

# The Tangible and Intangible Heritage of the Walled Cities of Amritsar and Lahore: Need for an Integrated Conservation Approach

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The city of Amritsar was founded by the 4th Guru of the Sikhs in 1577. Maharaja Ranjit Singh built the wall around the city as a defence measure against the growing power of the British who had reached the Jamuna River in their drive to conquer the remaining regions of the sub-continent. The city flourished and developed during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who gave it his special attention. The period has rightly been called the golden period in terms of its tangible and intangible heritage.

Similarly Lahore, cultural heart of Pakistan, is also a walled city having various layers of a tangible and intangible heritage. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, as the ruler of the Punjab with Lahore as the capital, also made an important contribution to the city of Lahore. The city still has gates (some rebuilt by the British) of the wall built around it during the period of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. The wall itself was demolished by the British when they annexed the Punjab and exiled the then Maharaja Dalip Singh, a son of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh.

The two cities exhibit similar values, life styles and way of life in their land use, street pattern and *mohalas*. The attitude of the people as well as the government in both cities also has many similarities. The unprecedented demographic and spatial growth accompanied by the ever-increasing strains on civic services has led to a loss of identity among residents of the two cities. 'Modern' planning principles and techniques based on western models have been used blindly without keeping in mind the unique culture, climate and heritage of the place. This has badly affected the traditional life styles of the residents of the old historic walled cities

Each generation places a different interpretation on the past and derives new inspiration from it. It can be looked upon as a capital that has been accumulated over centuries, and the destruction of any part of it leaves us poorer. There is therefore an obligation to pass on what is valuable in it to the future.

“Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments

of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity" (Venice Charter, 1964).

The basic function of any conservation programme is to identify and to retain those essential features contributing to the character of an area and to ensure that any new development or re-development is in sympathy with and contributes to the character of that area.

This paper attempts to identify and analyse the tangible and intangible heritage in the walled cities of Amritsar and Lahore. It will also highlight the similarities in terms of rich physical, social and cultural features in both these important walled cities, now located in different countries.

A heuristic technique has been adopted. Heuristic enquiry relies on the researchers' personal experiences, reflections and insights in order to understand the essence of the phenomena as it is experienced by the researcher and by others who also experience it intensely. This paper has been divided into three parts:

1. Heritage: Tangible and Intangible;
2. Walled Cities: Amritsar and Lahore;
3. Integrated Conservation Approach.

### **Heritage: Tangible and Intangible**

Heritage is a very broad term. It encompasses varied aspects. It is often defined as 'What We Value' or 'What We Wish' to pass on to future generations. Heritage resources provide living communities with a sense of continuity with previous generations. They are important to cultural identity as well as to the conservation of the cultural diversity and creativity of humanity (HSRC 2004:7). The dictionary meaning of Heritage as per Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus is "the evidence of the past such as historical sites and the unspoiled natural environment, considered as the inheritance of present day society and anything that has been transmitted from the past or handed down by tradition" (p. 953). Heritage is a broad concept and includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environment as well as biodiversity,

collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. It includes built and natural heritage in the form of buildings, areas and historic settlements on the one hand and historic landscape and scenic sites on the other hand. In addition, it incorporates language, literature, folk songs, dresses, articles, way of life, values, and so on. More specifically it can be divided into two categories: Tangible and Intangible. (International Cultural Tourism Charter 1999).

## Tangible Heritage

Tangible heritage is heritage which can be touched. In other words capable of being touched or felt or having a physical existence (Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus 2000: 1220). Thus, it includes buildings, areas, natural components and all the artifacts. The Tangible heritage includes historic buildings of all periods, their setting in the historic precincts of cities and their relationship to the natural environment. It also includes culturally significant modern buildings and towns (Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage & Sites in India 2004).

## Intangible Heritage

Intangible heritage is the heritage which can not be touched. "The Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) or living heritage is the mainspring of our cultural diversity and its maintenance a guarantee for continuing creativity" (UNESCO-CSICH 2003). It gets importance in the present day society where globalisation is being feared as a cultural bulldozer. It has changed the value system, life style, eating habits, dress patterns and also affected the Tangible components of Heritage. Realizing the importance of Intangible heritage, UNESCO in its Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003 states that ICH is manifested among others in the following:

- a) Oral traditions and expressions including language as a vehicle of the Intangible cultural heritage;
- b) Performing arts (such as traditional music, dance and theatre);
- c) Social practices, rituals and festive events;
- d) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe;

e) Traditional craftsmen.

Thus the convention clearly stresses that Intangible heritage includes practices, representations, expressions, as well as the knowledge and skills that communities, groups and in some cases individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. The depository of this heritage is the human mind, the human body being the main instrument for its enactment or literal embodiment. The knowledge and skills are often shared within a community and manifestations of Intangible Cultural Heritage are often performed collectively.

### Historic Walled Cities: Amritsar and Lahore

The cities of Amritsar and Lahore are important urban settlements having many similarities due to their close geographical location, same cultural similarities of the people residing there the same language, way of life, life style and above all the same principles and techniques of construction and medieval planning.

Historic towns are intimate and human in scale, often rich in diverse activities, often extremely convenient for shopping and entertainment. There are key buildings around which the city arranges itself, a temple, a gurdwara, a mosque or a palace. For the pedestrian there are many subtle qualities in winding streets, narrow lanes and these urban spaces all combine to give visual drama by the sensations of compression, expansion, surprise and a fine architectural set piece. Important landmarks give reassuring reference points in the city. The

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F. 1

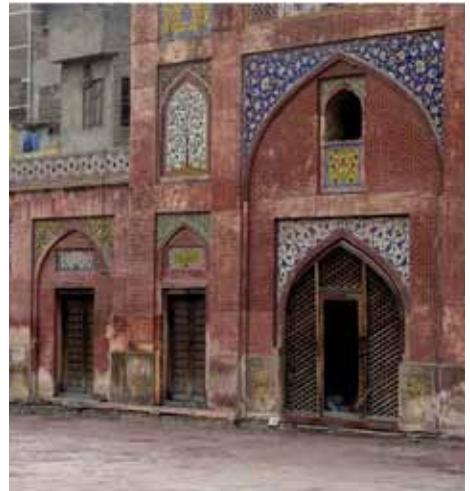
Harmandir Sahib  
Complex




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F. 2

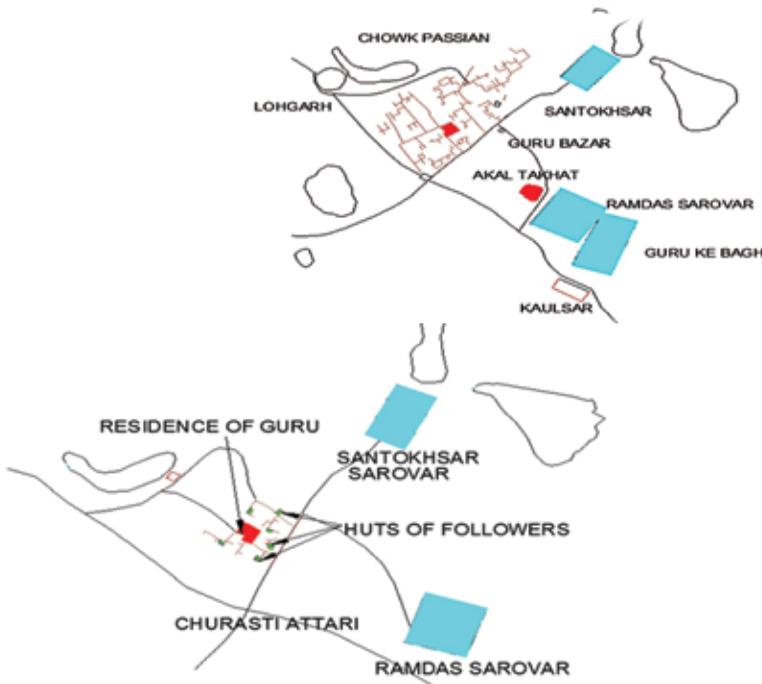
An inside view of  
Wazir Khan Mosque



history of a place gives a rich feeling of belonging, continuity and identity. They depict typical patterns which have influence on the life styles, values and way of life of the residents.

Amritsar known as the city of the Golden Temple, symbolizes the spiritual heritage of the Punjabis in general, and *Sikhs* in particular, is located in the North West part of India. The landmark around which the city developed is Sri Harmandir Sahib, the Sanctum-sanctorum. To supervise its construction, a place named *Guru Ke Mahal* came into existence which is also the birth place of Guru Teg Bahadur. *Chowk Passian* became the first residential area. *Guru Ka Bagh* became the main congregational area. Thus for the development of the city Guru Ramdas Ji purchased 500 bigas of land (Kahn Singh Nabha Mahan Kosh, 1930:57). The sixth Guru Hargobind Singh introduced the concept of *Miri Piri* and this way *Akal Takhat Sahib* came into existence. The *Sarovars* of *Sri Harmandir Sahib*, *Bibeksar & Santokhsar* also served as open spaces for the city in addition to the spiritual aspect. *Ramdas Sarover* was another landmark where the editing of *Guru Granth Sahib* was completed by Guru Arjan Sahib.

The approach of Gurus was comprehensive as they not only created spiritual centers but also invited people of various backgrounds



F. 3

Amritsar City:  
Development of  
Localities in Sikh  
Guru's Period

irrespective of caste and creed to start business. The 52 *Kittae* (trades) and 32 *Hattian* (Shops) were the first to come. They were people from various trades. Even today the city has various bazaars of specialized items. The street pattern favors the pedestrian, where the relationship of spaces satisfies the social and climatic needs and provides visual satisfaction. The traditional urban pattern has a medieval character with its overall organic urban pattern, well scaled narrow streets, number of public buildings and irregularly shaped public spaces at the intersection of streets and/or in the front of buildings. The Tangible heritage which has transformed into Intangible heritage in terms of values and life styles of the residents, needs documentation.

While looking at the Walled City of Lahore, there are many similarities in terms of physical and cultural parameters. The Walled City of Lahore is the product of the cultural influences of at least four major empires in the sub-continent of India: Sultanat period, the Moghul Empire, the British empire and the modern nation state of Pakistan. The earliest credible record of the city dates its establishment to around 1050 AD, and shows that its existence is due to placement along the major trade routes through Central Asia and the Indian sub-continent. The city was regularly marred by invasion, pillage, and destruction. It was sacked and then settled by the Moghul Emperor Babur in 1525. Sixty years later it became the capital of the Moghul Empire under Akbar and in 1605 the fort and city walls were expanded to the present day dimensions. From the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century until British colonial times, there was a fairly lawless period in which most of the Moghul palaces (*havelis*) were razed, marking a decrease in social discipline towards the built environment that has continued unabated till today. Much of the walled fortification of the city was destroyed following the British annexation of the region in 1849 (Kron). The city's importance can be judged from various popular phrases like *Jinne Lahore nhin dekhia oh jammia he nahi.....jinne vekhia nhin Lahore vekhe Kalanor....*It was a passion with everybody to see Lahore. Even when the great city of Ispahan was being built and embellished three centuries ago by the Safavis, Lahore was considered its competitor in beauty and elegance. There was a common saying: 'Ispahan is half the world, provided Lahore is not there.' (Muhammad Saeed, 1989:5) The Mosque of Wazir Khan is a good example of a marvelous piece of architecture and is a landmark in the Walled City of Lahore. Mr. J.L. Kipling, the then Principal of the Mayo School of Arts remarked in 1890, "This beautiful building is in itself a school of design; but year by year less attention seems to be paid to its maintenance, and the painted work is in a dilapidated state of neglect". (M. Baqir, 1952:352)

The Walled City of Amritsar further developed during the period of Sikh Misls and Maharaja Ranjit Singh's period (1765 AD-1849 AD) and is considered to be the golden period. The various developments that took place during this period include *Katras* (residential neighborhoods such as *Katra Dulo*, *Katra Ahluwalia* and so on), forts (such as *Ram Rauni*, *Ahluwalia*, *Loh Garh*, *Gobind Garh* and so on), palaces (such as Summer Palace of Maharaja Ranjit Singh), gardens (such as *Bagh Akalian*, *Sakatri Bagh*, *Gol Bagh*, *Ram Bagh*, *Bagh Ralia Ram*, *Bagh Ramanand*; Amritsar was known as a garden city), *Sarovars* (such as *Bibeksar*, *Ramdas*, *Santoksar*, *Sri Harmandir Sahib*), *Havelis* (houses with courtyards), Wall, Gates (12 gates, only one i.e. *Ram Bagh* gate is left of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's period). In addition, there are *Bungas* (rest houses, only *Ramgarhia Bunga* is left), *Akharas* (traditional centres of learning) which show the skills of craftsmen through decorative elements, carvings, murals, arches - traditional building materials such as typical brick (*Nanakshahi*- local term) with varying sizes, lime and *surkhi* (red powder) mortar, its scale, size, colour, texture, the urban pattern defined by streets and surprising open spaces (character that is, heritage zone or conservation area), values and ways of life, traditions and customs.

Except *Ramgarhia Bunga*, all have been demolished. Earlier the *Ramgarhia Bunga* had been restored without the consultation of conservation professionals due to which its originality has been destroyed. Now again, it is being restored by professionals to bring back its original glory. The same is the fate of *Akharas* as out of twelve *Akharas*, only three *Akharas* namely, *Chitta Akhara*, *Sangal Wala Akhara* and *Akhara Bala Nand* are surviving. The fading frescoes of *Akhara Bala Nand* are the proof that they were traditional centers of learning.

The Walled City of Amritsar still has typical street patterns and the street is performing interesting Tangible and Intangible aspects. It shows unity in design or streetscape which enhances social interaction. The width of streets varies from 4 feet to 20 feet. The balconies are the important elements which help in enhancing social interaction even from the upper floors. People sit in the streets in the evening and share their experiences and problems. Due to the absence of proper parks and open spaces near the residential areas, the street is also used as a play place for the children of the area. Due to the intimacy generated by dead-end streets, it provides social security. Any stranger can be easily identified. It also avoids through traffic. The streets are an important component of *Mohallas* and surprising open spaces which depict values and life styles, unique elements of tangible and intangible

heritage. A *Mohalla* is a typical small residential area in many cases consisting of people with the same occupation and caste. Medieval cities had different residential quarters for people following various professions. This was done in a subtle way to achieve cohesiveness. (Varsha Punhani: *Historic Cities Now and Then*). This is another reason for intimacy. It is a pattern of space which leads to a life style and way of life having values. These can be termed as socio-cultural values. Social values also include the “place attachment” as part of the heritage value. Place attachment refers to the social cohesion, community identity or other feelings of affiliation that social groups derive from the specific heritage and environment characteristics of their home territory. (Randall Masson:12)

Even in the Walled City of Lahore the concept of *Katra*, *Mohalla* and *Kucha* exists and depicts the Intangible heritage. The names of Mohallas have similarity with Mohallas of Amritsar. Streets are named after the profession or occupation and the people have more intimate social relations. In case of Amritsar, the preliminary findings of the study of four areas namely Cheel Mandi area, Chowk Passian, Katra Hakima area and Katra Garbha area have depicted that although there is a problem of hygiene, garbage dumping and choked drains, the people don't want to shift from the walled part of the city, the reason given is social cohesiveness, and neighborly relations. Even the bazaars in both the walled cities have the same character and names such as bazaar Hakeeman, bazaar Kaseran and many others.

Both the cities had walls and gates, (almost in a neglected state). In case of Amritsar, the wall is completely different. A massive double

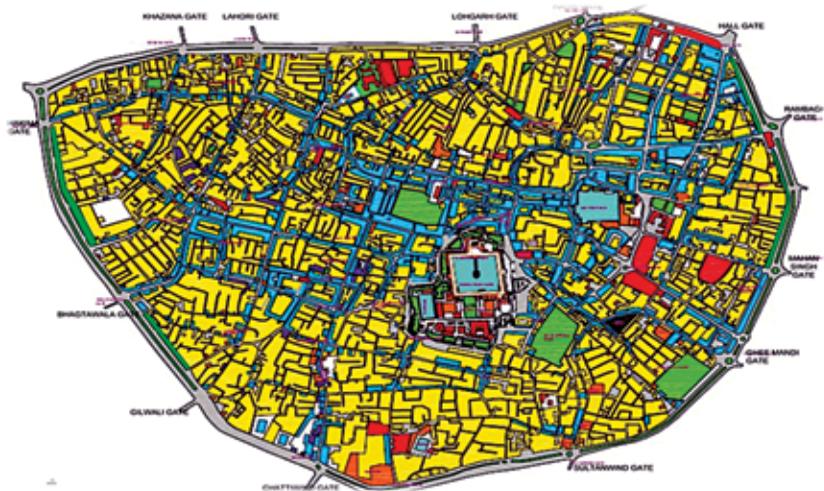
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F. 4

Mixed land use:  
Walled City of  
Amritsar



wall of unbaked bricks, with a double moat, had been constructed by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in 1825. According to Ahmad Shah, the fortification was twenty five yards broad and seven yards high.

The circumference of the Walled City was five miles. (Anand Gauba, nd:1) There were twelve strong gates of the city, some of them surrounded by defenses, with two or three brass guns. The Lahori Darwaza served as the main entrance on the road from Lahore. Moving in anti-clockwise direction, one came upon the other gates of the city: Khazana, Hakiman, Rangar Nanglia, Gilwali, Ramgarhia, Doburji, Ahluwalia, Deorhi Kalan, Rambagh, Deorhi Shahzada and Lohgarh. (Anand Gauba, nd:2) All the gates of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's period have vanished, only Ram Bagh gate has been restored recently irrespective of encroachments on and around it. Immediately after taking over of the Punjab, the British administrators took special interest in demolishing the old wall. (Anand Gauba, nd:32) But the case is not as bad in Lahore because some portions of the wall and some gates have been restored with traditional building materials and craft skills.

The interesting point is that Lahore has thirteen gates (in local language called darwazah), namely: Dilli, Akbari, Mochi, Shah Alami, Lohari, Bhatti, Taxali, Roshnai, Sheranwala, Mori, Kashmiri, Masti and Yakki.

The size of Amritsar in terms of area is 340 hectares (840 acres) and that of Lahore is 256 hectares (633 acres) with a population of 200,000. The city walls were destroyed shortly after the British annexed the Punjab in 1849 and were replaced with gardens, some of which exist today. The Circular Road links the old city to the urban network. Access to the Walled City is still gained through the 13 ancient gates, or their replacements. The convoluted and picturesque streets of the inner city remain almost intact but the rapid demolition and frequently illegal re-building, which is taking place throughout the city, is causing the historic fabric to be eroded and replaced by inferior constructions. The few old houses one can still see in the city are usually two or three storeys high, with brick façades, flat roofs and richly carved wooden balconies and overhanging windows. (Wikipedia, Walled City of Lahore)

It has been observed that in terms of area, the size of the Walled City and number of gates mentioned varies in different sources.

The street pattern is labyrinthine in the case of Lahore as well as Amritsar. Observing minutely, in the case of Amritsar, in the different *katras*, one can observe the irregular, linear, rectangular and radial and their combinations in the street patterns. In the case of Lahore the streets are narrow and winding, forming a perfect labyrinth of quaint and picturesque scenes. The houses are lofty, many of them richly decorated. The bazaars are densely crowded, very dusty and evil smelling, but full of interest, like every Punjab bazaar. (M. Baqir, 1952:344)

But broadly, the street patterns of both these cities highlight the lifestyles of the resident in addition to the traditional principles and techniques of planning. Another major similarity is the mixed land use. Intricate minglings of different uses in cities are not a form of chaos. On the contrary, they represent a complex and highly developed form of order. (Jacobs, 1961)

It is this mixed land use and street pattern which results in the typical life styles of the residents. The mixed land use city structure conformed to the living style of the inhabitants and the prevailing climatic conditions. The mixed land use provided easy accessibility between residential and work areas. (Varsha Punhani: *Historic Cities Now and Then*) Geddes shared the belief with John Ruskin that social processes and spatial form are related. Therefore by changing spatial form it was possible to change the social structure as well.

To date, proper documentation of the Tangible and Intangible heritage has not yet been done in both these important historic cities. Due to the change of land use and increasing traffic, many historic buildings have been demolished either for the construction of commercial markets or multistoreyed parking lots. No doubt, instruments that specifically aim to safeguard Intangible heritage have been developed in the context of growing numbers of national and international instruments affirming the importance of cultural life for the well being and development of humanity. The World Heritage Committee is a UNESCO body that manages the world heritage convention (WHC) designed to safeguard heritage places of international significance. With respect to Intangible heritage, perhaps the most significance shift in the guidelines happened in 1992 when changes permitted the listing of places directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas or with beliefs with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.

Various countries have already taken steps for safeguarding Intangible heritage. In fact the entire Tangible heritage has Intangible values associated with it. Considering the deep seated inter-dependence between the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Tangible, Cultural and Natural Heritage, UNESCO held a Convention for The Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Paris on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2003 and worked out the guidelines which can be helpful for any country.

The next period covers the years from 1849 to 1947 when the cities were ruled by the British. They were not greatly interested in the heritage of the city. This is evident from Lord Macaulay's address to the British Parliament on 2nd February, 1835, "I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief, such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such calibre, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self-esteem; their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation".

This indicates the intention of the Britishers. Their interventions in the urban landscape of the city, its arts and architecture and the living patterns of the city left deep impressions. The architecture of their buildings in Lahore has a variety of expressions, ranging from European classical importations, to the Indo-Saracenic as understood by the British architects-engineers. (Vandal's, 2006: 53) Not only this, the British adopted many ways to inculcate their culture amongst the people of Lahore. In 1858, the Punjab Government submitted a proposal to the Supreme Government to establish a University at Lahore, the general object of which was to encourage the diffusion of Western literature, as far as possible, through the medium of the vernacular, but where it was not possible, through the medium of English. (M. Baqir, 1952:225). Even in Amritsar many interventions were made in the Tangible heritage which ultimately affected the Intangible heritage. The best example is that of historic Rambagh where the layout was altered and at the same time many incongruous additions were made in Gobind Garh Fort, thereby destroying its originality. In addition, a major portion of the wall and gates of the city were demolished and the moat was filled. To quote Prof. P. C. Khanna in his paper 'The Ram Bagh – the splendour it was', "It is rather unfortunate that the well knit place of civic design created by the Maharaja, like his dynasty, was soon destroyed after his

death, through the vandalism of petty bureaucracy and unimaginative military engineers and surveyors of the British. To begin with it was renamed, after the East India Company, and called Company Bagh. They tried to superimpose their own design on Ram Bagh. The garden at present is thus a hotch potch of formal and informal styles”.

During this period, the physical growth started outside the Walled City of Amritsar . This shows the concept of detached housing following modern principles and techniques of planning without the blend of local traditional life styles and values. The same is true of Lahore. The coming of British was a break with the past. The new rulers were different in dress, language, behaviour and custom; they had a tradition and history of their own; their religious and cultural roots, their literature, music, art, indeed their total way of life was different. The changing living styles led to changed built environment as expressed in the design of houses and shopping methods. New urban patterns in street layout, providing paved roads and piped water supply, were adopted. (Vandal's, 2006: 56)

The next period that is 1947-2011 is the worst period for both the cities of Amritsar and Lahore. Both were very badly affected by the Partition of the country in 1947. In India the city was given due importance and a special Act that is the Punjab Development of Damaged Areas Act 1951 was enacted at a time when the main thinking of the government was to plan and develop a new capital city-Chandigarh. It is estimated by the Town and Country Planning Organisation, the apex body of the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India, that due to the riots of 1947, about 20% to 30% of the areas in the Walled City were burnt. The city of Lahore also faced the same tragedy. Lahore became a city of murders and fires. Out of the 82,000 houses in the Lahore corporation area 6,000 houses were burnt down during these disturbances. (M. Baqir, 1952: 238) Taking into account the above situation an ordinance called the Punjab Damaged Areas Ordinance 1949 was promulgated. This was followed by the Punjab Development of Damaged Areas Act 1951 which supplemented the powers of the Improvement Trust. A similar Act was also enacted for Amritsar.

Under this Act, the Walled City of Amritsar was declared a damaged area and the Amritsar Improvement Trust prepared a maximum number of re-development projects that is fifty-six. The evaluation of three projects by case study methods revealed that no methodology had been adopted for conducting surveys/studies before preparation of redevelopment plans. In the case of Chowk

Phowara-Jallianwala Bagh Scheme, the only available document was the survey plan which was prepared by the Amritsar Improvement Trust after two years from the date of notification. The survey plan shows only property numbers, temples and circulation pattern. This was the only information used for the preparation of a layout plan, that is, a re-development plan. How many people were uprooted? Where were they to be rehabilitated? Which buildings needed restoration, refurbishment, re-pointing, cleansing, and so on? These questions remained unanswered, as the basic aim was widening of the road under the name of re-development.

In addition, the layout plan had many drawbacks such as 'un-detailed areas', and the proposal for a big gate at the Jallianwala Bagh monument (thereby destroying the historic entry). It is clear that the main aim was only to widen the road.

Examining the re-development projects in depth it has been found that:

- i) An Integrated re-development plan for the whole of the Walled City was not prepared.
- ii) In addition to the areas damaged due to the riots in 1947, various other areas were included for re-development. These areas were not damaged due to the riots of 1947. For example, "An Approach Road Project from Bus Stand to Jallianwala Bagh and Golden Temple" was not part of the damaged areas. The objective of this project was different from the concept of re-development. It was to widen the road to 60' from the existing width which varied from 8' to 13'. No doubt this was an integrated plan, but the desired surveys and studies were not conducted. The whole project was divided into small projects such as Chowk Phowara, Jallianwala Bagh Scheme, Chowk Ghanta Ghar Scheme, Bazaar Sandukan Scheme, and so on. Some portions of the whole project were implemented. Many people were dislocated and not properly rehabilitated near the area. Similarly the detailed study of another project which was undertaken of the damaged area that is, Katra Moti Ram Area; has shown that the integrated survey techniques were not adopted. Moreover the basic concept of re-development has not been understood.

It seems, the same was the fate of the Walled City of Lahore. In the 1950's an organization called the Lahore Improvement Trust

attempted to install a plan for commercial development in the old city. The resulting commercial encroachment demonstrates a pattern of abuse of building stock through inappropriate re-use of structures intended for small scale (cottage) industry and residential use. There was also the destruction of older buildings replaced with quickly-erected, lower quality structures (Kron). Over time buildings and areas have suffered considerable losses of fabric from both natural causes such as weather and natural disasters and human causes, including welfare, vandalism and inappropriate or clumsy restoration techniques. (Toles, Kimbro, and Ginell: 2002: 10)

In addition to these projects another major project known as "The Project for the Redevelopment of Areas around the Golden Temple Complex" was undertaken in 1988. It has five phases. The last phase has started recently and lacks the harmonious principles of conservation. The required surveys were never carried out. The basic objective of this project was "To Beautify the Areas Around the Golden Temple". They demolished the 30' width wall around the Temple Complex and created an open space with trees, shrubs and grass. The press termed this project "operation demolition". It also became known as "the Corridor Plan". Thus the aim seems simply to demolish and either widen the road or create a corridor and an open space. Unfortunately, due to lack of expertise in the field of conservation, re-development was considered to be demolition. As a result a very rich tangible and intangible heritage has been demolished at the cost of WHAT? In the past, building elements were often replaced wholesale rather than repaired, and surfaces were renewed, not conserved, thereby reducing the authenticity of the whole. (Toles, Kimbo and Ginell, 2002:10)

To quote Mr. Amjab Bokumill from his book, 'Introduction to Islamic Architecture', "It is not a good solution to surround old monuments by modern, heavy structures, or to leave them in open space, setting them into artificial parks, because neither is typical for the hierarchy of buildings for which the monuments were once intended. Therefore the only correct way at the moment is to keep the environment as near as possible to its original state, or at least to respect its original scale and possibly replace all incongruous subsequent innovation, thereby helping to underline the original meaning of the whole ensemble".

Under the name of Beautification Plan, the city's gorgeous buildings and bazaars were knocked down and a corridor created which has encouraged traffic all around the sacred place.

The city still has a unique land use. One can find life, hustle and bustle, as there is mixed land use. But due to the change of land use it is losing its character both within and outside the walled portion. It is facing many problems such as vehicular pollution, encroachments even on footpaths and shopping corridors, traffic congestion, parking, garbage, choked drains and so on. Who is responsible for all this? The citizens, the lackadaisical attitude of the administration, poor enforcement, and above all the absence of conservation professionals, are the major factors. As far as the Walled City of Lahore is concerned the hygiene, choked drains, traffic congestion, parking, pollution and encroachments are common.

The latest threat to the old historic town of Amritsar is of an elevated road. Perhaps there is no such historic city in the world where such action has been taken. It will not only destroy the streetscape but will have other serious implications such as pollution for those whose properties are falling along the road, the effect of pollutants on Sri Harmandir Sahib (It is located on the leeward side of the proposed parking) and the increasing number of vehicles towards Sri Harmandir Sahib. Even this elevated road in the Walled City is against the guidelines of NCU (National Commission on Urbanisation) as well as of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments Sites). No impact assessment study has been undertaken. The surroundings of Sri Harmandir Sahib should be declared as Traffic Free Zone. Battery operated buses should be started and there is a need to undertake a viability study of underground metro link to this important spiritual place. But the elevated road project is under the implementation stage now. Another proposal is on the cards for destroying the streetscape of the historic Walled City of Amritsar which will bring the sky car on an elevated platform.

While looking at the works through various reports prepared for the Walled City of Lahore, it seems some efforts have been made there. Study of an area is the first step and is an important one. Here it is vital to refer to a very comprehensive and useful study *“Urban Conservation in Pakistan: a case study of the Walled City of Lahore”* by Mr Ali Reza H. But, the next step is the implementation of the studies and plans prepared. How far the implementation has been done, this can be seen by physical verification only. The most important document is the Comprehensive Development Plan or popularly known as Master Plan which must have the flavor of the conservation components or in other words it can be termed as Integrated Conservation Approach.

## Intergrated Conservation Approach

The basic objectives of Urban and Regional Planning are very closely related to those of conservation of historic towns, areas and monuments. Town Planning in the modern context originated from the desire of people to have certain self imposed norms and standards for the utilization and development of land in their cities. Comprehensive Development Plan is an instrument for the achievement of these objectives. Other instruments include zoning regulations, building bye-laws, development schemes, and re-development schemes.

Town Planning for existing old historic towns and areas need the application of similar will to take care of the gorgeous but otherwise neglected heritage buildings and areas. Thus conservation must be recognized as an integral part of the planning process that is, while preparing the comprehensive development plan, there is a need to lay stress on the integrated conservation approach which is missing till today in the preparation of all the development plans in the state of Punjab, India. It must identify both tangible and intangible components in Heritage zones in terms of *Katras*, *Mohallas*, and *Kuchas* which are an integral part of both the walled cities of Amritsar and Lahore.

Thus the comprehensive development plan of a city must be reviewed to assess its effect on the conservation needs of the city. It must reflect and respect the form of old cities, and must recognize the social needs of communities in old quarters. As is evident that an important constituent of all master plans or zonal development plans is a proposed land use map, according to which all future development must take place. The starting point for urban conservation is that this map must recognize the existence of buildings and areas (Heritage zones) to be protected. These must be clearly delineated on the map. In addition there is a need to evolve special urban design guidelines and building bye-laws for these areas which are missing till date as far as the Walled City of Amritsar is concerned. This is disturbing the streetscape and townscape. Above all, strict enforcement is needed in case of both these cities. No change of land use should be allowed in the Heritage zones.

Moreover, before initiating any intervention in the walled cities of Amritsar and Lahore, there is need to refer to the relevant sections listed below, at least two documents namely:

A."Report of National Commission on Urbanisation, 1988"

B. "ICOMOS: Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas".

A. National Commission on Urbanisation, 1988

Traffic:

1. Old cities were not designed for automobile traffic. Further damage was caused to the traditional fabric of a historic town by "massive road widening" and "beautification schemes".
2. Uses that are likely to generate heavy traffic should be reserved for areas other than historic areas. For this reason the penetration of heavy traffic generating activities into heritage areas should be restricted by firm enforcement of the development plan.

Road Widening and New Roads:

1. The environmental impact of the construction of new roads or widening of roads needs very careful assessment, especially in respect of the surroundings before they are undertaken.
2. Road widening, in most cases, only brings in more traffic to the historic core and sets in motion a vicious circle of further congestion and further widening.
3. Regulation of traffic whether of private or public vehicles should take into account the requirements of conservation. Traffic should be restricted in favor of the pedestrian.
4. The world over pedestrian schemes have proved immensely popular with shoppers and shops in rich areas having appreciated in value. Resistance to such schemes from shopkeepers in India probably reflects a lack of experience with this concept and it is worth attempting such schemes especially in historic quarters. They require particular attention in creating an atmosphere satisfying to pedestrians through provision of street furniture.

B. ICOMOS "Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns & Urban Areas"

Principles and Objectives: Some of the related objectives are listed below.

1. The values to be preserved include the historic character of the

historic city and all those material and spiritual elements that create character.

2. New activities should be compatible with the character of the historic town.
3. Traffic inside the historic town must be controlled; the parking areas should not disturb the historic fabric or degrade the environment.
4. When urban and regional planning provides for the construction of major motorways, they must not be permitted to penetrate an historic town, rather they should improve access to it.
5. Historic towns should be protected against natural disasters, pollution and vibration.

But till date these guidelines have been ignored in case of the Walled City of Amritsar, due to which the city has already lost and is in the process of losing its rich Tangible heritage and thereby its Intangible heritage. Even the Master Plan prepared for the city of Amritsar for the year 2010-2031 lacks the Integrated Conservation Approach. It lacks the concept of Heritage zones, listed buildings, height controls, especially for the walled part. No doubt superficial statements in an adhoc manner have been given at certain places. But Intangible heritage is in a complete state of neglect. Once the Tangible heritage is lost, the Intangible will automatically get lost. Thus there is a need to make both Tangible and Intangible heritage a part of Integrated Conservation Approach. This will not only help in protecting our rich built heritage and the character of the historic towns but also the traditional values, way of life and life styles still existing in walled cities. Modern developers have too often failed to understand the cultural value of historic centres and with unquestioning acceptance of the needs of motor traffic have constructed wide, straight streets through sensitive historic centres. The small and human scale, the refined traditional structure of the urban fabric, the narrow winding streets reflecting the necessities of climate, as well as the relationship between public and private space are destroyed. The situation of the historic centres in developing countries is more serious because often urban conservation planning is a low priority compared with modernization. (B. M. Feilden, 1089:82)

To conclude: the words of Graham King have still relevance, "We must restore the city the maternal, life nurturing function, the autonomous activities, and the symbiotic association that have long been neglected or suppressed. For the city should be an organ of love;

and the best economy of cities is the care and culture of human beings”.

Thus both these cities still have a rich tangible and intangible heritage which needs proper attention for bringing them on the map of the World Heritage list.

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