

**The Integration of Tangible and Intangible Cultural heritage values for the Sustainable development of the cultural capital of Kerala: Thrissur, India**

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**ABSTRACT**

The aim of this work is to analysis the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage of a historic urban core of Cultural Capital of Kerala. This investigation has also made it possible to recognize intangible cultural heritage, which was ignored for a long time for the future development of the city and also as heritage to be protected and safeguarded. This paper sets out to explain the interrelation between the intangible and tangible heritage of the space and the distribution of religious, social and cultural aspects in the spatial context within Thrissur, a South Indian temple city. The research has been fostered by questions: (1) How to understand and quantify the intangible heritage of traditional urban cores in Indian cities? (2) How the intangible and tangible heritage can be understood by the social aspects in terms of user preferences? (3)How the tangible heritage gets defined by the intangible ? The strong influence of various factors like religious, cultural, historic etc is analyzed to trace the development of architecture in Trichur. The analysis shows the integration of tangible and intangible heritage of the traditional urban core and the need for using this as a base for the sustainable development of the city for the user.

**Key words:** Culture, Intangible Heritage, Tangible Heritage

**1. Background**

In the Indian context, one finds that there is a lack of systematic studies to investigate the built environments with respect to the intangible heritage and the user preferences. This organically evolved parts of cities that are urban cores in the contemporary developing Indian cities, if analysed in terms of intangible cultural heritage along with tangible , will help to understand its spatial structure as a result of the culture specific user preferences in the Indian context.. This may help to evolve a humane approach to deal the emerging built environments in developing cities of India with objectivity. Only traditional urban core of Thrissur is considered for the study and not the complete cities, as the objective is to

understand the embedded human aspects in terms of user preferences about built heritage. If the complete cities are considered, the planned portions are also included and this would obscure the very purpose of the study

## 2. Introduction

Trichur highly acclaimed as the Cultural Capital of Kerala, God's own country well known for its temples, festivals and other religious events. The land has a singular, diversified physical configuration. The town is situated on a rising ground with Vadakkunathan Temple complex at its summit. Trichur, the granary of agrarian resources attracted many traders from different places and thus the area evolved as a commercial centre. That further led to the development of several settlements in and around Trichur. The myth of *Parasurama* doing the penance to bring *Shiva* to Kerala is taken as symbolic of the migration of Brahmins cult from the north region. Historically, this is dated to first century A.D. However this was a region of early proto Dravidian culture. The architectural vestiges of the co-existence of different communities covering a time span of about 5000 years can be seen in Trichur. The area is found to be the cradle of rich heritage, culture and history. The formation of the city urban core has a great influence of *vaastuvidya* principles in its planning and zoning. The view points are the development layers of the City, the cultural and religious nodes, the paths and its formations over the years, its close relation to the culture and religion, its transformation till date without changing its cultural significance, the built forms and urban blocks which goes hand in hand with culture and religion.



Fig. 1:Location map

Trichur City has a radial pattern with the central temple and streets radiating from it. *Trichur Pooram* which has found place in the list of national festivals and world tourism calendar plays the greater role in modeling the pattern of the urban core. TRICHUR POORAM The most important cultural event of Kerala, the main procession path of which takes place in the Swaraj round. The round has got a densely lined stretch of old buildings which forms the hard space of the urban block. Pooram is the important event

that retains the urban core with its ancient traditional character in its planning as well as architecture. As a reflection of the cultural significant of Trichur majority of the buildings are with balcony so as to participate in the cultural events. Even now the buildings tend to keep the same grammar in its architecture.

Unlike other cities and towns of Kerala where urban artifacts deteriorate and is ultimately destroyed through attack by natural and human agents ,Trichur town is distinctively different from the point of view of rich cultural values it pocess.The traditional design sensibility cannot be viewed in other towns in Kerala as much of it has been lost in the process of urbanization. But in Trichur it is in the midst of urban chaos that we can find so much that we have managed to unconsciously retain: all credits to the cultural background of the town

The study is divided based on the festivals ,the intangible heritage, the built heritage and socio cultural conditions. The aim of the study is to understand and quantify the intangible heritage and justify its existence through the built environments of urban cores in Thrissur. By studying the central urban cores, within the city, that have been influenced by the presence of religion, culture, trade in varying degrees, the study aims to highlight the effect of culture on the organisation of space within the city and thus to provide an understanding of the indigenous pattern of settlements in Thrissur

### 3.Intangible Cultural Heritage of Thrissur

The main cultural heritage features found in Thrissur and their brief description is listed below

1	THRISSUR POORAM	Celebrated every year, in the month of Medam. Thrissur town host the 36 hours long pooram. Main features of the pooram festival are <i>Ezhunnellippuprogramme</i> , <i>Elanjitharamelam</i> , <i>Madathilvaravu</i> , <i>Kudamattom</i> , spectacular fireworks.etc.
2	MACHATT MAMANKAM	A five-day festival celebrated at the MachattuThiruvani kavu temple. The main procession is on the concluding day in which richly decorated <i>kuthirakolams</i> are brought to the temple by the Devotees as offerings
3	KOODALMANIKYAM ULSAVAM	The Annual Festival of the Temple held for 11 days in April-May .it starts one day after the famous ThrissurPooram
4	UTHRALIKKAVU POORAM	The annual festival at the SreeRuthiraMahakalikavu Temple at Vadakkancherry in Thrissur. It is an eight-day celebration

5	OLLUR PALLI PERUNNAL	The most important festival of Ollur church falling on October 23 & 24 of each year. The festival was started in 1837
6	PULIKALI	A colorful recreational art form which liberally makes use of forms and symbols of nature that finds expression in its bright, bold body painting and high-energy dance movements. A quirky procession of vibrantly painted men in the guise of tigers and panthers romp the Swaraj Road
7	AARATTUPUZHA POORAM	The Pooram is known as Devamela as it is a conglomeration of gods, given its massive attendance of deities from neighborhood shrines. deities of various temples from different parts of Thrissur District attend the Pooram and is considered as the oldest temple festival.
8	KODUNGALLUR BHARANI FESTIVAL	The Bharani festival at the Kodungallur Bhagavati temple is one of the grandest in Kerala. It normally falls between the months of March and April. Kozhikkallumoodal, Kavutheendal, Chandanapoti Charthal. etc. are the important rituals carried out.
9	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE FESTIVAL	The festivities last for ten days, celebrated in the month of kumbha (Feb-Mar). Religiously, it is the restoration of divine Chaithanya
10	PUTHENPALLI PERUNNAL	The most important festival of Puthan Palli is falling on November last Sunday of each year. The festival was started in 1926
11	BUON NATALE	Buon Natale', a Christmas procession by the Thrissur Archdiocese of the Syro-Malabar Church, entered the Guinness World Records for having the largest number of people dressed up as Santa Claus (Father Christmas).

Table 1: Main Intangible cultural heritage of Thrissur

#### 4. Tangible Cultural Heritage of Thrissur

The main tangible heritage found in Thrissur and their brief description is listed below

1	VADAKKUMNATHAN TEMPLE	One of the oldest temples in the state. Built in Kerala style architecture. It is one of the 14 sites chosen by archaeological survey of India and Unesco named it as the world heritage site
2	THRIPRAYAR TEMPLE	The deity is Sree Rama with four arms bearing a mace, a disc, a bow and a garland. Temple is situated on the banks of the river Theevra.

3	KOODALMANIKYAM TEMPLE	Situated in irinjalakuda and the only temple in india that is dedicated to bharata, second brother of rama.one of the four temples in Kerala that form a set called `nalambalam`
4	ARATTUPOZHA TEMPLE	Known for its annual pooram during march/april .uniqueness in the ceremonial procession where deities of 41 temples are carried to this place.
5	KODUNGALLUR TEMPLE	The main deity is bhadrakali and the idol of the deity is unique as it has eight hands with various attributes one is holding the head of an asura. One with anklet, one with bell and so on..
6	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE	The festivities lasts for ten days, celebrated in the month of kumba( feb-mar). Religiously, it is the restoration of divine Chaithanya
7	ST. THOMAS CHURCH, PALAYUR	It is believed to be the oldest church built in india by St. Thomas in ad 52. The main highlight of the church is the thaliyakulam, a pond where St. Thomas baptized the local people.
8	BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF DOLOURES	Third tallest church in Asia. Famous for its gothic style architecture. It has 3 towers - front towrs (146 ft.) &bible tower (260 ft. )tall.
9	MART MARIAM BIG CHURCH	The first Christian church in Thrissur town, popularly known as valiya palli was established in 1814. It serves as church of the Chaldean Syrians.
10	LOURDE CATHEDRAL	The unique church has an underground shrine and is the third biggest church in Thrissur. The church was established in 1885 and was elevated to cathedral in 1891
11	ST. MARY'S FORANE CHURCH, KORATTY	One of the oldest churches established in 1381
12	ST. ANTONY'S FORANE CHURCH OLLUR	The church is constructed on a hill-top which is the highest location in the area. The church is surrounded by a huge protective compound wall called Elephant Wall (AanaMathil).
13	CHERAMAN JUMA MASJID	Built in 629 ad & is the first mosque in India. It resembles a Hindu temple in appearance.
14	BRAHMASWOM MADOM	Centre of Vedic studies situated on the west side of swaraj round. Established by four disciples of adi shankaracharya. The school practices the tradition of Vedic chanting.

Table 2: Tangible Built Heritage of Thrissur

### 5.Samples and procedures

To get the information about what the perceived value of the Local People in Thrissur regarding the Tangible and intangible Heritage of Thrissur. A Questionnaire survey was conducted. Sample size was 100. The Likert scale was used in this study to get the perceived value which ask people to indicate on a survey how much they agree or disagree, approve or disapprove, believe to be true or false. Likert scales were developed in 1932 as the familiar 5 point bipolar response format. When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a series of statements. A likert scale consists of 5 categories:5-very important,4-important,3-neutral,2-unimportant,1-very unimportant . Thus, the range captures the intensity of their feelings for a given item. Likert scaling assumes that distances on each item are equal. Importantly, "All items are assumed to be replications of each other or in other words items are considered to be parallel instruments" In this analysis the score 4-5 was kept as important and 1-2 was kept as unimportant.

	CULTURAL FEATURES	Gender	Number of responses		
			Not important	Neutral	important
1	THRISSUR POORAM	M	1	1	59
		F	3		36
2	MACHATT MAMANKAM	M			61
		F			39
3	KODALMANIKYAM ULSAVAM	M			61
		F			39
4	UTHRALIKKAVU POORAM	M		1	60
		F			39
5	OLLUR PALLI PERUNNAL	M			61
		F			39
6	PULIKALI	M	7	10	37
		F	14	1	31
7	AARATTUPUZHA POORAM	M	11		50
		F	5		34
8	KODUNGALLUR BHARANI FESTIVAL	M			61

		F			39
9	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE FESTIVAL	M	0		38
		F	1		61
10	PUTHENPALLI PERUNNAL	M			39
		F			61
11	BON NATALE	M	1	10	37
		F	3	1	48

Table 3: Perceived value of the local residents regarding the cultural Heritage according to gender based on 100 responses( 61 males ,39 females) during Jan2013 –Dec 2013(M=male,F=female)

	TANGIBLE FEATURES	Gender	Number of responses		
			Not important	Neutral	important
1	VADAKKUMNATHAN TEMPLE	M			61
		F			39
2	THRIPRAYAR TEMPLE	M	6	2	53
		F	2	1	36
3	KODALMANIKYAM TEMPLE	M			61
		F	1		38
4	ARATTUPUZHA TEMPLE	M		1	61
		F			38
5	KODUNGALLUR TEMPLE	M			61
		F			39
6	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE	M	1		60
		F		1	38
7	ST. THOMAS CHURCH, PALAYUR	M	2	4	55

		F			39
8	BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF DOLOURES	M			61
		F			39
9	MART MARIAM BIG CHURCH	M	0		61
		F	1		38
10	LOURDE CATHEDRAL	M			39
		F			61
11	ST. MARY'S FORANE CHURCH, KORATTY	M	1		60
		F		1	38
12	ST. ANTONY'S FORANE CHURCH OLLUR	M	1	2	58
		F	0	1	38
13	CHERAMAN JUMA MASJID	M	1		60
		F	3	1	35
14	BRAHMASWOM MADOM	M	1		60
		F		1	38

Table 4: Perceived value of the local residents regarding the built Heritage according to gender based on 100 responses( 61 males ,39 females) during Jan2013 –Dec 2013(M=male=female)

#### 6. How the Intangible and tangible cultural heritage are valuable to the local community of Thrissur ;Quantitative analysis

##### The Intangible cultural Heritage value(Likert scale)

	INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
1	THRISSUR POORAM	4.93	0.256
2	MACHATT MAMANKAM	4.98	0.507
3	KOODALMANIKYAM ULSAVAM	4.86	0.349



4	UTHRALIKKAVU POORAM	4.84	0.365
5	OLLUR PALLI PERUNNAL	4.29	1.008
6	PULIKALI	3.70	1.481
7	AARATTUPUZHA POORAM	3.28	1.67
8	KODUNGALLUR BHARANI FESTIVAL	4.56	0.755
9	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE FESTIVAL	4.88	0.327
10	PUTHENPALLI PERUNNAL	4.50	0.368
11	BUON NATALE	3.83	1.484

Table 5: Average value perception of Intangible cultural heritage

The local residence placed great importance on features related to religion, festivals including activities related to their religion and culture Pulikali, Aarattupuzha pooram, Buon natale were ranked relatively low this may be due to the influence of modernization. Thrissur Pooram however seems to be considered as most important than the rest of the Festivals

#### The Tangible Built Heritage value(Likert scale)

	TANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE	MEAN	STANDARD .DEVIATION
1	VADAKKUMNATHAN TEMPLE	4.94	0.278
2	THRIPRAYAR TEMPLE	3.83	1.13
3	KOODALMANIKYAM TEMPLE	4.84	0.368
4	ARATTUPUZHA TEMPLE	4.8	0.419
5	KODUNGALLUR TEMPLE	4.88	0.398
6	GURUVAYUR TEMPLE	4.03	0.971
7	ST. THOMAS CHURCH, PALAYUR	4.50	0.755

8	BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF DOLOURES	4.91	0.316
9	MART MARIAM BIG CHURCH	4.64	0.563
10	LOURDE CATHEDRAL	4.84	0.368
11	ST. MARY'S FORANE CHURCH, KORATTY	4.13	0.843
12	St. Antony's Forane Church OLLUR	3.99	1.02
13	CHERAMAN JUMA MASJID	3.73	1.36
14	BRAHMASWOM MADOM	4.12	.854

Table 6: Average value perception of Tangible cultural heritage

The local residence placed great importance on almost all the tangible built heritage with almost the same importance

### 7. Concluding remarks

The research has tried to establish the in depth relationship between the cultural values and the built environments of traditional urban cores of cultural capital of Kerala. From this research, an effort is made to make explicit the inevitable definition of the tangible heritage by the intangibles in traditional Indian built environments, so as to evolve a humane approach towards spatial design of emerging built environments. Thus, for a sustainable development, integration of tangible and intangible heritage in traditional urban cores, in terms of their spatial configurations and user preferences are inevitable. It is not necessary to emulate the past but to contribute positively to the evolution of contemporary Indian built environments; one can explore the configuration understanding the reasons behind it and integrate the cultural human aspects for the future sustainability of the cities. Thus, this approach which is based on understanding and integrating the cultural preferences to study/ conserve/ redevelop existing built environments or design totally new built environments in case of developing cities of India; can help to maintain them as humane and sustainable as the traditional built environments were.

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