

Spectacles of the City: An Analysis of the Effects of Festivals in the Formation of New Urban Identities

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Abstract : In the post-industrial scenario, cities in India have become critical sites of negotiation and are expected to become some of the largest urban agglomeration of the twenty-first century. This has created a pluralist identity resulting in a new multifarious urbanism pervading throughout the entire urban landscape. There is an ambiguity regarding the character of present day Indian cities with new meanings emerging and no methodical study to understand them. More than an abstract diagram, the present day cities can be looked at as an ensemble of meanings. One of the ways in which the meaning is reflected is through events. Festivals such as Diwali, Dussera, Durga Puja, Ganesh Chaturthi, etc have transpired as the phenomenon of the city, and their presence in the everyday landscape weaves itself through the urban fabric dominating the popular visual culture of Indian cities. Festivals influence people's idea of a city. Ritual, festival, celebrations are important in shaping of the urban environment and in their influence on the intangible aspect of the urban setting. These festivals pertaining to the city in motion have emerged as the symbolic image of the emerging urban Indian condition giving birth to new urban identities. The study undertaken to understand the present context of temporality of Indian cities is important in analyzing the process of its formation and transformation. This study aims to review the evolution of new dimensions of urbanism in India as well as its implication on the identity of cities.

Keywords : urban identities, urban design, festivals, rituals, celebrations, inter-disciplinary study

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