

Communal Festivals And Its Impact On Existing Urban Fabric

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Abstract: This paper departs from Guy Debord's "Society of the Spectacle" and seeks to explore the interrelation between the city and the festivals through the construction of the city image around the term "Urban Spectacle".

Each of the festival is celebrated in their way, and has their effect on the surroundings. And celebration of festivals today has become a subject of discussion. The proposed study enquires into the present state of the celebration of the Ganesh festival, as Urban Spectacle, in the state of Maharashtra, India. The idealistic rationale behind the celebration of the festival has the socio-religious basis which inculcates among people the sense of unity and integrity.

The study investigates the impact of the festival on the urban fabric, urban network, social economical network, tourism and environment.

Keyword: Spectacles, festivals, memory, urban fabric, environment.



I. INTRODUCTION

The word spectacle derives from the Latin root spectare "to view, watch" and specere "to look at" (Kan, 2004). Image and memory are the two elements that need to be underlined in the term "spectacle". Debord (1983) developed the concept of the 'spectacle' referring to a new stage in the development of capitalist urbanization, signaling "an image-saturated society where advertising, entertainment,

television and mass media increasingly define and shape the urban life".

Urban spectacles are the spectacular public display, including festival and mega-events, that's involve capitalist market and are set of social relations and flow of commodities, capital, technology, cultural forms and people across borders.

When a large urban spectacle is held in the city, the city adapts and remolds itself to fulfill the need of the events. Various additions are made to city fabric. After the event is over, the people leave but these temporary and permanent activities and form stay back in the city. They create impact in different ways on the city for several times. Similar things happen during festivals in India.

Today, Spectacles are no longer discrete and isolated event but are rational produced and scientifically managed by organizations. (Theorizing urban spectacles by Kevin Fox Gotham).

Festivals are an event ordinarily celebrated by a community and centering on some characteristic aspect of that community and its religions or traditions. Next to religion and folklore, a significant origin is agricultural. Food is such a vital resource that many festivals are associated with harvest time.

Festivals often serve to fulfill specific communal purposes, especially in regard to commemoration or thanks giving. The celebrations offer a sense of belonging for

religious, social, or geographical groups, contributing to group cohesiveness. They may also provide entertainment, which was particularly important to local communities before the advent of mass-produced entertainment. Festivals that focus on cultural or ethnic topics also seek to inform community members of their traditions, the involvement of elders sharing stories and experience provides a means for unity among families.

India is often and justly described as a land of many religions and innumerable languages, it might well be described as a land of festivals as well. Festivals are very important in the history of human being. It gives peace and breaks the monotony of the people. India is also well known all over the world as a country of cultural and traditional festivals.

One can enjoy the festival celebration in India every month. As it is a secular country full of diversity in the religions, languages, cultures and castes, it is always crowded with the people involved in the fairs and festivals celebration.



Source: <http://www.divyabhaskar.co.in/div>

Figure 1

There are numerous types of festivals in the country which it celebrates, important events or traditions with traditional cultural events and activities. Most culminate in the consumption of specially prepared food (showing the connection to "feasting") and they bring people together. Festivals are also strongly associated with national events.

Festivals can be categorized in following manner, religious specific festivals, seasonal specific festivals, art specific festivals, social bounding festival, and context specific festivals.

Each one have links in between them, and their way of celebrating it. For examples, Durga puja, where all come together and celebrate. After it just comes the Dessera, Diwali, Idemilad, Merry Christmas, Pongal, Republic Day, Holi, Gudi Padwa, Baisakhi, Independence Day, Onam, Krishna Janmashtami, Ganesh Chaturthi, Gandhi Jayanti, and many more. are celebrated one after the other. This all come and go, and transformer the cities and people in different manner, such as some changes the city fabric by their pandals, some created groups to celebrate, some are treated as national celebrating days, some create the ossicoations to visit relatives places.

The culture of Pune encompasses both the traditional Maharashtrian lifestyle that is prevalent in the heart of the city, as well as a modern, progressive outlook resulting from its being a hub for education and liberal thought. People from multiple religions and speaking different regional languages reside here. It also hosts various cultural events throughout the year. Ganesh festival, which gets people together. It was in Pune, in 1894 that Lokmanya Tilak initiated the concept of the "Sarvajanik Ganeshotsav" — the collective communal celebration of the festival of Lord Ganesh.

In the pre-independence era, Lokmanya Tilak was in great distress and worried about our country's freedom. He used to sit at bank of Girgaum chowpaty and wondered how to collect people. While sitting on the bank of seashore he used to make idols and people used to stop by to see it. Such collective

movement was not restricted by British. So from there he got an idea to celebrate sarvajanik Ganesh Utsav. He started the tradition of Sarvajanik Ganesha Utsav by making clay idols. From that time till today Sarvajanik Ganesha Utsav is been celebrated in a magnificent manner in the Maharashtra as well as many states in India.

During the month of August or September each year, the city celebrates the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi. Almost every neighborhood puts up a pandal with an idol of Lord Ganesh, often amidst a mythological setting, complete with decorative lights and festive music. The 10-day festival culminates in a carnival-like procession along the busy thoroughfares of the city, with every pandal leading the idol on a float to finally immerse (visarjan) it in the local rivers. It is one of the most important yearly events in the city. There are many pandals set up in important places of the city. The city has the five Maanache Ganpati- The respected Ganpati- at different places. They are the Kasba Ganpati at Kasba Peth, Tambdi Jogeshwari Ganpati at Appa Balwant Chowk, Guruji Talim at Laxmi Road, Tulshibaugh Ganpati at Tulshibaugh and Kesariwada Ganpati at Kesariwada, the ancestral home of the Tilaks. On the end of the day all are set in order in a format of procession one behind the other. Each one has their own significant elements like dhool and thashi patak, decorations, dress code etc. In this time city fabric changes for the ten days, many nodes have pandals due to which the traffic has to be controlled and some routes have to modify. Also at this time we can find the migrating population in huge amount and for which city gets prepared for. While doing all this there is a set of perment residence of the city whose daily activities should not be affected which city has to take care. At the same time one can see the city completely changed in to lights, decoration, prayers, and social active with a vibrating ambiance all over the city. The commercial local markets are highly active pre festival, there is a economic boom in the city at the same time, but as the festival comes to the end we can see many advertise impacts on environment too.

The most impact can be seen in the area where Dagdusheth Ganpati sets for the ten days. The area form Mandai to Shanevar wada is blocked at this time as well as the built fabric along these road changes, on normal days the road is full with traffic and the activity along it is mixed use, commercial on ground floor and residential on the above floors.

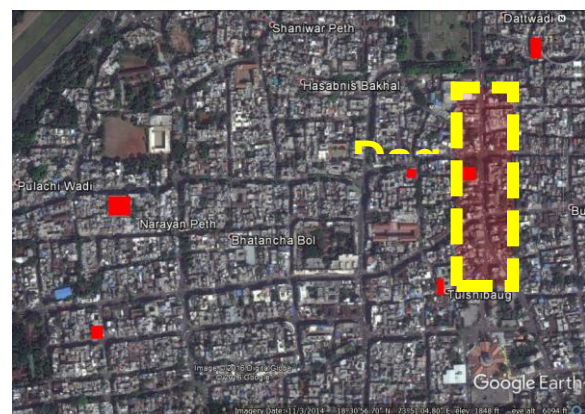


Figure 2

The same stretch pre-festival turns up into a market which has vendors like rangoli, decoration etc. on the inner streets there are some areas where the making or touch up to the ganesh idols are been seen. The idols are displayed and sell pre-festival. This festival attracts many tourists from nearby areas and foreign countries also. Festival contributes economically to the city. To local businesses, festivals can be considered as a market for services. This festivals with its opportunities for commercial stalls, booths, merchant tents, and activity areas, including the provision of music and artistic expression provide an excellent setting for the introduction of new kinds of services to customers. As a consequence, festivals include a variety of offers. However, the variety of offers tends to draw consumers with many different lifestyles and shifting preferences, which can, among other things, lead to problems of safety for festival participants.

At the time of the festival the street turns into pedestrian zone all the vehicular movements are restricted. The various types of stall like puja material, Food and beverage serving services, religious, Handicrafts, etc are set along the road and in the center there is a line of devotees which leads to the darshan of the Dagdusheth Ganpati. After standing in such long line a devotees can get darshan only of 10 – 20 sec, but still the place sees the enthuse of people. The residence along the stretch cannot use the vehicular access during this 10 day, and they except it happily.

ACTIVITIES DURING THE GANESH FESTIVAL:-

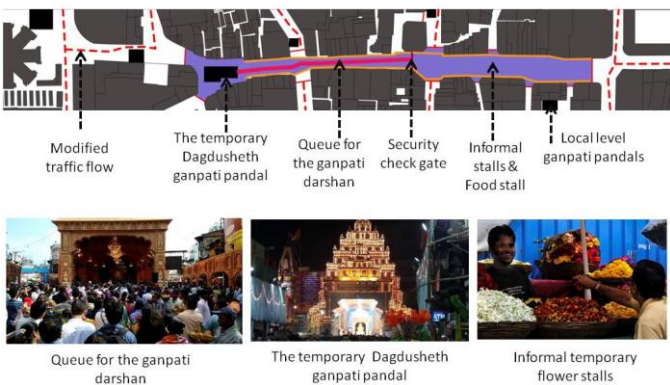


Figure 3

With the Dagdusheth Ganpati pandal there are many other pandals along the road in the area hampering the traffic flow of the area and create congestion along the road. This is due to our street are not design for such kind of events, so the consideration need to bdone while panning in such area or planning according keeping in mind about such events.

Many recreational services are provided during the festival time in the city. Pune Festival is one of the important programme organized by MTDC. During this festival time, the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation organizes the month-long Pune Festival which hosts classical dance and music recitals, a film and drama festival, automobile rallies and some traditional sports. In these programmes MTDC seeks to present the myriad facets of Maharashtra's rich heritage of the performing arts through a series of festivals held at important cultural centers. The years have added a mesmerizing allure to these events, now avidly awaited by lovers of Indian music, art and culture, who appreciate the artistry of India's leading exponents of classical music and

dance who come from all over the country to perform at the festivals.

During this period, the idols of Ganesh are worshipped by performing various religious rituals in the houses and the social pandals. On the day of the Anant Chaturdashi, public processions of the Ganesh idols of the social communities are conducted and at the end of the day the idols are immersed in rivers and public lakes and wells.

After these ten days, the day comes of ganesh visajarn, on the tenth day of the festival, on this day the procession of the ganesh idol is taken and then the idol is immersed in the water. This is one of the most important days which have a lot of implication on the city. The route of immersion is closed with prior notice to the citizens. The many other steps are taken to handle the event, like infrastructure, security, media coverage etc.

The day starts with the decoration of streets, every node is been decorated with different types of the rangoli pattern and design, the edges are also decorated which lead the path of the procession. This activity starts from morning 4:00am and completed by the 7:00am. There is institution, organizations and NGO's which help in this process. The awards are given for the best performance. The side are the nodes marked where rangolis are placed.

The processional path of the first five Ganpati:-



Figure 4

This activity is followed by the procession of the first five ganpati. The tradition is that no ganesh idol in the city are immersed before immersion of this first five ganpati.

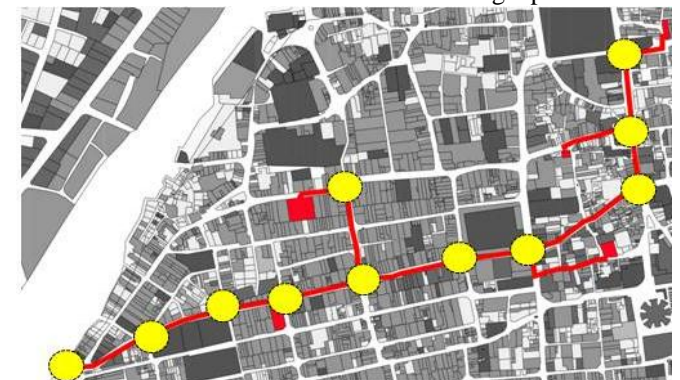


Figure 5

Pune: Immersion Routes

Important ghats where immersion is allowed by Pune Municipal Corporation are:

Ghats	
• Ananteshwar Temple	• Bopodi
• Pūlachwadi	• Aundh
• Deccan Causeway	• Baner
• Omkarneshwar Temple	• SM Joshi Bridge
• Garware College Causeway	• Dattawadi
• Panchaleshwar	• Rajaram Bridge
• Aashubhaja Devi Mandir	• Katraj Lake
• Sangam Bridge	• Alka Talkies
• Sand Garden	• Someshwarwadi
• Vitthal Temple	• Pashan
• Khandajbaba Chowk	• Warje
• Nagu Ghat	• Bharadigan
• Thosaraga	• Holkar Bridge
• Chima Udyan	• Sasarnagar
• Vidantwadi	• Unnatnagar
• Yerawada	

The following roads will remain closed to vehicular traffic from the given time until the end of the immersion procession and celebrations:

Road	Route	Time
Shivaji Road	Kakasaheb Gadgil statue to Jedha Chowk	7 am
Laxmi Road	Sant Kabir Chowk to Tilak Chowk	7 am
Badage Road	Sonya Maruti Chowk to Phadke Houd Chowk	9 am
Bajirao Road	Bajaj statue Chowk to Futka Baraj Chowk	2 pm
Kumthekar Road	Tilak Chowk to Chitale Corner	12 noon
Ganesh Road	Daruwala Bridge to Jijamata Chowk	10 am
Tilak Road	Jedhe Chowk to Alka Talkies	9 am
Shashtri Road	Senadatta Police Chowk to Alka Talkies	12 noon
JM Road	Bulgan dharva Auditorium to Khandoji Baba Chowk	4 pm
Karve Road	Nal Stop to Khandoji Baba Chowk	4 pm
FC Road	Ferguson College to Khandoji Baba Chowk	4 pm
Bhandarkar Road	PYC Gymkhana to Good Luck Chowk to Natraj Chowk	4 pm

Every ganesh pandal or group have their own dhol tasha patak, followed by the traditional instrument used during bhajans and the ganesh idol decorated on the ratah. This all activities are occupied on the road, and footpaths are left for the viewers to see this ceremony. People gather in huge number to witness the procession, from within the city and from outside too. The government has various plans to handle the crowd and complete the procession in a healthy way. At the end of the day the ganesh idols are immersed on the various ghats. But this immersion of the idols in the river lets to pollution and various other impact on environment. Considering this aspect of the environment, the Pune Municipal Corporation in 2016 year had take a decision of immersion of the idols in the artificial tanks created along the river. The awareness was also spread on eco friendly ganesh festival.

CONCLUSIONS

Everything is said, everything is exposed, everything acquires the force or manner of a sign. (Baudrillard, 1993)

The spectacle has entered our daily lives following the merger of the culture with the market, in which the consumer culture celebrated the commodity and its spectacle. These urban spectacle is held in the city, the city adapts and remodels itself to fulfill the need of the events. Various additions are made to city fabric.

Festivals have contributed in the development of cultural tourism it attracts culture tourists to local community events to promote cultural exchanges between tourists and resident. Tourism festivals have major effects on the local economy directly and indirectly that the spending by visitors on local goods and services by event-tourist has a direct economic impact on local businesses and also passes the benefit more widely across the economy and the community.

So at the end one can say that the festivals come and transform the society, makes it active socially. After the festival is over, society goes back to the schedule. But at the

same time one cannot deny on the fact that all this have a impact on every sector of society that is, socially, economically and environmental. And one should take care how the planning for the same can help to make this festivals a success one or can take one step ahead. There is also a need to understand that the streets are been used as the pressure cooker to celebrate such festivals on the streets in past and modern are not designed for the same. So the area should be demarcated to celebrate such city level events and the streets should also be designed considering these kinds of activities or events or festivals.

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