and stones, as well as the replacement of early in-situ or 'wattle-and-daub' construction techniques by the use of rammed earth or compressed stabilized mud blocks in recent times. The ornamentation, in itself, carries a long legacy of evolution with it. And yet, each of these maintain the essence of the original basic shelter, which forms the core idea of these evolutions. The inference is of history and heritage, that aspect of the built-environment that makes it "a great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, in the type of a great idea^[13]".

Third, at any point in time, both, the physical and meta-physical connotations of the shelter depend on its situational conditions. It is the contextual ground realities of geography, climate and situation (the factors of social, political, economic, infrastructure) that predominantly influence form,

material or technique. The description of the Bhunga most definitely bears a testimony to this in its use of mud and thatch as the chief construction materials, its thick climate-responsive walls and low windows, as well as its round shape. Besides these aspects of the physical environment, the socio-political and economic situation require adequate negotiation too, for it is these that contribute as dominant factors in deciding if the linear progression of a tradition (physical or cultural) continues or is broken.

Four, the exquisite walls paintings, the mud-mirror inlay work and the colourful hand woven fabrics used in the interior, speak volumes about the importance of place-making to the identity of the units and clusters. While the need for shelter is basic to man, transcending this to an element of beauty and a medium of social interaction and exchange, is governed by a set of paramount values which are intrinsic to the human condition. These are the values of beauty, community and engagement.^[14] It is the representation of the social realm and its myriad habits, that is responsible not just for the beauty of ornamentation and craft, the ordering and arrangement of the units and clusters, and the components of engagement within; but also for the critical reason of the existence of the shelter in the very first place.

Five, faintly discernible in many ways, not just from the painted wall and textile patterns, but also from the very pattern and progression of the settlement, as well as from several sudden gestures of design in its everyday life, is a powerful underpinning of an underlying "deep-structure^[15]" - the deeper, more "primordial myths^[16]" that hold the community together, and gives its existence meaning. These myths resurface in various forms as patterns are repeated in mud, clay, jewellery, and textile, alike.^[17]

The description itself brings to mind, for those who have previously been exposed to the settlement, the imagery (in the form of a sensation) of what is unmistakably Banni; and for those still unexposed to it, an urge to experience the same.

And so, if X is the Identity of the Bhunga, that we seek to quantify, then the value of the variable X becomes a comprehensive set of its 'identity-packets', namely O (the Objects), H (its Histories), R (its specific contextual ground Realities), S (The representation of its subjects, the Social) and M (the underlying Myths, Meanings and narratives

that bind them all together in the form of a strong pattern). Further, these various aspects are not only constantly in a state of transformation, but are inextricably intertwined with one another.

$$X = \{ \{O\}, \{H\}, \{R\}, \{S\}, \{M\} \}$$

(where each O, H, R, S and M are inter-dependent sets in themselves)

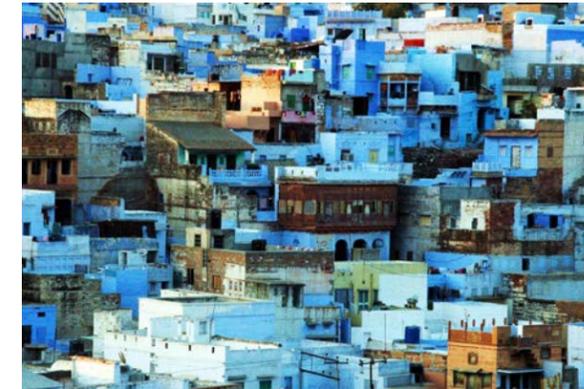


Fig4. Jodhpur: The jumble of blue cube-like houses come together in a tangle of winding, glittering, medieval streets and markets. The Physical Form of the city, the Objects, become the reflections for its identity.



Fig6. Shimla: Built-forms and urban organization submissively follow the demand of geography and climate. The context and its ground realities shape the architecture and the culture.



Fig7. Mumbai: A lunch-delivery system by Dabbawallahs, collects lunch-boxes from residences in the morning, delivers them to workplaces, and returns empty boxes back to residences by afternoon, utilizing public trains and personal bicycles. This representation of the social, becomes the city's peculiarity.



Fig5. New Delhi: Layers of history reveal themselves in the palimpsest of its heritage, as an Islamic minaret stands alongside a Buddhist iron-pillar and a Hindu rock-cut colonnade. The History and Heritage narrate the story of the city.

Together, these individual sets form the "cognitive-collage^[18]" or the memory montage of the identity of a city, such that the physical form and fabric of the built-environment is a product of its patient historical evolution, which in turn develops from its situational and contextual realities over time, is shaped by its social realm, and is bound together by common myths that give the overall assemblage a deep meaning. These narratives, yet again, find their application as underlying forces or "deep-structures" in the physical form and fabric of the built-environment, in one complete cycle of the city-identity.



Fig8. Varanasi: Blindingly colourful and unrelentingly chaotic, the River Ganges becomes the pulse of the Hindu universe, as pilgrims flock its ghats for holy ablution or to cremate loved ones. Underlying Myths and meanings become the driving force for the existence and performance of the city.

IDENTITY PACKETS

Christopher Alexander begins 'The Timeless Way of Building' with a dedication - "To you, mind of no mind, in whom the timeless way was born^[1]". He then describes, what he calls, "the quality without a name^[2]". For him, there is a central "quality" which is the root criterion of life and spirit in a person, a building, or a city; a quality that is "objective and precise, but cannot be named"^[3]. He then goes on to claim that every building and city receives its character from this "quality", which is formed from a certain pattern of events that occur there^[4]. Further, the more the patterns in a given place, the more it has a "self-maintaining fire^[5]", which is the "quality without a name". A building or a city that possesses this "quality", according to him, is "timeless^[6]". As he continues to struggle with the task of assigning a specific word for this "quality that cannot be named^[7]", he discovers that the reason why it cannot be summed up in a single word, is that this "quality" in itself is made up of several "simple and sweet qualities^[8]". One could contend that each of these qualities of the "quality", once encountered, owing to the very power of their "timelessness", are captured in the memory and become points of reference which allow identification with the particular person, building, or city - let us call these, the 'identity packets'. To understand the concept further (in the Indian context), let us analyze how the various 'identity-packets' interconnect with one another to comprise the 'memory-montage' of a city. Let us consider the broad categories derived from the example of the Bhunga dwelling, a combined quality-set of the manifest as well as non-manifest aspects of the city: (i) The Objects, (ii) The Histories,

(iii) The Realities, (iv) The Social, and (v) The Myths. The many forms and iterations of each of these 'identity-packets' are so arranged with respect to each other such that, even though many cities may share commonalities in terms of some of the 'identity-packets', no two cities possess the exact same "urban-DNA^[9]". Further, each of these 'identity-packets', whether "manifest" or "non-manifest", find themselves acting at a convergence of three main forces of influence, identified in Vistara: "Manusha (Man), Mandala (Cosmos) and Manthana (Transformation)^[10]".

THE OBJECTS

In the year 1954, Kevin Lynch, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, began studying city-form in a five year project funded by The Rockefeller Foundation. Under the directions of Lynch and Professor Gyorgy Kepes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Center for Urban and Regional Studies, the research documented nearly 2000 black-and-white photographs of Boston.^[11] While the research established the importance of "legibility and imageability^[12]" of an urban landscape, in terms of the individual's perception of a city, at the heart of the project was a strong self-evident idea: "The urban landscape, among its many roles, is also something to be seen, to be remembered, and to delight in."^[13] For years since, our understanding of cities has been dominated by the search for a "visual order"^[14]. From the fact that any urban changes, good or bad, that manifest themselves in cities, are first associated with their visual implications in the city, it is clear that our

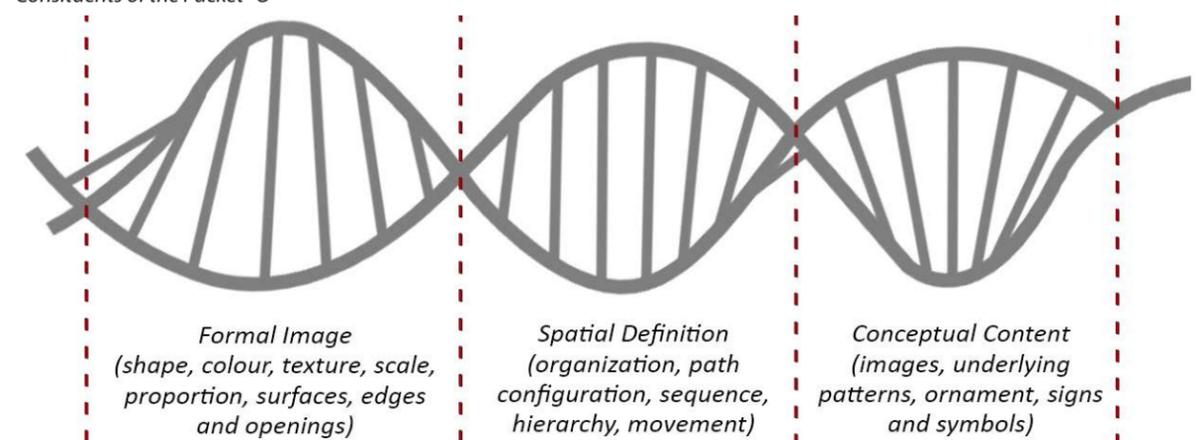
immediate knowledge and interpretation of the city is, indeed, visual. Of this visual experience of the city, the formal image is the foremost aspect that comes to represent, what one remembers of a city, and then invariably proceeds to associate with its identity. For instance, the shapes of the massive Islamic domes bring back the imagery of the Mughal Delhi or the Nawabi Lucknow, and the tall, tapering rectangular gopurams remind one of Madurai or Srirangam; blue comes to symbolize Jodhpur, and pink, Jaipur; the intricate carvings in stone get associated with Jaisalmer and the exquisite wooden detailing with Kochi; narrow chaotic streets characterize Varanasi, and broad roads and generous squares, Chandigarh. These aspects of identity in the delightful cities of the past were usually "happy accidents: their form was not consciously guided, except along infrequent public squares and avenues."^[15]

For centuries now, cities and cultures in India have continuously augmented through an "instinctive and intuitive process^[16]". Forms, devices and articulations have developed as a result of the many influences imposed on them by the situation of the city. Generally speaking, the built-environment that contributes to the image of a city includes "the built forms, which are defined as building types (such as dwellings, temples, or meeting houses) created by humans to shelter, define, and protect activity. Built forms also include, spaces that are defined and bounded, but not necessarily enclosed, such as the uncovered areas in a compound, a plaza, or a

street. Further, they may include landmarks or sites, such as shrines, which do not necessarily shelter or enclose activity. Built forms may also refer to specific elements of buildings (such as doors, windows, roofs, walls, floors, and chimneys) or to spatial subdivisions of buildings (such as rooms, their sizes and function, arrangement and connections)^[17]". Each of these elements and attributes of the built-form, are a response to the various geographical, social, political, economic, and cultural variables of the place. While the physical manifestations in architecture accommodate human activity, their arrangement and ordering determine how architecture promotes cultural meanings and responses. However, in order to understand a city as an object in physical manifestation alone, one would have to diminish the role of the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects that condition it. Form, in its very objective sense, then becomes "the point of contact between mass and space. Architectural forms, textures, materials, modulations of light and shade, colour, all combine to inject a quality or spirit that articulates space."^[18]

The two basic sub-categories in terms of the Objects in a city are: Landmarks and Fabrics. he elements that we encompass under these categories are concerned primarily with the visual aspects of physical reality as a coherent whole. The content of this reality, the formal image and spatial definitions - the qualities of shape, colour, texture, scale, proportion, and the aspects of surfaces, edges and openings^[19] - define form at the various

Constituents of the Packet -O



levels of the unit, the street, the square and the settlement. Beyond these visual functions, these elements, through their relationships with one another - organizational pattern, movement, and hierarchy - communicate the notions of space^[20]. The conceptual content of the formal image includes the physical expressions of the images, patterns, signs and symbols as well as the path configurations and the sequence of spaces^[21], yet again at the various levels of the unit, the street, the square and the settlement. These individual elements, in turn, intertwine with one another as well as with elements from other 'identity-packets', to ensure that at least a few variations in the overall 'packet-set' and their relationships, ultimately cause one city to be extremely distinct from another. And so, within the same identity-packet, while both, Jaisalmer and Ahmedabad are characterized by tightly-packed and intricately carved residential facades, the former is known as the 'golden-city' owing to the use of the tawny yellow sandstone in its construction, while the latter is more dominantly known for the craftsmanship in richly painted wood. Further, the aspects of this identity-packet intertwines with those of another, the demography for instance. Jaisalmer, being the land of the Rajput clans, throughout its socio-political history, showcases a collection of Forts and Palaces, that becomes a part of its Identity. Ahmedabad, on the other hand, having had both, prominent Islamic and Hindu influences in its history, reflects the confluence of the two faiths in its generous mosques and step-wells.

{O} = {Formal Image, Spatial Definition,
Conceptual Content}

(where, each of the three are sets {} in themselves, comprising of various formal elements, that may or may not be interdependent)

Needless to say, even within the packet-set, certain variations arise in terms of the formal structure. These differences are what mark the segregation between the landmarks and the fabric. While owing to its scale and importance as an institution of public value, a single landmark can become a

constituent of the packet-set independently. The power of the fabric as a constituent, lies in the very scheme of its entirety through repetition and patterned organization. For instance, let us consider the example of the old city of Jodhpur. Rising perpendicular from a 120 meters-high rocky hill, above the skyline of Jodhpur is the mighty Mehrangarh Fort. In its shadow lies the old city - a jumble of blue cubes, winding medieval streets and chaotic markets - stretching out to the 10 kilometer-long, sixteenth century city-walls. While traditionally, the blue signified the home of a Brahmin, over time, the entire city has united in on the act. And so, while the modern Jodhpur stretches well beyond the city walls, it is the Fort and the Old City that radiate the uniqueness of character. The colours and patterns of the various architectural accents as well as the fabrics and crafts of the markets indulge in a gamut of bright colours ranging from piping pinks, parrot greens, mango yellows, deep magentas and pulsating oranges.^[22] While, both, the Mehrangarh Fort and the Blue City become a part of the city's identity-packets in the same capacity, a single unit of the cube would mean little, unless repeated to the produce the effect of the large-scale. Here, it is

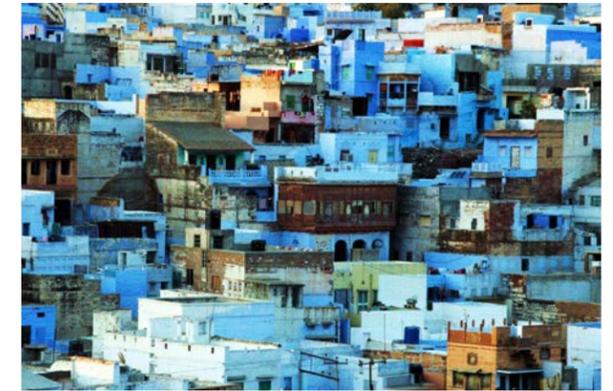
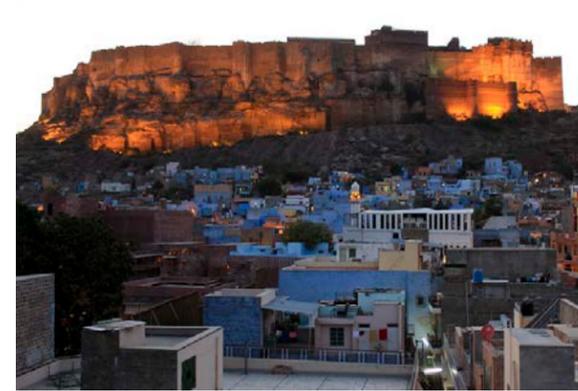
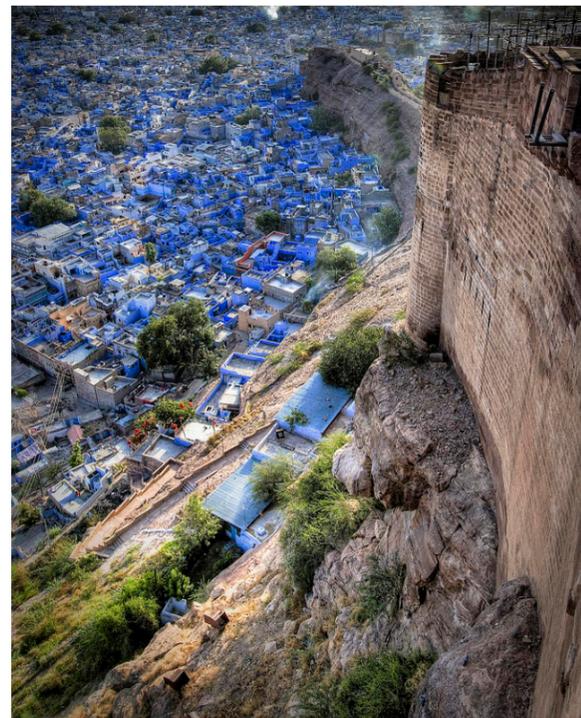


Fig Set 9. Constituents of the Packet -O at the various levels of unit, street, square and fabric.

the integration of several similar blue-units (with the specific "quality"^[23] of the "quality") that form the "quality" of the street. It is then the extension and adaptation of these particular attributes to the streets and squares, that together ultimately reflect the "quality" (identity) in the settlement. The result of this unity is an overall mental composition of the city and hence, its identification with the organization of the Fort, the Blue-city and the physical attendance of its social representations in bright, bold colours.

Of course, the objects of the physical image of the city - be it in terms of the landmarks, the fabric, or the culture - are continuously in a state of flux. This is another aspect of the physical environment of a city that renders distinctions in Identity. Transformations occur differently in each city based on the nature of its current realities and its acceptance or resistance to change. The material remains of earlier constructions are frequently assumed as an evidence of this evolutionary

status, and the exact nature of the evolution, and its relationship to the built-environment and the socio-cultural sphere, becomes a principle force in formation of a city's built-environment. And even if we do dismiss the political and social history of place, that underpins this object of architecture or urban furniture, for the purpose of study, the visual imagery of the city and its built-form inevitably links itself to this narrative, almost as a justification for it, and traces its source back to these influences. As identity packets, the Packet-O can then become a symbol of the various influences (natural, political, social) on the city; hence making them the easiest to manipulate, and yet the most easily vulnerable to losses due to the condition of archi-cultural amnesia.

THE HISTORIES

Nearly 70 years ago, India threw away the shackles of the British Empire to become an independent nation. Ever since, the atmospheres of its cities have progressed with time and assimilated the many

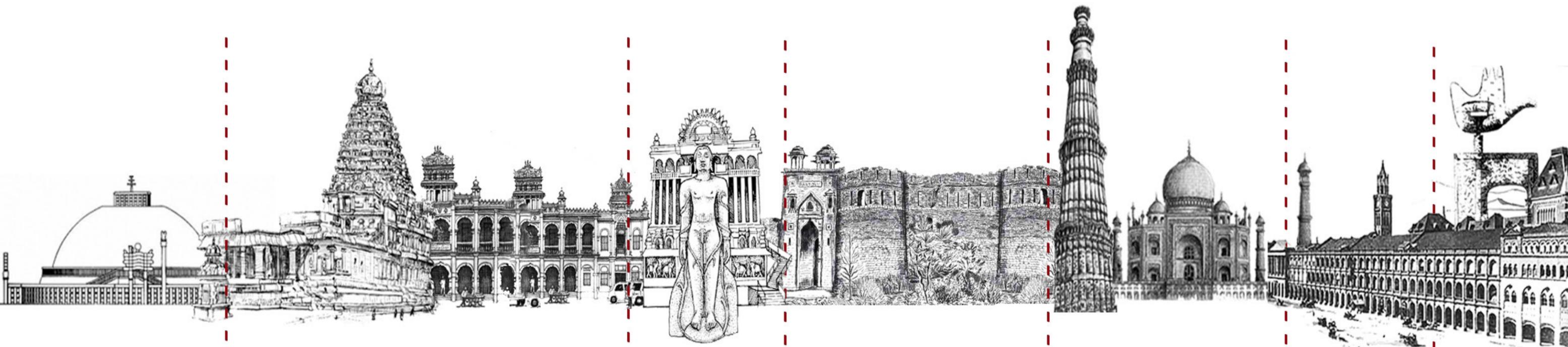


Fig10. Civilisation >> Buddhist Influences >> Hindu Influences >> Jain Influences >> Islamic Influences >> Colonial Influences >> Modern Influences

influences that came to them as a result of global discourse. While its architectural history resists any organization into particular neat patterns in terms of its overlays^[24], its 'identity' becomes a medley of its traditional pasts, its political currents, its social revolutions^[25], its architectural assimilations, its realities and its dreams. A mapping and analysis of this evolution becomes a crucial identity-packet, the reasons being three-fold. First, it plays the role of concrete evidence in the claim that identity in India is a representation of the life of a city, over centuries of transformation. Any attempt to construct the same overnight would only be inadequate. Second, It helps understand the evolution of elements and ideas that constitute a city's identity with reference to all other 'identity-packets', and confirm why they represent the city in the manner that they do. These structures help inhabitants appreciate the richness of their city through a psychological ownership. Any attempt to bypass these for foreign paradigms would be alienating. Third, in bringing forth the aesthetic and cultural legacy possessed by Indian cities, it challenges the existing disorientation regarding the origins of architecture and culture in the country, and proposes a re-imagination of the contemporary perceptions with regard to our aspirations. In the 1990s, cultural preservation movements energized public opinion around the

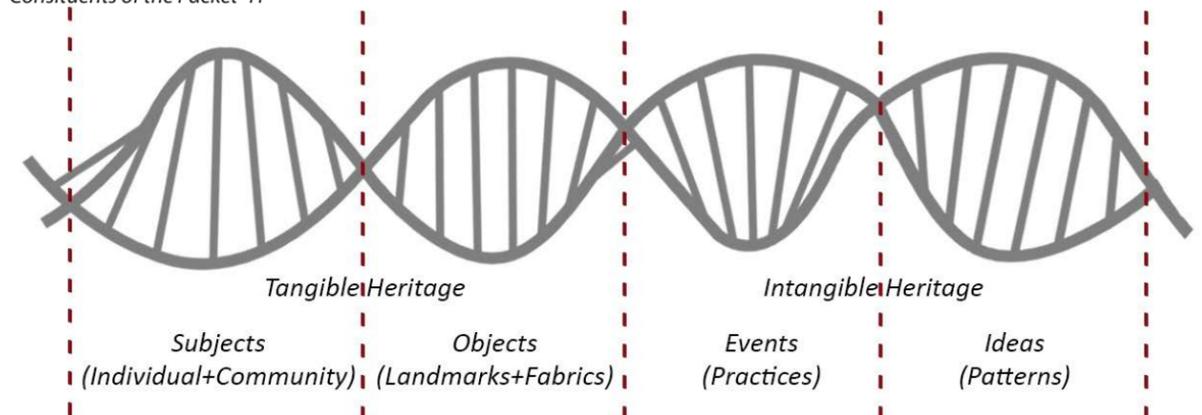
world, concerning the importance of protecting cultural assets.^[26] They elicited technical support to halt the progressive degradation of built heritage and to rescue the heritage at risk. As a result, in many countries, policies responded to these appeals by improving pertinent legislation and adopting new mechanisms for the conservation of heritage.^[27] The history and heritage of a city can be understood as a "matrix"^[28] of the collective human memory attached to its evolution, over time. The matrix is transmitted from one epoch to the next, with each generation contributing its encounters and experiences to its definition, and discarding aspects that are no longer relevant to it. Besides being a significant 'identity-packet', the reason why the preservation of heritage becomes very crucial to the city is that, while in the past, it could be taken for granted that our cities are naturally imbued with the spirit of their identity; the modern world-view and technological power prevent a natural course of historic evolution and threaten its linear progression (the smart-cities initiative in India, for instance). However, efforts in terms of historic preservation in India, more often than not, aim at differentiating monuments that are 'valuable' from those that are 'dispensable' on the basis of a register of pre-determined laws that designate buildings, structures and public landscapes as per their historical,

architectural or archaeological merit. John Ruskin's "voicefulness"^[29] dwells into the notions of memory and emotional impact of heritage, on its subjects in terms of experience through passing time, to arrive at the conclusion "it is in that golden stain of time, that we are to look for the real light, and colour, and preciousness of architecture; and it is not until a building has assumed this character, that its existence can be gifted language and life"^[30]. Heritage conservation in India even today, however, is seen more as a formal restoration of the physical environment, and the question of the connection of this heritage to the identity of a city remains largely unaddressed in the country. Even as the concept of conservation matures gradually, its doctrines appear to have eviscerated

any form of intangible value from its practice, and the movement is eclipsed by tourism and other economic activities associated with heritage. With any mention of emotional experience being labeled as an 'needless romanticism of the past', conservation begins to assume a more political agenda, than a socio-cultural one.

For the derivation of the components of this 'identity-packet', one can classify histories into two main sub-categories - Tangible Heritage and Intangible Histories. The tangible heritage mainly comprises of the aspects of the physical structure of the built-environment (objects) and the social representation of its inhabitants (subjects); and the intangible heritage comprises of cultural

Constituents of the Packet -H



practices (events) and the underlying narratives in these practices related to the subjects, objects and events (ideas) in the city. While speaking of subjects, various aspects of social representation can come to define this 'identity-packet' -- for instance, personalities through their contributions may become symbols of the city (Le Corbusier in Chandigarh or Sir Edwin Lutyens in New Delhi or Mahatma Gandhi in Gandhinagar); or communities owing to their presence and collective contributions may come to dominate the culture of the city (the Sikhs of Amritsar, the Bohra Muslims of Siddhpur or the Parsis of Bombay). These subjects, inevitably make their presence felt in the city through either physical existence or through ideas that permeate into culture with time through object manifestations, to become inseparable from the memory of the city. In terms of objects, the physical structure -- the landmarks and fabrics of a city, over years, gather the transformations of its traditional practices, its political happenstance and its social engagement to evolve a quality, that makes them specific and identifiable with that city (For instance, the Quwat-ul-Islam Mosque Complex exhibits layers of New Delhi's history with the juxtaposition of the Hindu colonnades, Buddhist Iron-Pillar and Islamic minaret; and the painted pink facades of Jaipur bear testimony to a historic event of the visit of the Prince of Wales to India in 1878). In terms of events and ideas the quantification becomes slightly more complex. These, being intangible in nature -- irrespective of their temperament, good or bad -- linger on as mental impressions in the city. This is not to say that they are all equally worthy of preservation, but that, nonetheless, they exist. And, irrespective of its being the experience of an architect, a philosopher or a mere traveler, these impressions on the city are manifested in the form of the powerful feelings derived from the ambience of the city (the celebrated industry of Bollywood in Mumbai or the tensions between the Hindu and Islamic pols in Ahmedabad or the celebration parades of the Independence Day at New Delhi). And again, overlaps occur within the 'identity-packet' such that the subjective

Fig Set 11. New Delhi: The identity of the city becomes a matrix of its heritage - Subjective (Sir Edwin Lutyens), Objective (The exquisite Mughal monuments), Event-based (The Republic Day Parade) and Idea-based (The bazaars of Chandini Chowk).



representation of a community develops an idea or event that becomes the identity of a city; or an object, in hosting an event or nurturing an idea, strengthens its position as a symbol of the city; or a subject affirms his position as an element in identity through an engagement with a physical object. And therefore, while Pongal (the first harvest, celebrated by the farmers in South India) finds its spirit in the life of urban Chennai, the old restaurants and cafes of the Parsi community monopolize South Bombay's social-scene, the Jama Masjid continues to host its everyday prayers in Old Delhi as Louis Kahn's spirit lingers in Ahmedabad, the location of his famous IIM Campus.

{H} = {Tangible Heritage, Intangible Histories}
 (where, Tangible Heritage comprises of sets of subjective and objective manifestations in the city and Intangible Heritage comprises of the memories of events and ideas related to it)

With heritage, the process of transformation is key. "There are many ways in which a cultural identity is formed and maintained. Much of the process has to do with the intangible cultural heritage of a body of traditions and usage, rites, poetry, song, and dance. A great deal of all of this is passed on orally through generations. Consequently, its survival is always threatened. Tangible cultural heritage has the great advantage over its intangible counterpart that with proper care, it will remain authentic over centuries. As long as historic monuments remain without falsification and misleading imitations, they will, even in a neglected state, create a sense of continuity that is an essential part of cultural identity."^[31] A "matrix" then of, both, monumental historic milestones as well as small everyday gestures of a city, history and heritage remain strong, although constantly transforming 'identity-packets'. We adopt a constructionist perspective to selective past material artifacts, natural landscapes, mythologies, memories and traditions to make them cultural, political and economic resources for the present, by associating them with one another in a mental montage. This process of imaginary re-construction, is not

independent of influences from the status quo, which is, in fact, responsible for the contribution to identity, on behalf of that particular moment in time, within the larger timeline.

THE REALITIES

A city in its context is neither a matter of cursory attention nor is it a radical innovation. The context refers to the external elements that influence the objects in a city as well as their relationships with one another. These elements are, both, physical and non-physical. The great cities of India's past, learnt to negotiate these physical and non-physical elements through their intuitive designs. The architecture of its cities was, thus, a response to its situation. However, with new technologies came a newfound ability to cope with the natural mechanisms of the context, without necessarily having to succumb to the authority of its dictates. The context was taken for granted, and architecture and planning became more of a contest between the ideologies of the sacred past and the aspirations of the technological future. In his essay on critical-regionalism and world-culture, Kenneth Frampton recommends the "arriere-garde position"^[32], one which distances itself equally from, both, the "optimization of advanced technology and the ever-present tendency to regress into nostalgic historicism"^[33]. For Frampton, it is this position alone, that has the capacity to "cultivate a resistant, identity-giving culture, while at the same time having a discreet recourse to a universal technique"^[34]. As we juxtapose this sentiment with Christopher Alexander's initial dedication in 'The Timeless Way of Building', "To you, mind of no mind, in whom the timeless way was born"^[35], what we arrive at is a concoction of an intuitive understanding of the present context, once it is completely stripped-off of its burdens of the past or the expectations of the future - the present moment alone. In terms of a city's identity, this one moment in itself is a web of various phenomenon that continuously function as underpinning influences in its augmentation. The forces of landscape, climate, situation, function, society, politics, and economy form these underlying mechanics that compose

what the city is in that moment. The city that is born out of the negotiation of this situational moment is valuable to its identity, not because it reveals ideas that are new to the city's structure, but because it embraces ideas that are already known as integral to it. What makes this identity unique is its very ordinariness. In the context of India, the impact of the realities of geography and society make their presence more prominent in terms of the fabrics of the city, while the landmarks and infrastructure are predominantly influenced by the political actors and the economic factors. Explicating the system of Ground Realities, the 'identity-packet' encompasses a number of aspects, namely, (i) Geography, which, in turn, comprises of the character of the topography, the climate, and the presence of natural features. For instance, the unique character of the hill-station of Shimla is a direct response to the topographical characteristics of its location; the bamboo stilt houses of the Assamese cities result from the dire necessity to counter the heavy rainfall in the region; and Varanasi as well as Srinagar find that their urban formations derive important aspects of their identity from their association with the natural water-bodies, which becomes their lifeline either in a religious or an economic sense. (ii) Society, which in turn comprises of the dominant culture, vocation, economic condition and social-networks that make the city. And so, while the close-knit community life of Ahmedabad is manifested in the architecture and organisation of its pols to become a constituent of its identity; the Agraharam settlements, set up by the fishing

communities of Pallakad near the coast-line in Kerala, become the city's unique feature; and the squatter settlements in Dharavi become synonymous with Mumbai's chaos, as much as its complex informal network of the Dabba-walaha does. (iii) Political and Economic, which include the city's infrastructure, links and networks, and public-spaces. For instance, one associates the imagery of the Howrah Bridge, the Tram-system, yellow taxis and the Rabindra Sarobar Park with Kolkata, while the imagery of the Worli Sea-link, the local train-system, black-and-yellow taxis and Marine Drive with Mumbai. For an understanding of how these elements of the 'identity-packet' function in unison, let us consider the example of Mumbai. Although with only a slight hyperbole, the coastline (Marine Drive) along with its hyperactive beaches, the squatter settlements (Dharavi), the community festivals (Ganesh Chaturthi) and the informal networks of street-and-food vendors, and its juxtaposition of the sea-link, the maidans, the local transport systems and the movie industry create an exacting imagery of Mumbai.

{R} = {Geography, Society, Politics, Economy}
 (where, Geography includes Topography, Climate + Natural Features, Society includes Culture, Vocation + Social-Networks, and Politics & Economy include the Infrastructure, Public-Spaces + Links & Networks)

Of all the identity-packets that comprise the "spirit of a city"^[36], the ground realities are the most difficult to navigate through -- for one reason

Constituents of the Packet -R

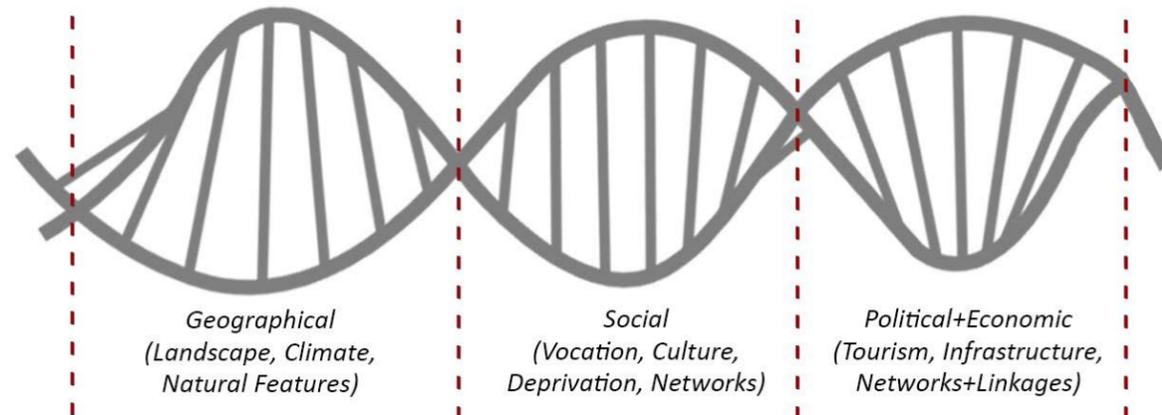


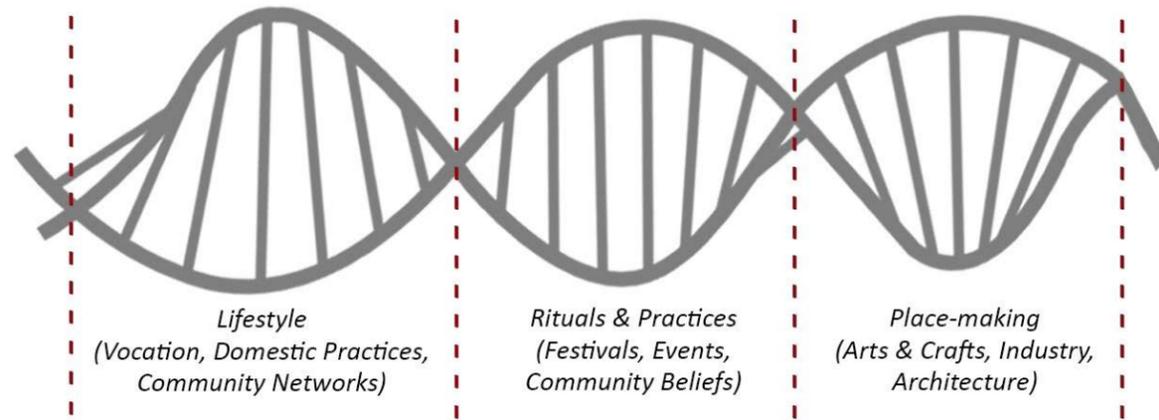
Fig Set 12. Mumbai: The Marine Drive, Dharavi, street-and-food vendors, Worli Sea-link, the Local Trains and Bollywood, together create an exacting imagery.

that, they form the influence that is currently in the stage of shaping identity through its acts. Further, it being a complex system with the participation of many actors and bodies, at times, tends to get paralysed by the scale of its own internal inconsistencies. And so, quite often, not only does it remain pre-occupied by the burden of negotiating these discrepancies, but in the process of doing so, undermines the priority that the other identity-packets equally deserve. And, it being the active contender in the decision-making processes of the present tends to enlarge its own priority, over the others, so much so that if not suitably manipulated, it bears the tendency to become one of the key reasons for the amnesia that the city may eventually face.

THE SOCIAL

"Moving elements in a city, and in particular the people and their activities, are as important as the stationary physical parts."^[37] When writer and activist Jane Jacobs wrote 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities' in 1961, her primary concern was the community. Although considered to be an imagination beyond the practical lessons of urban design and planning, the theoretical underpinnings, even with their positioning as common sense and anecdotes, challenged the mindset of modern development. Rejecting the monopoly of highways, downtowns, and isolated

Constituents of the Packet -5



unnatural urban-spaces, she advocated the need for dense, mixed-used neighbourhoods, respectable living for city-dwellers and vibrant urban communities. For her, there was “no logic that could be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans.”^[38] In the history of the great Indian cities, this had always been taken as granted. The old cities that evolved, while being natural responses to the conditions of the land, also incorporated candid expressions of community-life, manifested proudly through native skills. This community-life was egoless and inclusive, and yet, it did not exclude the individualities that orchestrated it. Further, with the theme being set by the elements of place-making, the variations within were so specific and unique, that it remains a wonder how certain underlying patterns were so prominent that many individuals, unconnected and anonymous, collectively arrived at coherent outputs without the slightest need for rules. Even in the most fundamental forms, fine details and craftsmanship expressed high values of place-making, an element that would naturally come to impress upon memory and identity. Common, yet intrinsic, traditions were articulated by craft and even with the many individualities, the collective identity was only enhanced, not lost. There are many aspects in a city that bind this community life together. These aspects form the ‘identity-packet’ for the representation of the social realm, and it mainly comprises of the

lifestyle choices of the community, the rituals and practices followed within and their concepts of place-making expressed through industry and craft. In terms of the lifestyle choices of the community, various aspects of vocation, domestic practices, and community networks result in marked manifestations in the physical as well as non-physical sense. For instance, the Agradharam settlements, set up by the fishing communities of Pallakad near the coast-line in Kerala, are built uniformly with necessary access to the community shrine and become the city’s unique feature; the jalis and jharokhas are used as privacy gradients (for women) and the otlas (porches) establish the relationship of the unit with the street in the Havelis of Jaisalmer; and the networks of dabba-walaha and street-vendors becomes a peculiarity of Mumbai. In terms of Rituals and Practices, many festivals, processions and community beliefs tend to become a part of the identity that a city enjoys. And so, as one immediately associates the Uttarayan Kite Festival with Ahmedabad, Christmas celebrations with Panjim, and the neighbourhood chabutra with the everyday-life within the pols of Ahmedabad. In terms of the place-making through industry and craft, the manifestations are many and they interlink themselves significantly with the myths and meanings that the communities nurture. Highly dependent on the nature of the community’s engagement with their built-form -- whether it involves a place-attachment or a place-dependence alone -- these find their presence

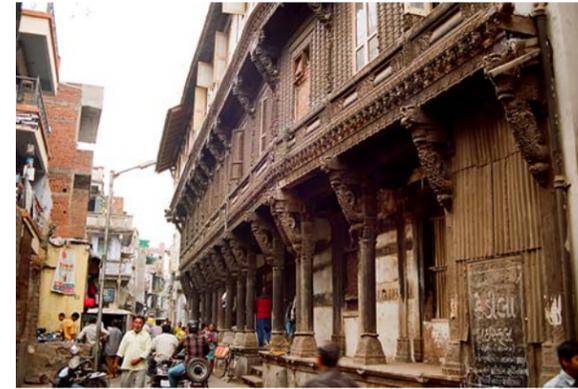


Fig Set 13. Ahmedabad: The juxtapositions of community life in the verandahs (otlas) of the pol-houses, the kite festival of Uttarayan, the neighbourhood bird-feeders (chabutra) and the ornate craftsmanship of the individual pol-houses.

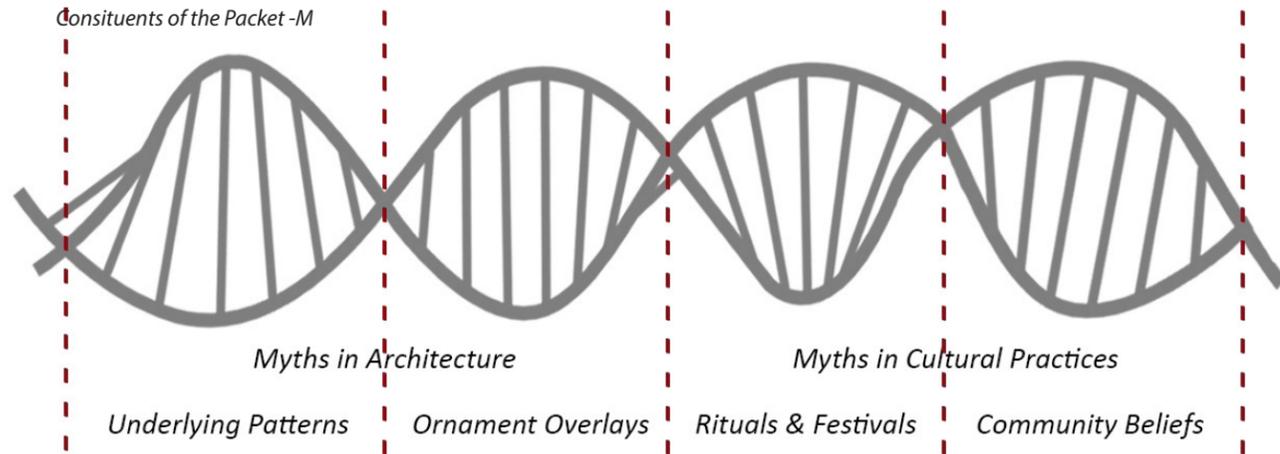
THE MYTHS

The contextualization of forms and ideas of the past through an understanding of its particularities as an evolution in history, comes at a price. It emphasizes the past as the past so much, that it makes this very past completely separated and unavailable to us. The over-insistence on the present as something entirely different from the past, makes it all the more cut off from values from the past, that may nourish, surprise or challenge the creations of the present.^[39] Architects and urban designers in the country, today, assume great pleasure in disregarding the application of ancient myths in design, as hopelessly outdated components of a bygone era. Who, after all, wants to embrace a ‘myth’ while calling it so?^[40] There is a sense of pride in the ability to deflate myths with rationality in design decisions, relying on a superficial understanding of its intentions as a “more or less organized form of falsehood”^[41]. “We live in a world of manifest phenomena. Yet, ever since the beginning of time, man has intuitively sensed the existence of another world: a non-

as ornamentation in the built form and, crafts as decoration. And so one notices the finely carved woodwork in the Chettinadu Houses of Chennai or the Nalaketu Houses of Trivandrum, and brightly coloured and patterned fabrics and ceramics adorning the markets of Jaipur or Jaisalmer.

{S} = {Lifestyle, Rituals & Practices, Place-making}
 (where, each of the three comprise various elements, sharing symbiotic relationships with other ‘identity-packets’)

This ‘identity-packet’ has a strange relationship with the identity of a city. While it is this ‘identity-packet’ that is responsible for the creation of Identity, it strongly depends on the Identity of the city itself (which in turn commands the loyalty of the ‘identity-packet’ or solicits its desire), as a source to extract the feeling of pride that becomes essential in maintaining Identity.



manifest world whose presence underlies - and makes enduring - the one we experience every day.^[42] The architecture and culture that comes to signify a city's identity is not created in vacuum, or without correlation to this non-manifest world. The narrative of the city is a compulsive expression of these intrinsic habits and acquired beliefs that, over time, become central to the collective lives of its people.^[43] These habits and beliefs form the city's identity, woven, in equal parts, with its realities and its myths. It is unfortunate that the employment of the term 'myth', irrespective of context, instantly draws out the imagination of ancient tales of gods, demons and heroes, and dusty legends born from the deficiency of

scientific justifications to imponderables.^[44] What if, instead, we were to see them as a structure of meaning, a method of understanding the cosmos and our own experience of it, a value that expresses cultural ideals and shared sentiments? For, myths do not always mean supernatural fantasy stories. They can be born from very real people, objects, events or ideas. When speaking of the contribution of myths to the 'Identity' of a city, the judgement of their plausibility in a scientific or historic sense is irrelevant. What is of relevance is their meaning and significance in the extent of their continuing influence in the objects of a city and their capacity to render that very object meaningful owing to this influence. The near-universal conjecture today,

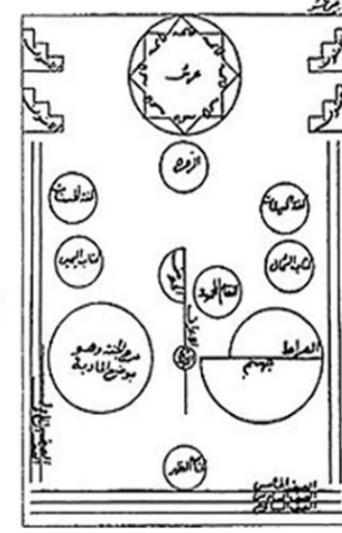
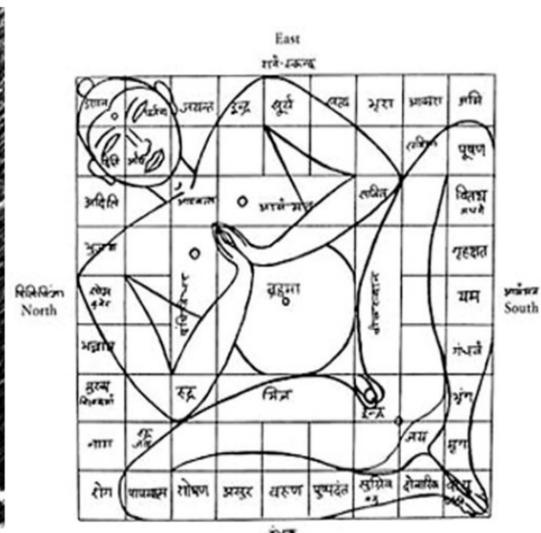


Fig Set 14. Some of the common underlying patterns that occur in the architectural manifestations: The Jain Icon (Cosmic+Human), The Vaastu Purusha Mandala (Hindu) and the Plain of Assembly Diagram (Islamic).



Fig Set 15. Varanasi: The pulse of the Hindu universe, as pilgrims flock its ghats for holy ablution or to cremate loved ones.

regarding the demise of myth and mysticism and the rise of rational manifest knowledge, although positivist, has no shred of evidence to support it, in the context of India. Here, there exists a profound tension - its "city-zens"^[45] do not live by the practicalities of the manifest world alone. Many challenges that cities, world-wide, have faced force participatory actors to think about who we are and what we stand for as a collective.^[46] These connotations in Indian cities, more often than not, are non-manifest. And it is these, non-manifest narratives that bind all the 'identity-packets' of a city together as an underlying continuity of their myriad manifestations.

The web of myths and narratives in the Indian context is extremely complex. It is a country where, an incredibly rich reservoir of mythic images and beliefs co-exist in a "natural pluralism"^[47]. For the purpose of deriving the components of this 'identity-packet', let us consider this complex web under two main categories; (i) The Myths in Architecture and (ii) The Myths in Cultural Practices.

{M} = {Myths in Architecture, Myths in Cultural Practices}
 (where, Myths in Architecture includes, both, underlying patterns and ornament overlays and the Myths in Cultural Practices includes, both, rituals and social beliefs)

Needless to say, architecture being inseparable from culture, the two experience several overlaps. The myths in architecture include the underlying patterns that govern the plans and forms of the built environment, at various scales of the building, the cluster and the city; as well as the overlaid ornamentation of its built-forms. And so we see the suggestions of the ceremonial path from the kund (deep-earth) to the shikhara (heaven) along a linear axis, inform the organisation of the Sun Temple at Modhera, or the diagram of the Plain of Assembly become the deciding factor in the layout of the Taj Mahal complex, or great architecture like the Datia

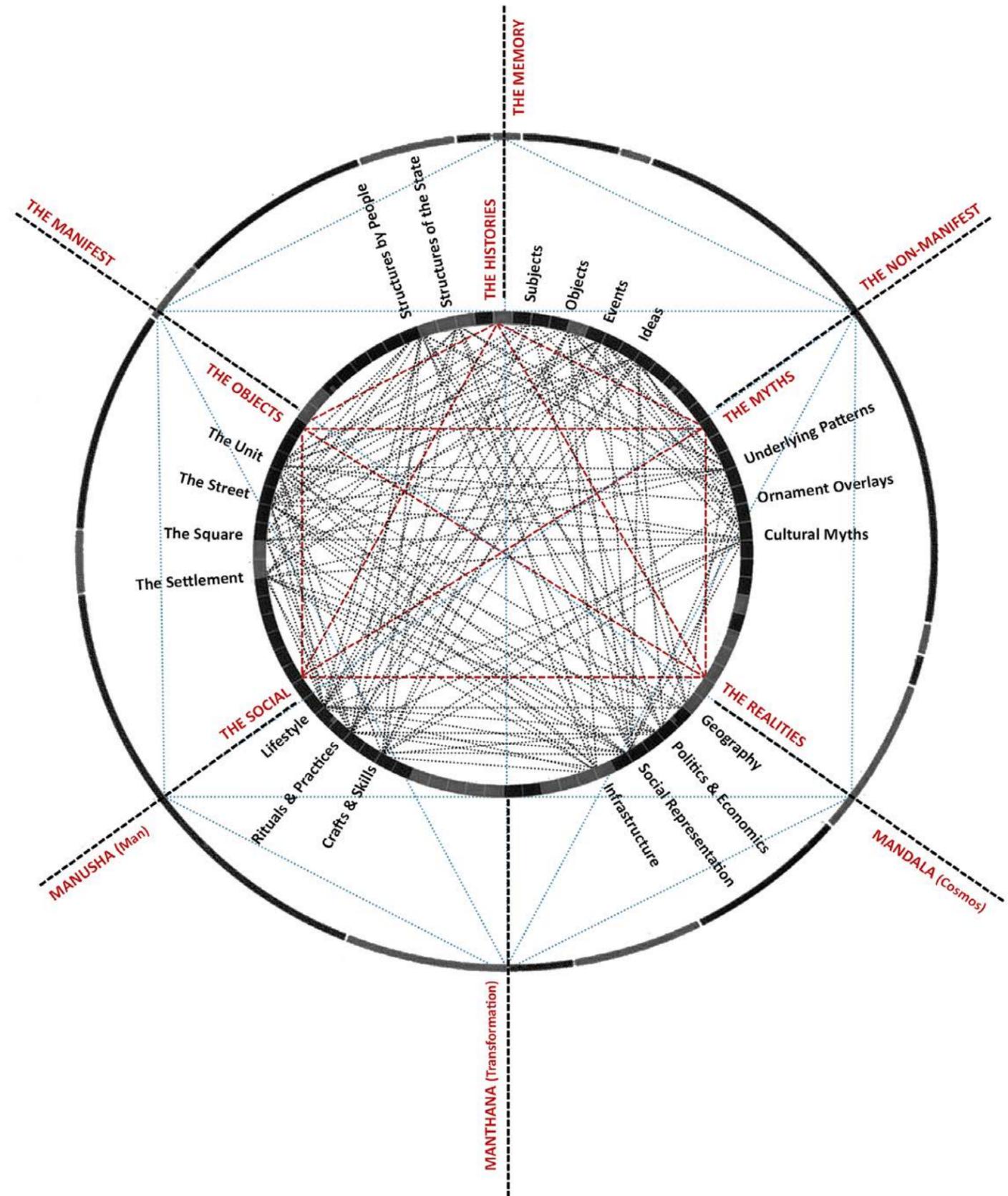
Castle in Gwalior and the Padhmanabhapuram Palace in Trivandrum share its plan-concepts with great cities like Srirangam, Jaipur and Fatehpur Sikri in the form of the Mandala ("Magic diagrams that explain the nature of the cosmos"^[48] used in various applications and adaptations).

Further, these patterns and ornaments experience marked transformations with changes in the ground realities of the city, and become principal elements in the study of the city's evolution. And so, one finds the strong suggestion of the axis mundi (the centre of the universe) in the Buddhist monument of The Great Stupa at Sanchi (200 BC), the Jain Temple at Ranakpur (1500 AD) and the Diwan-i- Khas of Fatehpur Sikri alike. Within architecture, these myths also find their manifestation in the physical form depicting various themes and rich ideas from the Indian past through ornamentation. For instance, themes like the origins and cosmology find their manifestations in the early cave paintings of Ajanta and Ellora, mythological stories from great epics are carved into the rock-cut architecture of Mahabalipuram, and the ideas of astrology find ornate expressions in the various Sun Temples in the country. Further, these narratives in ornamentation find a confluence with the ground realities of the city to develop peculiar thematic hybrids -- for instance, the reflections of law, justice and animal-rights etched on the many Buddhist pillars, the expressions of eroticism as a sacred act in the temples of Khajuraho, and the explorations of the indigenous avant-garde in the architecture of Jaipur.

Myths in cultural practices take an even more complex and obscure note, but they undeniably exist and contribute to identity all the same. These are predominantly of two kinds; rituals and festivals that hold communities together and the social-beliefs of these communities which manifest, either in the physical or psychological form in the city. And so, for instance, the rituals of the ghats of the River Ganges (where pilgrims crowd to wash away a lifetime of sins or the public demonstration of the most intimate rituals, like

cremating the dead) at Varanasi predominantly make the atmosphere of the city what it is, much like the car-festivals around the temple-square in Udupi becomes a spectacle of the city, or the creation of the "ephemeral-city"^[49] on the banks of the River Yamuna for the Kumbh Mela Festival gives the city of Allahabad its unique sense of identification. Further, ideas of living one-with-nature express themselves in the form of ornate chabutras in the pols of Ahmedabad, and the social beliefs of the communities are reflected in the arbitrary urban-shrines that reaffirm faith, jalis and jharokhas as privacy gradients (for women) and the otlas (porches) that establish the relationship of the unit with the street. Even the informal squatter settlements that are generated as a response to the brutal socio-economic forces of the situation of a city, find sudden gestures of the rangoli (a suggestion of the mandala) before the front-door or the bindi (a suggestion of the axis mundi) on the forehead, or their various adaptation in textiles, fabrics or decorations of everyday use, reminiscing these age-old "deep-structures"^[50].

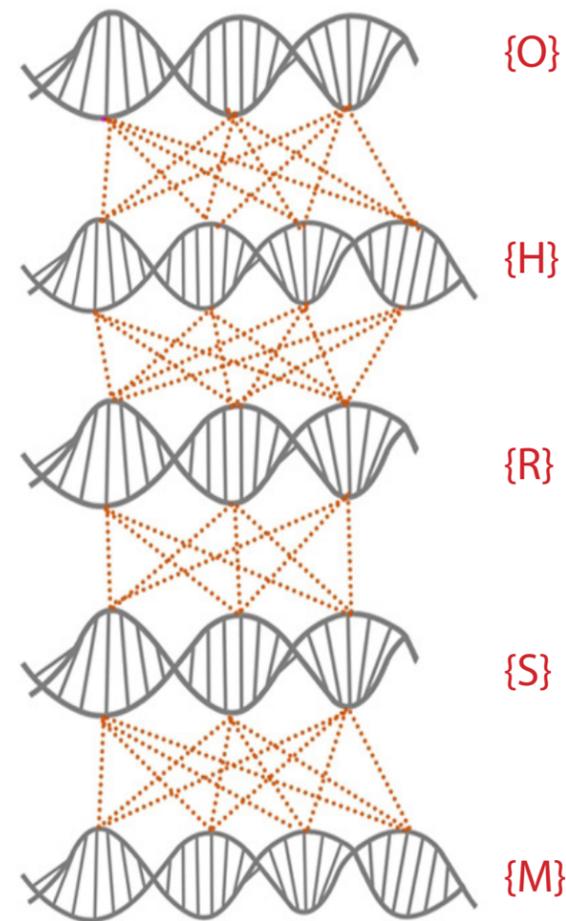
Although looking back to the past with nostalgia or dwelling deep into the spiritual realm may not be the way to resolve the pervasive archi-cultural amnesia that our cities face today -- it may also be deemed to be regressive by some -- yet, if one wishes to locate something close to the original spirit of our great cities, first and foremost, the ability to search inward, into our own cultural practices, rather than outward for external inspiration, becomes crucial. And here, the concepts of the "non-manifest" become important, for India has always been a land with great emphasis on culture, tradition and religion. Needless to say, these narratives of a city too, in their manifestation overlap with other identity-packets; which goes to prove their very inter-dependence. As the various aspects of each of these identity-packets inter-weave, the city-identity is formed in the form of a complex "cognitive collage".



The Cognitive Collage, based on the various identity-packets.

CITY-TAXONOMIES

To be fair, it is important to note that not all city-identities can be preserved as is, owing to the increasing pressures of the rapidly developing world. For instance, while Jodhpur's old blue city may still be maintained by the enforcement of strict preservation laws, in terms of the new constructions that could threaten its physical form; preserving the informal developments in Mumbai as is (without improvements) becomes an alarming concern in terms of sanitation and the quality of life of its inhabitants. On the other hand, Shimla's key identity lying in the landscape of its location, allows for more flexible explorations in terms of architectural styles or cultural introductions, whilst saving this basic mandatory essence. Further, cities like Varanasi, in fact, require sensitive but sturdy interventions in its city-fabrics to be able to cope with the self-generated requirements of its identity packets, in terms of the demands of tourism. Further, while Ahmedabad's historic core appears to be rapidly deteriorating owing to newer developments and changed aspirations, making their identities glaringly endangered; new and upcoming cities like Gurgaon provide scope for fresh definitions of identity, allowing the shaping of its fabrics to accommodate new aspirations. This is not to say that these cities lack identities, but simply that these are in fact more delicate as eco-systems as they pave way for the outlook that our future cities will consequently assume. Needless to say, there are certain cities where, the dominant personality traits of a city may prove derogatory to the sensibilities of its own existence.^[51] For instance, when the mass-submerging of Ganesh idols in the sea becomes a cause for water-pollution, or when extreme religious fanaticism affects community lives in Srinagar, or when the increasing mall-culture threatens to devastate social interactions and exchange in Noida. To map these inconsistencies even -- without a thorough examination of the city and a comprehensive documentation of its individual quirks, their inter-relationships, and hence, an informed prioritization -- would be inadequate, and unjust to its identity. Hence, an



The Inter-connectivity of various identity-packets.

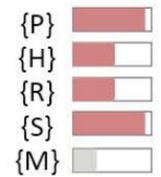
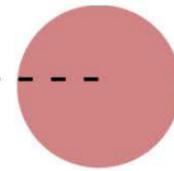
understanding of the individual identity packets as well as their inter-connectivity becomes just as important, to arrive at informed decisions. Based on the nature of their inter-relationships, and for the ease of identification of the cities where the proposal of smart development would result in lesser damage to the local ethos, one could designate cities as those where the strong uniqueness requires continuance, others where identity could be moulded as per new aspirations, still others where a balanced negotiation is to be achieved to promote the identity itself, and still others requiring urgent attention due to endangered culture. The following are the resulting taxonomies of cities according to their identity gradients: Identity Places, Flexible Canvases, Moderation Zones, Endangered Zones, and Opportunity Cities.

IDENTITY PLACES

(Eg. Jodhpur)



Cities having (one or more) unmistakably distinct 'identity-packets' that older developments continue to maintain and new developments aspire to achieve.

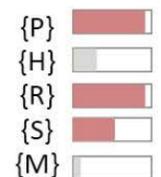
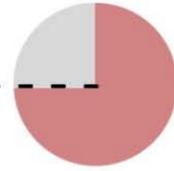


FLEXIBLE CANVASES

(Eg. Shimla)



Cities with identities based on certain specific 'identity-packets' that allow for reasonable innovative flexibility in design outlook.

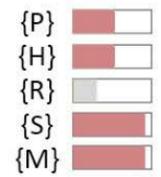
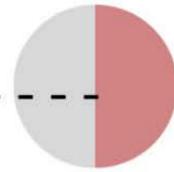


MODERATION ZONES

(Eg. Varanasi)



Cities where dual identities demand co-existence owing to the nature of underlying 'identity-packets'.



(co-existence)

ENDANGERED ZONES

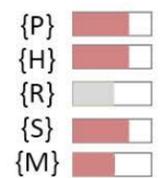
(Eg. Ahmedabad)



(non-relation)



Cities previously possessing strong 'identity-packets', rapidly losing importance due to new development.

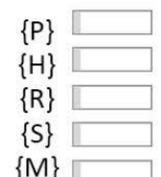
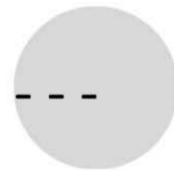


OPPORTUNITY CITIES

(Eg. Gurgaon)



'From-Scratch' Cities with relatively few significant 'identity-packets', allowing scope for fresh definitions.



AHMEDABAD FACT FILE^[0]:
 Year of Establishment: 1411 A.D.
 Commencement of the municipal works by 'Town wall fund committee': 1834.
 Establishment of Municipality-1858.
 Establishment of Municipal Corporation - 1950.
 Area of the city: 464.16 sq. km.
 Population: 45,05,539 (As per 2001 census)
 Latitude - 22° 58' N, Longitude - 72° 35' E
 Altitude - 49 Mts. above MSL
 Average annual rainfall-750mm (July to September)
 Climate: Summer - 24°C- 39°C (May exceed 42°C or above.)
 Winter - 10°C - 24°C (It may dip to 5°C)

CASE 1: AHMEDABAD

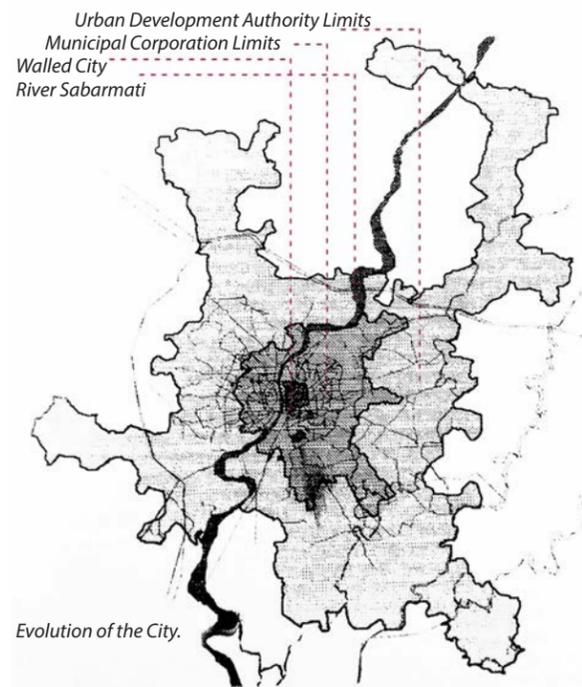


Ahmedabad is as much a study in express-growth, as it is in enterprise facilitation. Rich by inheritance, this flashy metropolis in the western Indian state of Gujarat, was ranked third in the Forbes list of "the fastest growing cities of the decade" in 2010^[1]. Located on the banks of the River Sabarmati, only 30 kilometres away from the state capital of Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad is perhaps one of the very few Indian cities that has "modernised on its own terms"^[2], obstinately resisting the pressures of post-colonial modernity.

Contrary to the common perception, that city-transformations in colonies, during the colonial period, were predominantly "one-way processes"^[3] (wherein colonial regimes "restructure the physical

and social environments of colonies to establish their dominance^[4]), Ahmedabad's character and its very sustenance dispute the impacts of post-colonial atmospheres. In discovering the role of the "indigenous elites"^[5] in spatial organization and social identity, it rejects any notions of (i) the lack (in a post-colonial situation) of substantial unaffected psychologies, capable of moulding identity; (ii) traditional or non-western architecture as stagnant entities, devoid of the ability to modernize without external influence; and (iii) the doubts regarding the probability of successful "indigenous modernities"^[6] or coherent built-environments that acknowledge an idea of non-western modernity. Ahmedabad's modernization echoes (with respect to post-colonial impact on the colonial culture) Edward Said's thoughts on 'Orientalism' and in that rejects the monopoly of imperial ideas on indigenous thought, "It is quite common to hear high officials in Washington and elsewhere speak of changing the map of the Middle East, as if ancient societies and myriad peoples can be simply shaken up like so many peanuts in a jar."^[7]

Operationally, the old city of Ahmedabad evolved on the eastern bank of the Sabarmati River, and was previously surrounded by a 10 kilometre-long wall, which now leaves behind remnants in the form of 15 scattered, albeit still-formidable, gates. This part of the city is characterized by packed bazaars, closely clustered housing communities, and integrated places of worship. The new city on the western bank of the river, is almost entirely built in the last 50 years, and prides broad streets,



educational institutions, shopping malls and new business districts centred around arterial roads. Politically, the earlier Ahmedabad was never an independent city-state; nor did it have formal authorities with territorially defined powers for governance^[8]. Instead, it possessed powerful mercantile and artisanal corporations and guilds, that used their "commercial power to constrain interference by external political authorities in the management of city affairs"^[9]. Industrialization was self-generated, without noticeable imperial investment, with little desirability of western allurements and little disturbance to existing cultural habits. Psychologically, its urban development was significantly tied to its religious history and entrepreneurial resolve. Its walls, housed Hindus, Muslims and Jains alike, and their respective lifestyles found their manifestations in the city-fabric through co-existing architectural traditions of public buildings, fine mosques and mausoleums, elaborate temples and residential clusters. The economic activities, education, art and craft, culture, architecture and administration were "symbiotic"^[11]. What set the city apart was that the drivers of development were rooted in the indigenous city, they were free from colonial patronage, and sustained an inherent sense of the city-identity, even with drastic physical transformations in the surrounding cityscape. For decades, individuals set up industries that patronised institutions, that in turn nurtured individuals who set up more industries^[12], while the city in the backdrop build its identity from a rich tradition of craftsmanship as social representation. Ahmedabad was instinctively combining its traditional underpinnings with modern experimental practicality through sturdy civic initiative - a relationship that became its foremost idiosyncrasy - "the Spirit of the City"^[13].

HISTORY & THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN FORM

Sigmund Freud's theory contrasting the human mind and the city of Rome^[14], proposes that unlike the human mind, which inevitably functions as a "repository of multiple memories and past identities"^[15], a city cannot sustain different historical memories (different contents) in the

same space^[16]. The study of Ahmedabad's urban structure, however, suggests otherwise. Its urban fabric is continuously informed and moulded to a significant degree by its historical spirit, one that is continuously in flux. And yet, whilst doubting Freud's claim that urban spaces are "incapable of hosting plural histories"^[17], its contemporary situation also demonstrates (like many other cities in the country) that the existence of multiple identities can, in fact, be disorienting for the city's aspirations, and that tensions inevitably arise in any efforts to realize imposed juxtapositions.

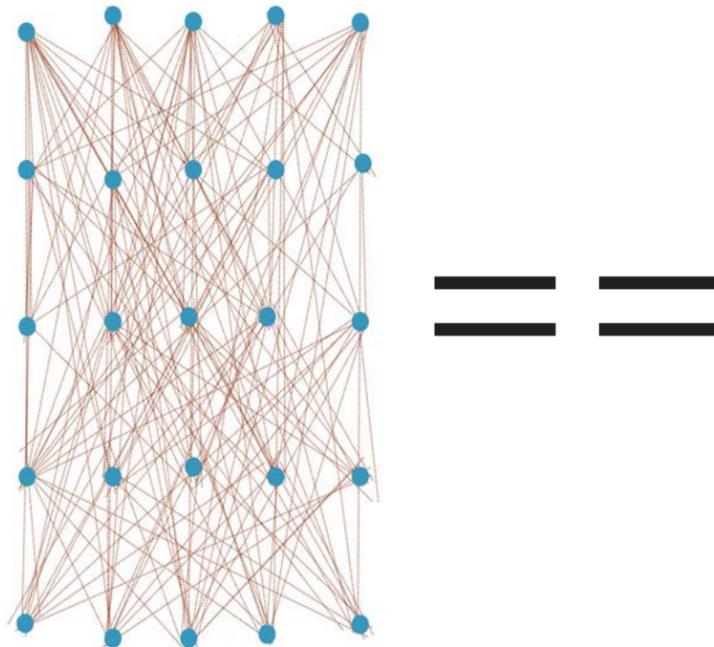
The city of Ahmedabad was established by Sultan Ahmed Shah in the year 1411, strategically along former trade routes and, geographically in the vicinity of an existing commercial settlement. The connections between the contemporary temperament and its genealogy are vaguely perceptible. The population of the settlement, for most part, remained commerce-oriented, with an economy based on flourishing trade.^[18] The indigenous financial and mercantile elite of the city, have been responsible for shaping the city's urban form with their activities and investments, ever since. The story of its urban structure begins with a single Citadel at Bhadra, which later became the centre of the fortified walled city.^[19] The city was imagined with 17 wide streets lined with tall trees, and many garden suburbs^[20]. The social realm of the early city developed gradually and organically for years, and was characterised by a "humble accommodative attitude"^[21]. Its architecture was "socially relevant"^[22] with residential facades and street elevations depicting a perfect balance between individual and collective identities. There were about 40 guilds in Ahmedabad, which were predominantly Hindu or Jain communities and these divisions of the population within society were reflected in the layout of the city.^[23] Independent business operations predominantly involved local craftsmanship, and were run from home. Communities lived and worked in the group houses known as the pols, and sold their wares markets, held once a week.^[24] Within, the overall urban character during this phase was a dense fabric, resulting from wall to wall construction of

buildings and from the cordial inter-dependent community-lifestyle.^[25] The Muslim rule in the city was a prosperous one, with several significant heritage contributions. The British annexed the city with the realisation of the importance of its commercial character and drive, and sought the co-operation of its wealthy and influential elites in governing the city. The "indigenous elites^[26]" too, with time and experience, had acquired, the skill of collaboration with the imperial powers for personal and societal benefit. The series of events that transpired, during the British Rule, intensified the growth of the city: the emergence of the Municipal Commission in 1857, the first textile mill in 1861, the introduction of the Railways in 1864, the building of the first Ellis Bridge in 1870 (which was washed away in the flood of 1875), and the establishment of the city Municipality in 1874^[27]. With the rise of economic prosperity in the city, there was an influx of migrants from surrounding villages and the density within the walled city rose rapidly. Fresh spurts of indigenous spirit, thus, time and again, balanced out the transforming identity. The rising congestion, however, saw the elite in the city move out to the suburbs, where the British had located their cantonments. Soon, the fabric of the city began growing far beyond the walls where it had originated, and the density was far more fragmented than before; the culture observed a marked change.

With the new administrative structure being formalised by the British, there was an intentional distancing of the people from the government, a legacy that the colonial rule left behind in many of the institutions that they formed. As a consequence, the city was no longer responding to the 'needs' of its populace; it was responding to the 'aspirations' of its administrators, and there was a clear and deliberate gap between the two actors. The general perception was that any measures introduced, were done without a consideration of the society, the customs, or the possible repercussions of its implementation on the occupants and the city as a whole^[28]. And so, any attempts made at developmental interventions, was only met with social resentment and dissatisfaction^[29].

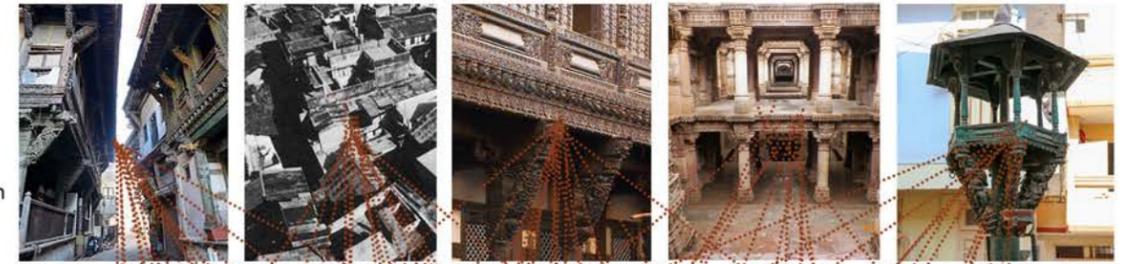
Independence and industrialization marked yet another milestone in Ahmedabad's history, with newer aspirations and reconditioned values replacing the older ones. One of the first cities to embrace modernism, Ahmedabad witnessed the likes of Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn and Frank Lloyd Wright, invited to propose architecture that could align with the new outlook that the city was developing. The intentions of subscribing to newer and advanced role models, however, triggered an unanticipated phenomenon. The very investment of the "indigenous elites^[30]" that had ardently served Ahmedabad's prosperity for centuries, became the detonator for its impending chaos. There was an overwhelming gap between the views of the elite groups and the general population, which was now unable to reach a common consensus on what the city's image should look like. With forced modernity, isolated high-rise buildings - compartmentalized within walled compounds, oblivious to their surrounding contexts and pampering individual egos - filled the new skyline.^[31]

Let us briefly consider 5 elements under each of the identity packets in the old city of Ahmedabad to understand the nature of the study of their inter-relationship within a "cognitive-collage".



THE OBJECTS

- The Pol Houses
- The Pol Organisation
- Ornamentation
- Adalaj-ni-Vav
- Neighbourhood Bird Feeder



THE HISTORIES

- The Bhadra Citadel
- Siddi Sayed Jaali
- The British Imperialism
- Gandhi & the Freedom Movement
- Le Corbusier & Modernism



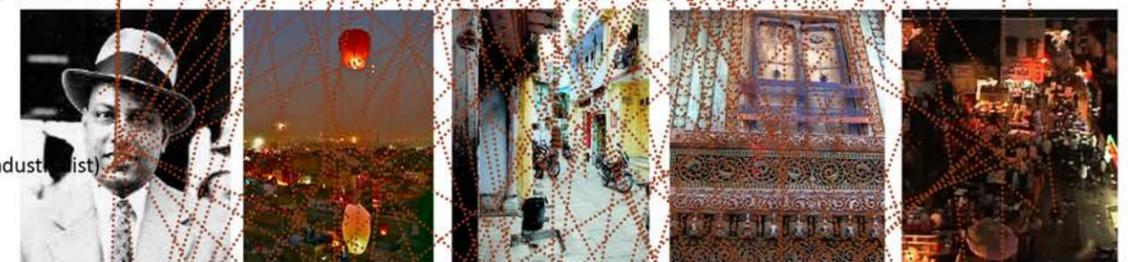
THE REALITIES

- Sabarmati Riverfront
- Climate & Nature
- Textile Market (Commerce)
- Narendra Modi (Politics)
- CEPT (Institutions)



THE SOCIAL

- Kasturbai Lalbhai (Industrialist)
- Kite-flying Festival
- Pol Streets
- Ornamentation
- Manek Chowk (Market)



THE MYTHS

- Rabit chasing Dog
- Residential Practices
- Neighbourhood Bird Feeder
- Ornamentation
- Stepped wells for water



A cognitive collage of a few elements of the Old City of Ahmedabad.

THE DATABASE | THE WEBSITE

WHAT?

City-based judgements are ubiquitous. One speaks about cities having attributes or personalities, evaluates them, and arrives at favourites and non-favourites, "almost as though cities are like people^[1]". Yet, it is extremely difficult to theorize or analyse them. An instinctive intuition prescribes that people living in our great cities ought to lobby for and promote their "particular ways of life^[2]", as significant aspects in the creation of their city's identity. Yet, little exists in the form of any comprehensive research-database that registers or catalogues the aspects that make up the city concurrently. City-identity, in its objective sense, results from certain 'identity-packets' of image and experience, that the city impresses -- almost like a 'cognitive-collage' of its quirks. The Identity Project is an attempt to instigate its investigation in the Indian context.

WHO?

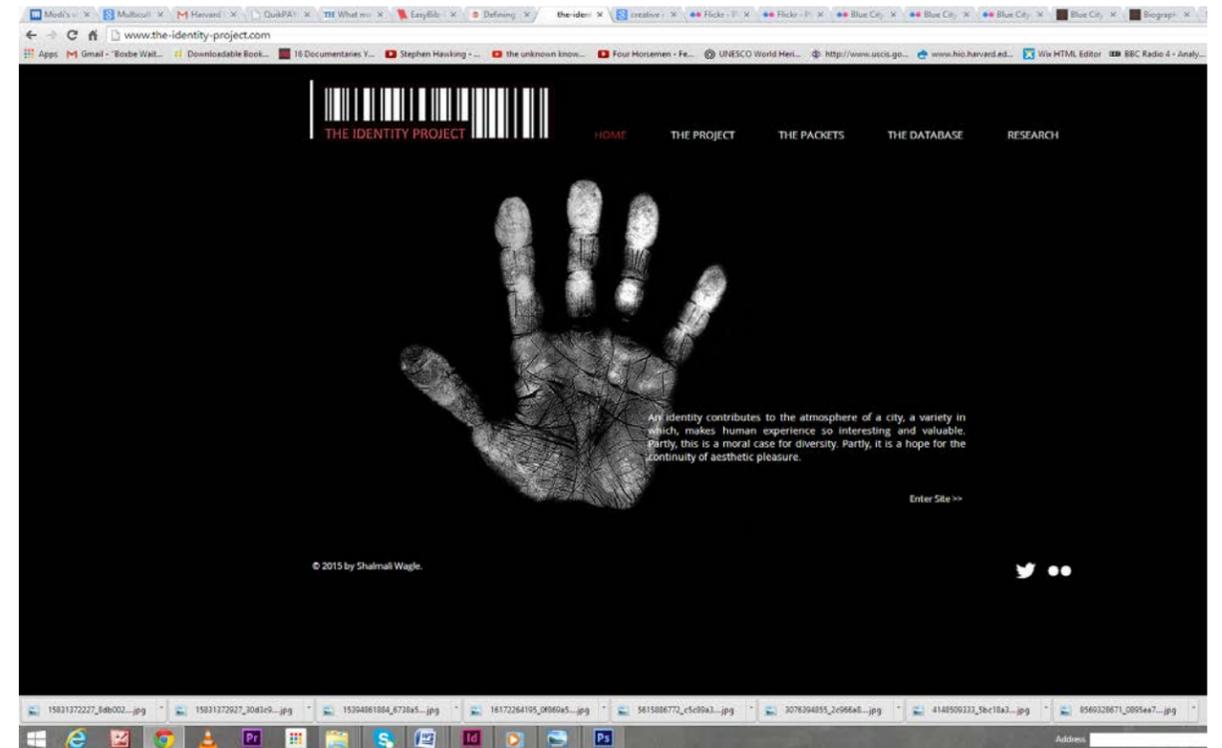
The Project foresees an inter-disciplinary team comprising of established and knowledgeable professionals from various fields of architecture, urban studies, sociology, psychology, geography and history, working on the documentation together. Needless to say, its implementation will lie, much at the discretion of the political will and economic factors. The database will perform as, both, a medium for the generation of awareness amongst the general public regarding city-ethos and the associated pride, as well as, become a set of ready reference material for participatory actors in the execution of the new developments, ensuring more informed, sensitive decisions.

HOW?

'The Project establishes a formal platform where a standard academic voice can be developed to guide each city through its own search for (or preservation of) identity, by the establishment of basic frameworks that aid investigation and data assemblage. Strictly objective, the Project brings into sharper focus a thought, a habit, a way of life, that was arrived at long ago, but was lost to a vague form of amnesia, and follows out its consequences to try and restore, that which has been lost in the fissures. It develops a regulatory framework, an assessment model, for the identification, designation and preservation of characteristics, ideas and elements (both, tangible and intangible), on a city-by-city basis (through structures, streetscapes and cultural landscapes), to encourage their continuation as indispensable aspects of the city's living atmospheres.

WHY?

An identity contributes to the atmosphere of a city, a variety in which, makes human experience so interesting and valuable. Partly, this is a moral case for diversity. Partly, it is a hope for the continuity of aesthetic pleasure.^[3] The project is seen as a foundation stone to a building process, rather than as the building itself. The idea is to recognize, first and foremost, that it is possible to disentangle the many complexities involved in a city's identity, and that its parts once broken down systematically, become individually comprehensible and graspable, even at the formidable scale of a city. Beginning with one city, the idea is to grow via public and professional participation.

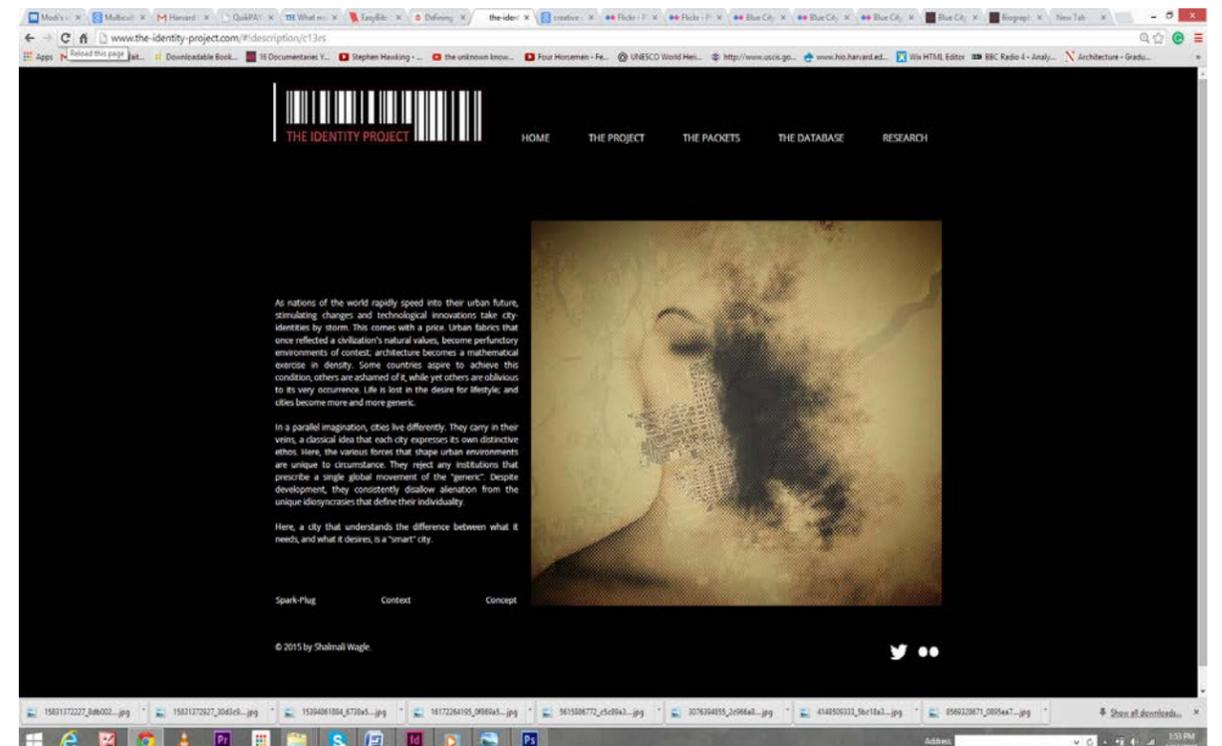


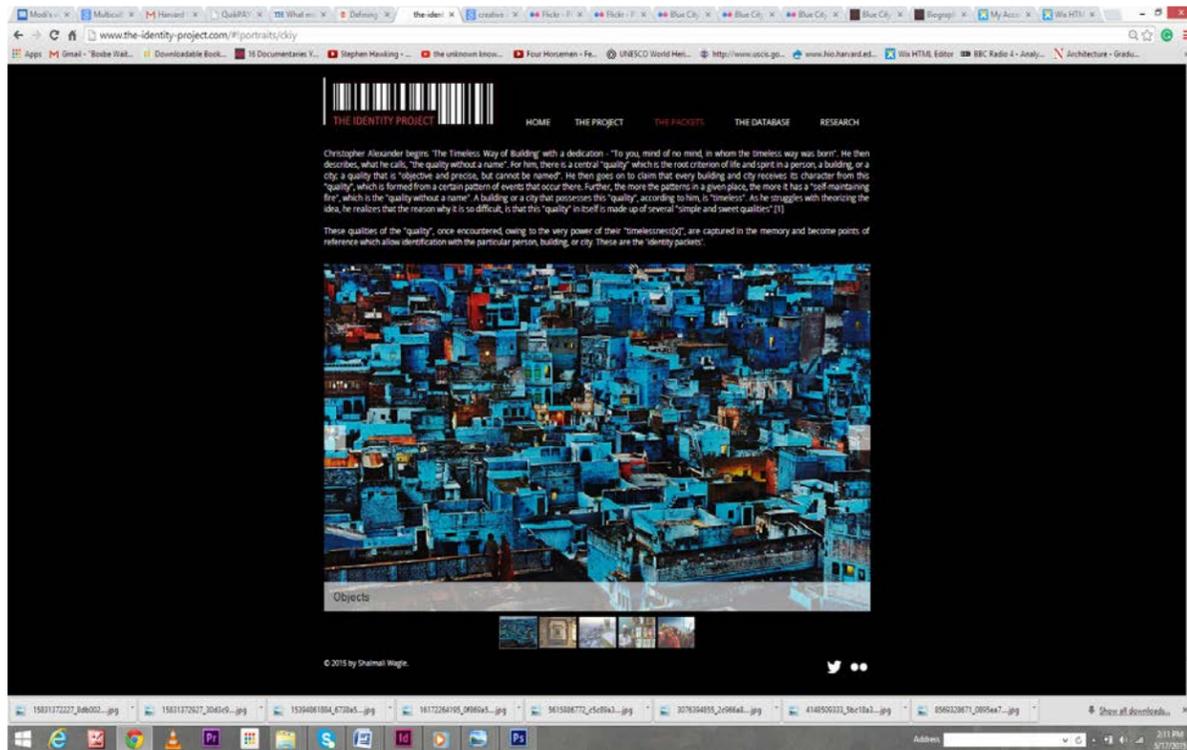
Landing Page: **THE HAND.**

- (i) THE PROJECT (involved concepts and theories)
- (ii) THE PACKETS (the aspects of the sets in detail)
- (iii) THE DATABASE (city-wise compilations of the packets)

Homepage: **THE PROJECT.**

- (i) SPARK PLUG (description of the "smart-cities" initiative)
- (ii) CONTEXT (Identity & Amnesia in the Indian Context)
- (iii) CONCEPT (The Project in Detail, Derivation and Deduction)



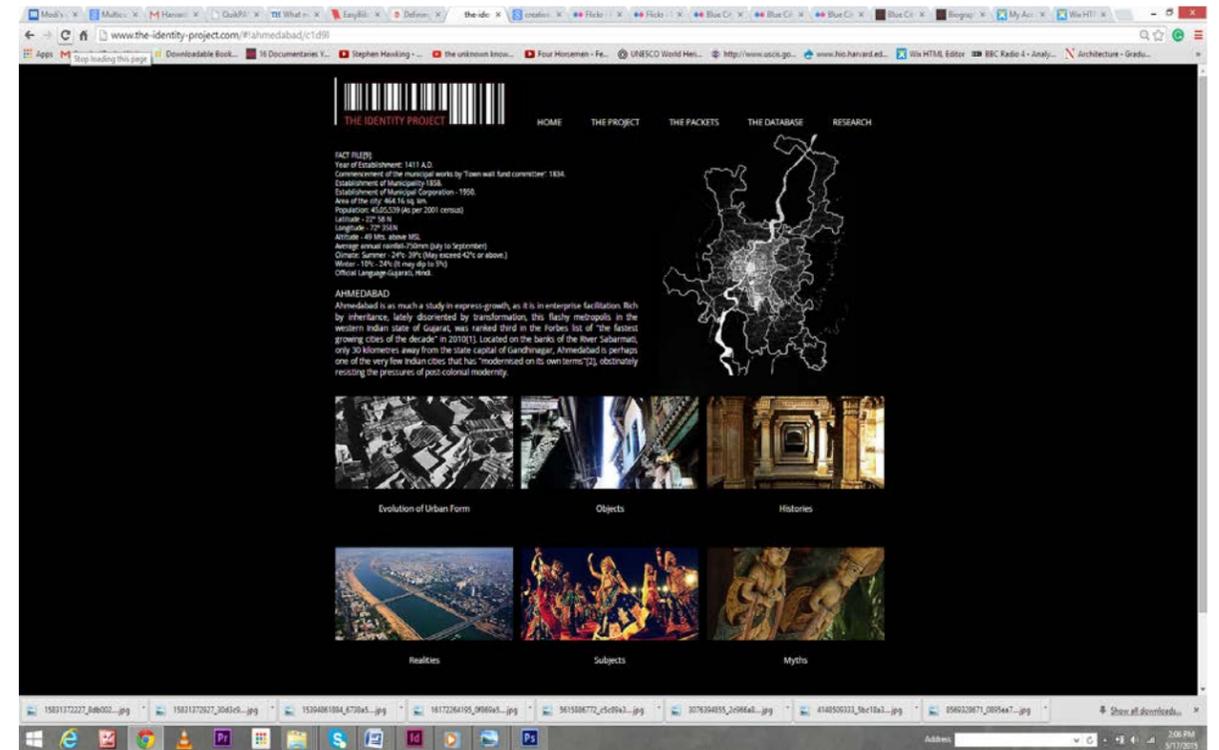


PAGE: THE PACKETS.

Detailed descriptions of the aspects involved in each of the 5 derived Identity-Packets: the Objects, The Histories, The Realities, The Social and The Myths.

PAGE: THE DATABASE.

An organised database according to the City Taxonomies: Identity Places, FLExible Canvases, Moderation Zones, Endangered Zones and Opportunity Cities.

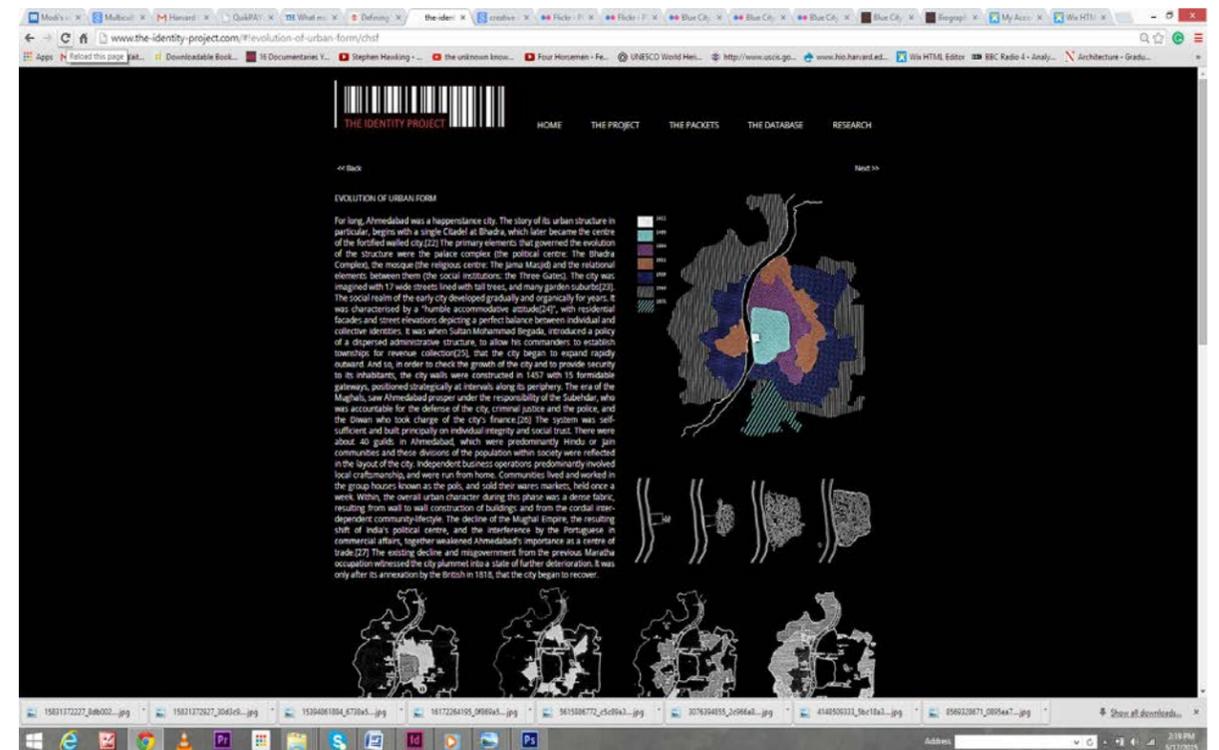
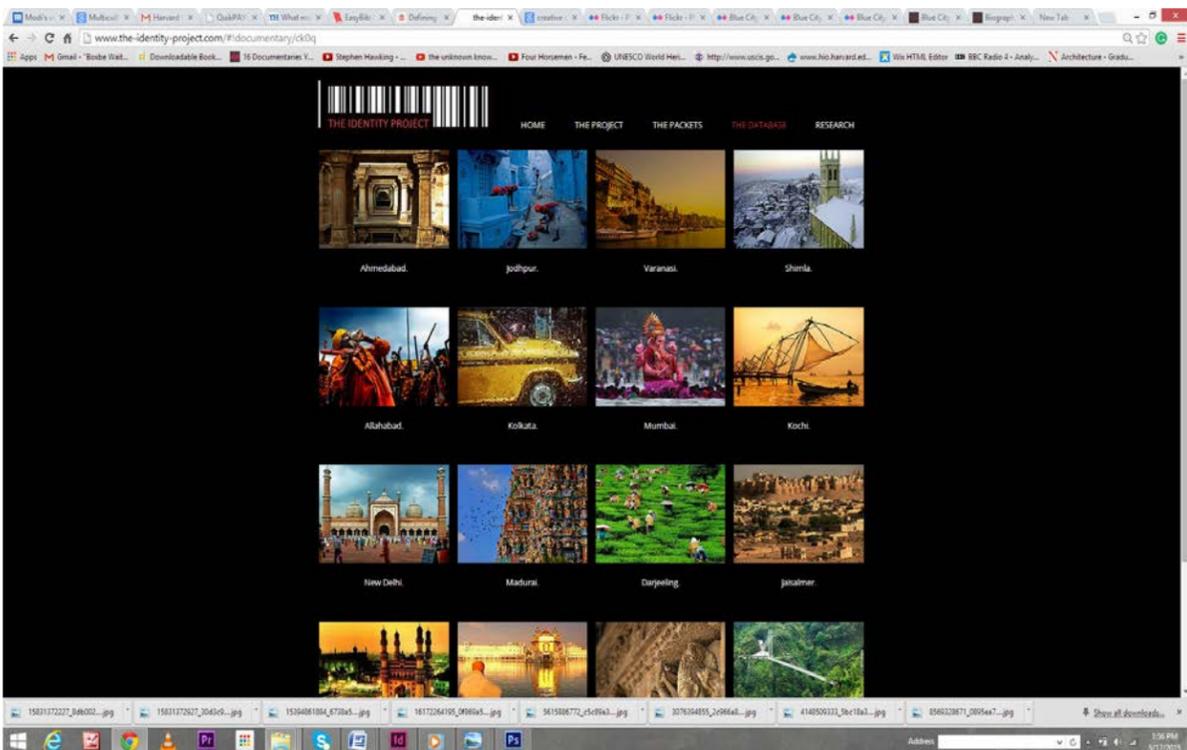


PAGE: THE COGNITIVE COLLAGE

Detailed database of the five Identity Packets that create the Cognitive Collage of the particular city, along with the evolution of its urban form through history.

PAGE: THE CITY-WISE PACKETS

Detailed descriptions of each of the Identity Packets, with a sub-database that registers the various components within each of the packets and their inter-relationships.



THE DOCUMENTARY

In India, cinema and the city are inextricably linked to each other on several levels. A country predominantly driven by emotions, cinema here is one of the most impactful forms of media. Being its inevitable framework, the city inspires the spatial complexity, diversity, and social dynamism expressed in cinema, while cinema influences and represents spaces, lifestyles and living conditions of a city, through deep social and psychological permeation. Cinema is a continual unconscious recorder of the perpetual transformations of a city, and this coincidental nexus between the two provides a rich avenue for investigation and exploration of city-related issues.

The Project recognises the parallel mobility and visual-aural sensations of a city and that of cinema, and explores the relationship between the two lived social realities of India's urban present. The aura of a city in all its naturalness captured by the candid camera -- without any interference -- makes for an appropriate technique to document the uniqueness of the city's simple everyday ordinariness. Conceived with a complex script (the

city itself) of the simplest realities (the packets), the documentary is envisioned as a series of unscripted clips that together produce the experience - or the "cognitive collage" of the atmospheres of cities -- in its natural movements, sounds and exchanges -- in terms of the five identity-packets, on a city-by-city basis. This compilation acts as a ready material to communicate the crux of the project, which is the diversity of India's cultures. It also reinforces the objective stance of the project, in that it removes the subjectivity of the creator from the script and allows for the depiction of the city in its pure, unadulterated, timeless form. The documentary film becomes a register of that which is being lost by focussing on simple objects of everyday, that, in a country like India (with abundant tangible and intangible heritage), are often, taken for granted and ignored into a state of deterioration. Pieced together as a montage of the cognitive collages of various cities of the country, with a brief introduction to the purpose of its creation, the documentary film, in the silence of its noisy cities, makes a strong case for the preservation of city-identities and against the "generic".



AHMEDABAD

THE OBJECTS

THE HISTORIES

THE REALITIES

THE SOCIAL

THE MYTHS



Stills from the Documentary

ENVOI

Cities exist to perform as physical backdrops for people to live. However, when we dig deeper into their complexities, or systematically explicate their identity-packets, we realise that the best cities are those that offer experiences beyond these mere physical backdrops. These are the cities that inspire, that seduce, and that deliver. Throughout time, cities have persisted as one of the most profound reflections of culture. Echoes of advanced civilization, city-identities can only be experienced as fluid entities and can only be understood (in its entirety) in retrospect. As the situation stands today, many cities have already lost their strong uniqueness to the clutches of the “generic”^[1]. The Identity Project acts beyond the realm of personal nostalgia or generic concern, (which it undoubtedly also is), and well into the territory of alarmed urgency. It is a warning sign, for those who fail to understand the delicate systems that they threaten with their uninformed propositions, and yet, possess the audacity and power to thoughtlessly intervene in them. It is a wake up call for those, who ought to possess the courage to suitably intervene, but fail to voice their opinions, in their apologetic capacities. It is a demonstration of what we risk to lose, and it is an evaluation of this against that which we, in most certainty, do not even want, in the first place. For, how many people have we met, who would dream of travels far and wide into city-after-city of undeviating sameness? How many people do we know, that would rather look out of their windows into 10-lane highways than at a festival celebration on the streets? And how many people are we willing to quote, as those wishful

of a future where children can no longer play on the streets, where neighbours barely know each other, and where architecture is an exercise in stacking up match-box models, having nothing to do with the passion of its creator’s handicraft. And, more pointedly, how many people can we vouch, in all sincerity, wish to leave behind such a legacy for the future? Culture is transmitted from one generation to the next, with each generation contributing its experience into shaping it and discarding things that are no longer useful to it.^[2] So, how many people can we say, truly believe that identity and culture are aspects of the city that we no longer have use for, that can be discarded as unnecessary?

It is commonly accepted that the source of India’s ambivalence towards its rich cultures and city-identities is a lingering aftermath of the post-colonial impact. To begin with, in a country like India, it would be incorrect to assume a homogenous seamless society, which thinks in a uniformly straight-forward manner. Here, the cities find themselves existing as deeply polarised agglomerations, where their inherent schizophrenia creates extreme opposites in a precarious equilibrium. In such a situation, when culture, additionally, becomes abundant and common-place, its value suffers a diminished priority. There is a lack of awareness. There is a lack of respect for the home-grown. The Indian city functions at two levels; and city-identities face two simultaneous battles. While a majority of the country’s population continues to struggle for survival, a smaller, albeit more influential, segment

aspires to uplift its position on the global map. At a fundamental level, the motivations of both these fractions may be ethically well-intentioned. However, these two mutually-dependent segments of the population fail to intersect in terms of their visions of what a functional city should look like. Much then, depends on the influential segment of the population (equipped to implement change), which pre-dominantly derives its inspirations from foreign models. The other segment, for most part remains unaware and inconsequential in the act -- it cannot “speak”^[3]. At the heart of this project is the realisation of the two simultaneous audiences (irrespective of post-colonial influences). There is one that is a conscious psychology of choice - where one can superimpose the theories of “difference, ambivalence, mimicry or hybridity”^[4] to achieve an exact juxtaposition. And there is the other, one that remains rather static in terms of theoretical expression, one that cannot “speak”. For all its substantial contributions in the creation of the city’s identity, this section remains, for most part, self-sedated and oblivious to its role in the creation of this very identity. This is the part of the society that remains deprived of the access to anything that is remotely considered as “smart”^[5], and yet is at the risk of maximum impact, if and when, cities do assume this status. The psychological manifestations in the two sections are divergent. And yet, they converge at a single consequence -- the terminal archi-cultural amnesia. Their root problems coincide as well. While the former, in its determination to compete with global trends overlooks the inherent uniqueness in possession, the latter, for most part, remains ignorant of it. Attempting to target the two audience simultaneously, The Identity Project proposes to become a tool for the generation of awareness amongst the general public regarding the immense legacy that we possess; while at the same time, acting as a ready reference guide for participatory actors involved in the decision-making processes for new developments. The Project is envisioned more as a continuous movement, across media, than as a single one-stop solution to tackle the inconsistencies that haunt city-identities. The creation of a comprehensive

database of city-identities and their identity-packets, brings to the forefront a sharp critique on India’s disregard for its own unique idiosyncracies, highlighting the root of the problem -- Why is it that people fail to nourish the heritage that they own? What is it that they assume as positive in the cringe-worthy simulations that are being promoted by those in power? Why is it that an external approval or acclaim becomes important to internal pride? How can this problem be tackled from within?

As robots threaten to take over jobs, services, and our lives, cities become sites of contestation, where individual opinions can mean everything and nothing. As politics and policy gradually dominate city-building, it becomes important to resist the creation of fake histories at the onset, lest it leave us in a 1984-like dystopia, where the truth is a function of politics^[6] and identities, “memory holes”^[7]. For cities in India, where realities and dreams are often at odds with one another, The Identity Project is an awakening call. It is to recognize that it is possible to disentangle the many complexities involved in a city’s identity, and that its parts once broken down systematically, become individually comprehensible and graspable, even at the formidable scale of a city. It is a platform to bring strong focus on thoughts, habits, and ways of life, that have always been sacrosanct to our city-identities, but are rapidly losing out to the global amnesia. The project is big, the proposition extremely humble. It may only be a drop, while what we need is a mighty ocean. Some might think of it as an out-dated regressive strategy. Others, as unnecessary unwarranted nostalgia. But our cities once had incredibly unique atmospheres. They are now critically endangered. Rem Koolhaas claims, “Identity centralises, it insists on an essence, a point”^[8]. The Identity Project attempts to prevent humanity from losing that very point altogether -- the point being that cities are physical backdrops for people to live. Not to merely exist. Of course, it is entirely possible, that this way, we just end up with something of an “urban illusion”^[9]. But as Spiro Kostoff says, “in our time and age, even that, maybe plenty to be thankful for”^[10]!..

NOTES

COVER IMAGE

Source: Author (Inspired by an image from www.katherinegreenway.com)

GRAPHIC 1. Source: Author.

Image. Adapted from Angelus Novus. Paul Klee. 1920.

- [1] Benjamin, Walter, Hannah Arendt, and Harry Zohn. "Theses on the Philosophy of History." *Illuminations*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968. Print.
 [2] Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974. Print.

1 INTRODUCTION

- [1] Simmel, Georg. *Metropolis and Mental Life*. Chicago: Syllabus Division, U of Chicago, 1961. Print.
 [2] The "Other" (or "Constitutive Other") is a concept of the identity of difference that is discussed within Continental philosophy and the Social Sciences. The state or characteristic of "The Other" is "being different [from] or [alien to]" the identity of the self or the social. The term was first coined by Hegel, but used later, and more predominantly in terms of the current context, by Jacques Lacan.
 [3] Objectivism, here, is used in the sense of its definition as the tendency to lay greater stress or importance on what is external to or independent of the human mind.
 [4] Simmel, Georg. *The Metropolis of Modern Life* in Levine, Donald (ed). 'Simmel: On Individuality and Social Forms'. Chicago: U of Chicago. 1971. Print.
 [5] Simmel, Georg, David Frisby, and Mike Featherstone. *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*. London: Sage Publications, 1997. Print.
 [6] Simmel, Georg. *Metropolis and Mental Life*. Chicago: Syllabus Division, U of Chicago, 1961. Print.
 [7] Simmel, Georg. *Metropolis and Mental Life*. Chicago: Syllabus Division, U of Chicago, 1961. Print.
 [8] Simmel, Georg, David Frisby, and Mike Featherstone. *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*. London: Sage Publications, 1997. Print.
 [9] Simmel, Georg, David Frisby, and Mike Featherstone. *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings*. London: Sage Publications, 1997. Print.
 [10] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*.

Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

- [11] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [12] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [13] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [14] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [15] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [16] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [17] Gladwell, Malcolm. *Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking*. New York: Little, Brown, 2005. Print.
 [18] Ambady, Nalini, and Robert Rosenthal. "Thin Slices of Expressive Behavior as Predictors of Interpersonal Consequences: A Meta-analysis." *Psychological Bulletin* 111.2 (1992): Web.
 [19] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [20] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [21] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [22] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.
 [23] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [24] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.
 [25] Jacobs, Jane. *The Death and Life of Great American*

Cities. Pelican Books: n.p., 1964. Print.

- [26] The word flâneur carried a set of rich associations: the man of leisure, the idler, the urban explorer, the connoisseur of the street. It was Walter Benjamin, drawing on the poetry of Charles Baudelaire, who made this figure the object of scholarly interest in the 20th century, as an emblematic archetype of urban, modern experience.
 [27] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [28] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [29] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [30] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [31] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [32] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [33] Serageldin, Ismail, Ephim Shluger, and Joan Martin-Brown. *Historic Cities and Sacred Sites Cultural Roots for Urban Futures*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001. Print.
 [34] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [35] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [36] Dalí described the paranoiac-critical as a "spontaneous method of irrational knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectivity of the associations and interpretations of delirious phenomena."
 [37] Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974. Print.
 [38] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [39] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [40] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.
 [41] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.
 [42] Calvino, Italo. *Invisible Cities*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974. Print.

GRAPHIC 2. Indian Cities - From Identity to Amnesia. Source: Author. Images. Various Sources.

[1] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. S, M, L, XL. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.

2 SMART CITIES

- [1] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [2] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [3] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [4] Kalia, Ravi. *Chandigarh: The Making of an Indian City*. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 1999. Print.
 [5] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [6] Tolan, Casey. 'Cities of the Future? Indian PM pushes plan for 100 smart-cities'. www.cnn.com. July 2014. Web.
 [7] Tolan, Casey. 'Cities of the Future? Indian PM pushes plan for 100 smart-cities'. www.cnn.com. July 2014. Web.
 [8] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.
 [9] Om Prakash Pandey. List of 100 Smart Cities of India Proposed by Arun Jaitley in Budget 2014-2015. July 2014. Web.
 [10] Kuipercompagno. Smart Cities in India: www.rvo.nl. Agentschap NL. National Office for Entrepreneurial Netherlands. Web.
 [11] Kuipercompagno. Smart Cities in India: www.rvo.nl. Agentschap NL. National Office for Entrepreneurial Netherlands. Web.
 [12] Kuipercompagno. Smart Cities in India: www.rvo.nl. Agentschap NL. National Office for Entrepreneurial Netherlands. Web.
 [13] Kuipercompagno. Smart Cities in India: www.rvo.nl. Agentschap NL. National Office for Entrepreneurial Netherlands. Web.
 [14] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.
 [15] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.
 [16] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [17] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.
 [18] Mehrotra, Rahul. Harvard India Conference: Smart Cities Panel. Harvard University, Cambridge. Mar 2015.
 [19] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.
 [20] Dutta, Ayona. India's smart-city craze: big, green and doomed from the start? www.theguardian.com.

April 2014.

[21] Dutta, Ayona. India's smart-city craze: big, green and doomed from the start? www.theguardian.com. April 2014.

[22] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.

[23] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.

[24] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.

[25] Mehrotra, Rahul. Harvard India Conference: Smart Cities Panel. Harvard University, Cambridge. Mar 2015.

[26] Gandhi, Feroze Varun. What makes cities really smart? www.thehindu.com. April 2015. Web.

[27] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[28] Dutta, Ayona. India's smart-city craze: big, green and doomed from the start? www.theguardian.com. April 2014.

[29] Koolhaas, Rem. 'The Smart Landscape. Intelligent Architecture'. www.artforum.com. April 2015. Web.

Images:

Fig1. Stills from the released proposal for Dholera SIR. Dholera SIR: Future Smart City. Youtube Creative Commons. June 2013. Web.

Fig2. Images of Dholera in its reality.

a. 'Viewpoint: How Narendra Modi can revive India's economy'. www.bbcnews.com. June 2014.

b. 'Gujarat govt plans to take away 50% of land from Dholera SIR farmers, claims it's "not land acquisition"'. www.counterview.net. January 2014.

c. 'Dholera: Modi's pet project back on the fast track'. www.rediff.com/business. October 2014.

d. 'Dholera SIR: Campaign to save Bhal ecology launched'. www.adlertours.com. January 2014.

e. 'Gujarat govt plans to take away 50% of land from Dholera SIR farmers, claims it's "not land acquisition"'. www.counterview.net. January 2014.

f. Dutta, Ayona. India's smart-city craze: big, green and doomed from the start? www.theguardian.com. April 2014.

Fig3. Website launched by the Urban Development Ministry of the Government of India. Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.

Fig4. The Declaration of the 100 Smart-cities Initiative. Vikram, Kumar. 'Modi's vision of 'smart cities' takes shape as government commits to delivering first three hubs by 2019'. www.dailymail.co.uk. August 2014. Poster as published.

3 IDENTITY + AMNESIA

GRAPHIC 3. The Relationship between memory and identity with time and transformation. Source: Author.

[1] Mathur, Krishna Mohan, Pragya M. Kumar, Shiv Shubhang Mathur, and Nandita Narayan Mathur. *New Horizons in Indian Management*. Delhi: Kalpaz Publications, 2010. Print.

[2] Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin. *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*. London: Routledge, 1998. Print.

[3] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[4] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[5] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[6] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[7] Narasimhan, Naresh. "We are all suffering from urban amnesia". TEDxBangalore. October 2014.

[8] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[9] Belloso, Juan Carlos. "Building a Strong City Identity." *Future Places*. 17 Oct. 2012. Web. 04 Feb. 2015.

[10] Mead, George Herbert, and Charles William Morris. *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. Chicago, IL: U of Chicago, 1962. Print.

[11] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[12] Adam Curtis. *The Century of the Self*. Dir. Adam Curtis. BBC Four, 2002. Documentary.

[13] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[14] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[15] Macaskill, Andrew, and Rupam Jain Nair. "Fears Grow in India about Hindu 'Modi-fication' of Education." Uk.reuters.com. Reuters, Nov. 2014. Web. Apr. 2015.

[16] Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

[17] Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

[18] Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

[19] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[20] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[21] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[22] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[23] Michael Woods. *The Story of India*. Dir. Michael

Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[24] Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

[25] Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

[26] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[27] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[28] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[29] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[30] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[31] Macaskill, Andrew, and Rupam Jain Nair. "Fears Grow in India about Hindu 'Modi-fication' of Education." Uk.reuters.com. Reuters, Nov. 2014. Web. Apr. 2015.

[32] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[33] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[34] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[35] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[36] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[37] Hernández, Felipe. *Bhabha for Architects*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.

[38] Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

[39] Chisholm, Roderick M. *Person and Object: A Metaphysical Study*. La Salle, IL: Open Court Pub., 1976. Print.

[40] Yanofsky, Noson S. "The Ship of Theseus and the Question of Identity." *Utne*. Nov. 2013. Web. 15 April 2015.

[41] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[42] Yanofsky, Noson S. "The Ship of Theseus and the Question of Identity." *Utne*. Nov. 2013. Web. 15 April 2015.

[43] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Festivals of India Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[44] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The*

Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Festivals of India Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[45] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Festivals of India Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

GRAPHIC 4. The Evolution of Identity. Source: Author. With research and reference from:

a. Mead, George Herbert, and Charles William Morris. *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. Chicago, IL: U of Chicago, 1962. Print.

b. Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

c. Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Festivals of India Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

Images: Various Sources.

GRAPHIC 5. The Influence of post-colonial psychology on the evolution of post-independent identity in architecture. Source: Author. With research and reference from:

a. Hernández, Felipe. *Bhabha for Architects*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.

b. Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994. Print.

c. Tadgell, Christopher. *The History of Architecture in India: From the Dawn of Civilization to the End of the Raj*. London: Phaidon, 1994. Print.

d. Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. *Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980*. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

e. Correa, Charles, and Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Festivals of India Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

Images: Various Sources.

GRAPHIC 6. The Identity Project.

4 THE IDENTITY PROJECT

[1] The term 'Heimlich' was first used with reference to the familiar by Sigmund Freud in 1919.

[2] Tversky, Barbara. 'Cognitive Maps, Cognitive Collages, and Spatial Mental Models.' Department Of Psychology. Stanford University. Web.

[3] Tversky, Barbara. 'Cognitive Maps, Cognitive Collages, and Spatial Mental Models.' Department Of Psychology. Stanford University. Web.

[4] Kroeber, A. L., and Clyde Kluckhohn. *Culture; a Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*. Cambridge, MA: Museum, 1952. Print.

[5] Ali Raza, Syed. *Multiculturalism*. www.googlebooks.com.

[6] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition)*. Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[7] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition)*.

Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[8] McClay, Wilfred. Myth and Memory in the American Identity Part of The Lehrman Lectures on Restoring America's National Identity. www.heritage.org. November 2014. Web.

[9] Tversky, Barbara. 'Cognitive Maps, Cognitive Collages, and Spatial Mental Models.' Department Of Psychology. Stanford University. Web.

[10] Jani, Vibhavari. Diversity in Design: Perspectives from the Non-Western World. New York: Fairchild, 2011. Print.

[11] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[12] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[13] Disraeli, Benjamin. The Cities Book: A Journey through the Best Cities in the World. Footscray, Vic.: Lonely Planet, 2006. Print.

[14] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[15] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[16] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[17] Charles Correa, Imtiaz Dharker. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Dir. Charles Correa, Imtiaz Dharker. 1986. Documentary.

[18] Tversky, Barbara. 'Cognitive Maps, Cognitive Collages, and Spatial Mental Models.' Department Of Psychology. Stanford University. Web.

Images:

Fig Set 1.

a. Christ the Redeemer - Rio de Janeiro - Brazil. Photograph: Sam Vavaldi. Flickr Creative Commons. February 2013.

b. Barcelona ESP. Photograph: Funky Tee. Flickr Creative Commons. June 2012.

c. Street of San Francisco. Photograph: Prayitno. Flickr Creative Commons. January 2010.

d. Still. Eric Stange. The Wall - A World Divided. Dir. Eric Stange. PBS.org, 2010. Documentary.

e. Jerusalem. Photograph: Cycling Man. Flickr Creative Commons. September 2009.

Fig Set 2.

a. Bhungas - 120° panorama, ludia kutch. Photograph: Nevil Zaveri. Flickr Creative Commons. April 2009.

b. Bhungas of Kutch. Photograph: Colleen. Flickr Creative Commons. January 2013.

c. Gateway to Rann Resort, Dhordo. Photograph: Gateway to Rann Resort. Flickr Creative Commons. July 2013.

d. Kutchi Mud and Mirror Work. Photograph: Gateway to Rann Resort. Flickr Creative Commons. July 2013.

e. Kutchi painting on Bhunga. Photograph: Gateway to Rann Resort. Flickr Creative Commons. July 2013.

Fig Set 3. Source: Author.

Fig4. Jodhpur Blue City. Photograph: Sebastian Lange. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2007.

Fig5. Qutab Minar and Iron Pillar, Delhi. Photograph: Dimitry B. Flickr Creative Commons. February 2012.

Fig6. Sanjauli, Shimla. Photograph: Bharat Justa. Flickr Creative Commons. March 2011

Fig7. Mumbai Dabbawala. Photograph: Ayan Khasnabis. Flickr Creative Commons. January 2008.

Fig8. Sadhu (Varanasi). Photograph: Pierre-Emmanuel BOITON. Flickr Creative Commons. September 2009.

5 IDENTITY PACKETS

[1] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[2] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[3] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[4] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[5] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[6] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[7] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[8] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[9] The term Urban DNA is used in the sense of the characteristics that make up the urban personality of the city.

[10] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[11] "Perceptual Form of the City." : MIT Libraries. May 2015. Web.

[12] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[13] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[14] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[15] Batty, Michael. Longley, Paul. 'The Shape of Cities: Geometry, Morphology, Complexity and Form.' www.fractalcities.org. UCL Centre For Advanced Spatial Analysis. Web.

[16] Lawrence, Denise L., and Setha M. Low. "The Built Environment And Spatial Form." Annual Review of Anthropology 19.1 (1990): Web.

[17] Lawrence, Denise L., and Setha M. Low. "The Built Environment And Spatial Form." Annual Review of Anthropology 19.1 (1990): Web.

[18] Bacon, Edmund N. Design of Cities. New York: Viking, 1967. Print.

[19] Frank Ching. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order. Hoboken, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2007. Print.

[20] Frank Ching. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order. Hoboken, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2007. Print.

[21] Frank Ching. Architecture: Form, Space, and Order. Hoboken, New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2007. Print.

[22] Lonely Planet India. Lonely Planet India. Footscray, Vic. 2007. Print.

[23] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[24] Lang, Jon T., Madhavi Desai, and Miki Desai. Architecture and Independence: The Search for Identity-India 1880 to 1980. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. Print.

[25] Michael Woods. The Story of India. Dir. Michael Woods. BBC Four, 2007. Documentary.

[26] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. Questions of Cultural Identity. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[27] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. Questions of Cultural Identity. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[28] Hall, Stuart, and Paul Du Gay. Questions of Cultural Identity. London: Sage, 1996. Print.

[29] Ruskin, John. The Seven Lamps of Architecture. London: J.M. Dent, 1907. Print.

[30] Ruskin, John. The Seven Lamps of Architecture. London: J.M. Dent, 1907. Print.

[31] Serageldin, Ismail, Ephim Shluger, and Joan Martin-Brown. Historic Cities and Sacred Sites Cultural Roots for Urban Futures. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2001. Print.

[32] Frampton, Kenneth. "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." Foster, Hal. The Anti-aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture. Port Townsend, WA: Bay, 1983. N. pag. Print.

[33] Frampton, Kenneth. "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." Foster, Hal. The Anti-aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture. Port Townsend, WA: Bay, 1983. N. pag. Print.

[34] Frampton, Kenneth. "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance." Foster, Hal. The Anti-aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture. Port Townsend, WA: Bay, 1983. N. pag. Print.

[35] Alexander, Christopher. The Timeless Way of Building. New York: Oxford UP, 1979. Print.

[36] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[37] Lynch, Kevin. The Image of the City. Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1960. Print.

[38] Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Pelican Books: n.p., 1964. Print.

[39] McClay, Wilfred. Myth and Memory in the American Identity Part of The Lehrman Lectures on Restoring America's National Identity. www.heritage.org. November 2014. Web.

[40] McClay, Wilfred. Myth and Memory in the American Identity Part of The Lehrman Lectures on Restoring America's National Identity. www.heritage.org. November 2014. Web.

[41] McClay, Wilfred. Myth and Memory in the American Identity Part of The Lehrman Lectures on Restoring America's National Identity. www.heritage.org. November 2014. Web.

[42] Correa, Charles, and Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The

Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[43] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[44] McClay, Wilfred. Myth and Memory in the American Identity Part of The Lehrman Lectures on Restoring America's National Identity. www.heritage.org. November 2014. Web.

[45] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[46] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[47] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[48] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[49] Mehrotra, Rahul. 'Mapping the Kumbh Mela. Harvard Graduate School of Design. Feb 2013.

[50] Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. Vistara: The Architecture of India (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.

[51] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

Images:

Fig Set 9. The Objects

a. The Blue City. Photograph: Andrew Miller. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2008.

b. Jodhpur Fort (at dusk). Photograph: Magalie L'Abbé. Flickr Creative Commons. March 2011.

c. Building blocks in blue. Photograph: Owen Young. Flickr Creative Commons. October 2014.

d. Blue City Jodhpur. Photograph: Dharmesh Thakker. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2014.

e. Blue City Jodhpur. Photograph: Dharmesh Thakker. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2014.

f. Blue City Jodhpur. Photograph: Dharmesh Thakker. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2014.

g. Blue City Jodhpur. Photograph: Dharmesh Thakker. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2014.

Fig 10. GRAPHIC. Source: Author. Images: Various Sources.

Fig Set 11. The Histories

a. Rashtrapati Bhavan. Photograph: Souparna. Flickr Creative Commons. October 2009.

b. Jama Masjid Delhi. Photograph: Rohan Prakash. Flickr Creative Commons. February 2010.

c. Chandni Chowk fabric bazaar, Delhi, India. 2009. Photograph: Alan Morgan. February 2009.

d. Republic Day Parade. defenseforumindia.com. January 2013.

Fig Set 12. The Realities

a. And it's not even rush hour. Photograph: Satish

Krishnamurthy. Flickr Creative Commons. August 2009.
b. Washing Laundry in Dharavi Slums. Photograph: Adam Cohn. Flickr Creative Commons. February 2015.
c. Nokia N8 Panorama - Marine Drive. Photograph: Clinton Jeff. Flickr Creative Commons. October 2010.
d. Colors of Chowpaty. Photograph: Gaurav Agarwal. Flickr Creative Commons. October 2007.
e. Bandra worli sealink. Photograph: Myriad Ways. Flickr Creative Commons. March 2009.
f. Bollywood Poster Detail. Photograph: Meena Kadri. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2009.

Fig Set 13. The Social

a. Craftsmanship in the Pols. Photograph: Sarvesh Kumar. December 2011.
b. Makar Sankranti evening in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Photograph: Sandeep and Chetan. January 2013.
c. Craftsmanship in the Pols. Photograph: Sarvesh Kumar. December 2011.
d. Bird Feeder. Photograph: Ccaristead. Flickr Creative Commons. November 2012.

Fig Set 14. The Myths

a. Correa, Charles, Kagal, Carmen. *Vistara: The Architecture of India* (Catalogue of the Exhibition). Bombay: Tata Press Limited. 1986. Print.
b. Kumar, Nitin. 'The Hindu Temple - Where Man Becomes God.' www.exoticindianart.com. May 2003.
c. Diagram of "Plain of Assembly"(Ard al-Hashr) on the Day of Judgment, from autograph manuscript of Futuhat al-Makkiyya, ca. 1238 (Photograph: after Futuhat al-Makkiyya, Cairo edition, 1911). www.wikipedia.org.

Fig Set 15. The Myths

a. Varanasi Ghats in the morning. Photograph: Epi Longo. Flickr Creative Commons. February 2011.
b. Ghat at Dawn. Photograph: Alan Morgan. Flickr Creative Commons. March 2009.
c. Ganges Devotion. Photograph: Sergio Carbajo. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2012.
d. Varanasi, Ganga Aarti. Photograph: Arian Zwegers. Flickr Creative Commons. December 2008.

Packet Constituents Diagrams.

The Objects. The Histories. The Realities. The Social. The Myths. Source: Author.

GRAPHIC. The Cognitive Collage, based on the various identity-packets. Source: Author.

DIAGRAM. The Inter-connectivity of various identity-packets. Source: Author.

GRAPHIC. City-Taxonomies. Source: Author.

6 AHMEDABAD

[0] Setu, Mānekabhāi Patela. *Welcome to Ahmedabad: A Complete City Guide*. Ahmedabad: Gurjar Prakashan on Behalf of Ahmedabad Foundation, 2010. Print.

[1] Kotkin, Joel. "The World's Fastest-Growing Cities." *Forbes*. *Forbes Magazine*, 07 Oct. 2010. Web. 13 Apr. 2015.

[2] Ahmedabad Fact File: Architecture and Urban Development. Ahmedabad: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation

for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 1999. Print.

[3] Raychaudhuri, Siddhartha. "Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India), 1890-1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 35.03 (2001): Print.

[4] Raychaudhuri, Siddhartha. "Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India), 1890-1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 35.03 (2001): Print.

[5] Raychaudhuri, Siddhartha. "Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India), 1890-1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 35.03 (2001): Print.

[6] Hosagrahar, Jyoti. *Indigenous Modernities: Negotiating Architecture and Urbanism*. London: Routledge, 2005. Print.

[7] Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage, 1979. Print.

[8] Ahmedabad Fact File: Architecture and Urban Development. Ahmedabad: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 1999. Print.

[9] Ahmedabad Fact File: Architecture and Urban Development. Ahmedabad: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 1999. Print.

[10] Pandya, Yatin, and Trupti Rawal. *The Ahmedabad Chronicle, Imprints of a Millennium*. Ahmedabad: Vastu Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 2002. Print.

[11] Pandya, Yatin, and Trupti Rawal. *The Ahmedabad Chronicle, Imprints of a Millennium*. Ahmedabad: Vastu Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 2002. Print.

[12] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[13] Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1962. Print.

[14] Driver, Felix, and David Gilbert. *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999. Print.

[15] Driver, Felix, and David Gilbert. *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 1999. Print.

[16] Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1962. Print.

[17] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[18] Pandya, Yatin, and Trupti Rawal. *The Ahmedabad Chronicle, Imprints of a Millennium*. Ahmedabad: Vastu Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 2002. Print.

[19] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[20] Ahmedabad Fact File: Architecture and Urban

Development. Ahmedabad: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 1999. Print.

[21] B V Doshi. DOSHI. Dir. Premjit Ramchandran, Bijoy Ramchandran. BBC Four, 2008. Documentary.

[22] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[23] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[24] Pandya, Yatin, and Trupti Rawal. *The Ahmedabad Chronicle, Imprints of a Millennium*. Ahmedabad: Vastu Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 2002. Print.

[25] Raychaudhuri, Siddhartha. "Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India), 1890-1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 35.03 (2001): Print.

[26] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[27] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[28] Sejpal, Shraddha. "Theory and City Form : The Case of Ahmedabad." *Dspace@MIT*. June 1987. Web. Apr. 2015.

[29] Raychaudhuri, Siddhartha. "Colonialism, Indigenous Elites and the Transformation of Cities in the Non-Western World: Ahmedabad (Western India), 1890-1947." *Modern Asian Studies* 35.03 (2001): Print.

[30] Ahmedabad Fact File: Architecture and Urban Development. Ahmedabad: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 1999. Print.

Fig. Evolution of the City. Pandya, Yatin, and Trupti Rawal. *The Ahmedabad Chronicle, Imprints of a Millennium*. Ahmedabad: Vastu Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design, 2002. Print.

GRAPHIC. Cognitive Collage of a few elements of the Old City of Ahmedabad. Source: Author. Images: Various Sources.

7 THE DATABASE

[1] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[2] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

[3] Bell, Daniel, and Avner De-Shalit. *The Spirit of Cities: Why the Identity of a City Matters in a Global Age*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 2011. Print.

WEBSITE: www.the-identity-project.com

Source: Author. All Rights Reserved.

Images: Various Sources. Suggestive only.

Details: Subject to change as per discretion of the Author.

8 THE DOCUMENTARY

GRAPHIC. Source: Author. Image: Modified.

Film Frames: courtesy Sarvesh Kumar.

DOCUMENTARY. Concept. Script. Compilation. Source: Author. All Rights Reserved.

9 ENVOI

[1] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. *S, M, L, XL*. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.

[2] 'Defining culture, heritage and identity'. www.sahistory.com. Web. 2005.

[3] In postcolonial theory, the term subaltern describes the lower classes and the social groups who are at the margins of a society—a subaltern is a person rendered without agency due to his or her social status. The concept of their agency (or its lack thereof) was introduced by Gayatri Spivak in her book, 'Can the subaltern speak?'

[4] Hernández, Felipe. *Bhabha for Architects*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.

[5] Revised As On 03.12.2014 (Work Under Progress), Ministry of Urban Development. Draft Concept Note on Smart City Scheme. www.indiansmartcities.in. Government of India. December 2014. Web.

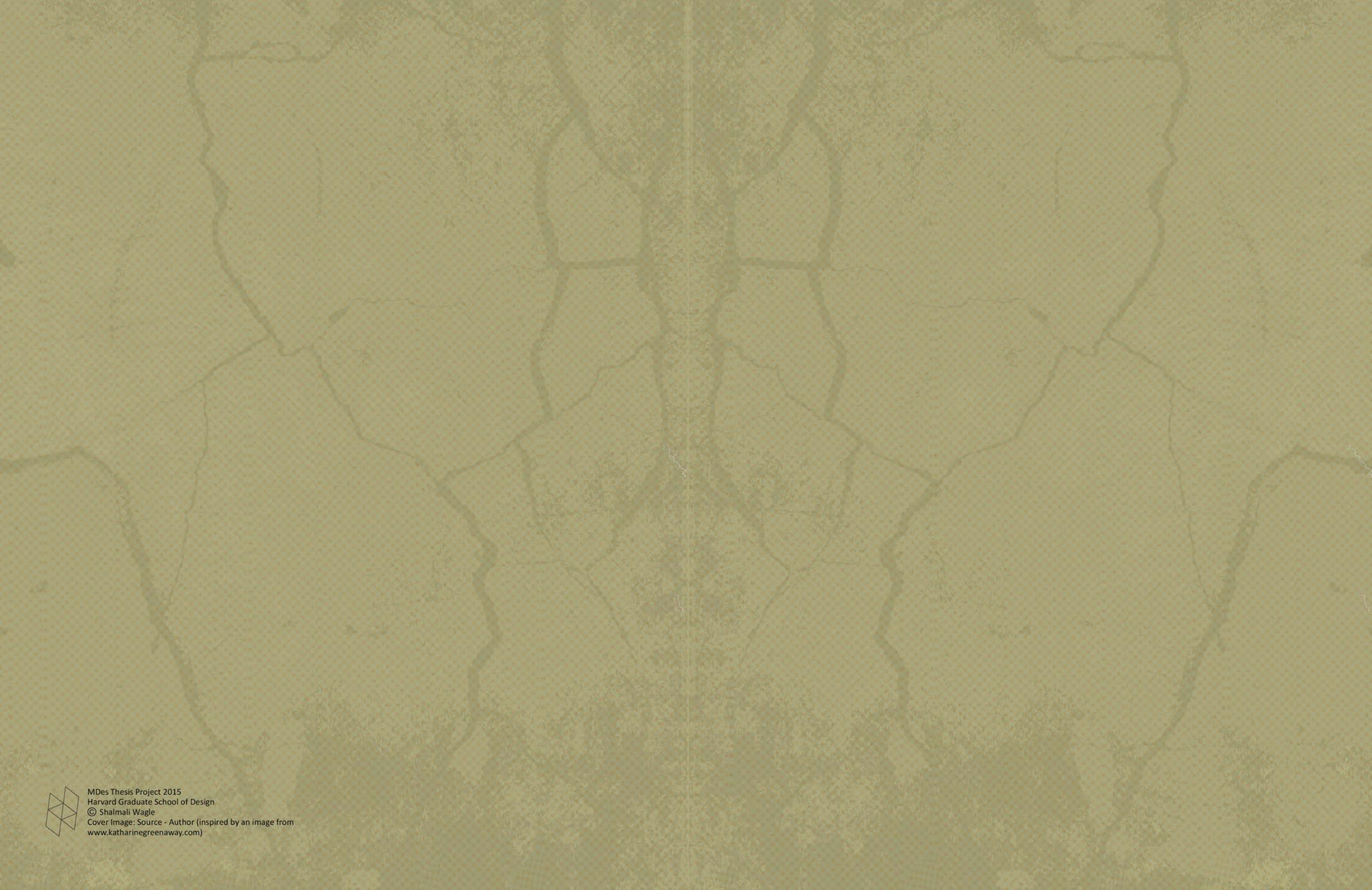
[6] "Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true.. the means by which each is sanctioned.. the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true." (Foucault, in Rabinow 1991).

[7] A memory hole is any mechanism for the alteration or disappearance of inconvenient or embarrassing history, particularly as part of an attempt to give the impression that something never happened. The concept was first popularized by George Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

[8] Koolhaas, Rem. "The Generic City". Koolhaas, Rem, Bruce Mau, and Jennifer Sigler. *S, M, L, XL*. Rotterdam: 010 Publ., 1995. Print.

[9] Kostof, Spiro Konstantin. *The Third Rome: 1870-1950: An Introduction*. (Berkeley: U Art Museum), 1973. Print.

[10] Kostof, Spiro Konstantin. *The Third Rome: 1870-1950: An Introduction*. (Berkeley: U Art Museum), 1973. Print.



MDes Thesis Project 2015
Harvard Graduate School of Design
© Shalmali Wagle
Cover Image: Source - Author (inspired by an image from
www.katharinegreenaway.com)