

TRANSFORMATION OF SMALLER CITIES AS AN ADVENT OF SPRAWLING DEVELOPMENT AND COMPACTING CORE: CHANGE IN URBAN LIFE/ENVIRONMENT.

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Abstract

Cities can be referred as the quintessential paradigm of complexity. So far the hidden hand in the precinct that defines the city is the morphology, which is the outcome of the individual actions and collective response that builds together to build a whole. In 20th century, when the general systems theory pierced the dictionary of science, cities were regarded as being an exceptional model of interactive systems within the basic characteristics that demonstrated the narration for the field: The 'whole is greater than the sum of parts'. Since then the theory of complexity has progressed to incorporate systems and temporal dynamics. Cities has again started to demonstrate basic themes such as global organization from local events, emerging morphology from mere spatial resolution, Individual decision making suggesting random change, Progress through evolution, variety , pressure and competition. Thus sketching these ideas with respect to city results in three basic themes, which include pressure between the constantly changing systems, qualitative aspects of transformation and fundamental change based on emerging assets within the whole.

The course of change from small town to core or neighborhood of the city is noticeable by the loss of distinctiveness, independence and amalgamation. It is the processes of amalgamation and integration until which one has to search to find evidence or clues of historical events or its structure.

The illustration would be elaborated with an old historic core of two tier city called "Mahal" in Nagpur, Maharashtra, India. The area identified for demonstration is around 29acre which has been delineated as per the evolutionary stages mapped. The existence of the precinct is since the origin of the city in historic times which is around 18th century. City has seen a huge transformation during different stages for instance when Britishers invaded in 1870, when it became Maharashtra state capital in 1960 from Madhya pradesh state capital in 1950, when influx of economic magnet 'MIHAN- multimodel international hub at Nagpur' came into being, and further when it was declared as a proposal for smart cities project. Thus this variety of events makes evident in the evolution of city. Thus three themes namely pressure between the constantly changing systems, qualitative aspects of transformation and fundamental change based on emerging assets.

This paper is based on the field survey, morphological study and physical appearance in terms of typology and its transformation over the years. The analysis which is an elaboration of the above mentioned three themes, starts with the overview of the theories relevant to city transformation in terms of events, spatial pattern, defining the concept of quality of city. Further this analysis is supported by mapping the evolution/growth patterns in order to identify the old core and recent development taking place in an around the city. Secondly the quantitative analysis of the changing fabric, building use and typological which resulted in not only affected the historic core of the city but also the cultural identity of old core with loss of significant sites for the future generation. In conclusion the paper elaborates on some ideas/proposals to reduce pressure of transformation on the old city and maintain its significant identity for years to come.

Keywords: Transformation; Development; urban life.

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