

# “Regeneration of Ancient settlements and Cultural Industries- a Case Study of Paithan, Maharashtra, India”

**Author 1. Ar. Swapna Ashok Dhavale.**

*Assistant Professor at G.S.Mandal's Marathwada Institute of Technology, Beed by Pass. Aurangabad,  
Maharashtra, India.*

**Author 2. Ar. Leena Prasad Aphale.**

*Assistant Professor at G.S.Mandal's Marathwada Institute of Technology, Beed by Pass. Aurangabad,  
Maharashtra, India.*

**Author 3. Ar.Madhulika Bhumkar.**

*Assistant Professor at D. Y. Patil College of Engineering and Technology, Kasba Bawada, Kolhapur, Maharashtra,  
India.*

**Abstract-** Villages, towns and cities are mutually dependent on each other and they always are to be observed as integrated system of settlements of any region, state or nation. This interdependency may be economic, political, social or cultural, the economic aspect being the major one. In a given geographical region both urban and rural settlements are in a functional hierarchy and depend on each other for sharing of resources. Understanding the formation of spatial patterns of settlements and development of networks; along with the land use distribution and their interdependency is an important aspect for the sustainable development of such settlements. This paper attempts to understand an ancient settlement from the urban regional sustainable development through study of the ancient silk weaving industry.

The study of this ancient town and the hinterland clearly shows the spatial pattern and architecture that had evolved in response to the prevailing economic (weaving industry- flow of raw material, process involved) social (communities involved in the skilled processes) and political (rulers and their aspirations) conditions. In the present pace of sustainable development of the region (Smart City Aurangabad MIDC, DMIC and AURIC Projects) as in the case of many cultural industries – weaving, too, is witnessing a heavy out-migration of the skilled artists into other employment sectors and to bigger cities. There is an urgent need to take steps for preserving these ancient towns with heritage and cultural identities.

**Keywords-** Ancient settlement, Cultural Industries, Sustainable Development, Paithan,

## **Introduction:**

Almost each of the modern metropolitan cities across India, have its own and unique, rich glorious history. Towns and cities have acted as focal points in the cultural landscape of India. They have been evolved spatially over many centuries, and this can be seen

through the study of their spatial patterns and morphology. The influence of cities, past and present, on our way of life cannot by any means considered as a simple, or uni-dimensional. The evolution, growth and decline of these cities, have meant different things at different points in time and space. Thus, Indian cities are the most important and celebrated form of organized human behavioral coordination.

## **Objective:**

Study of the existence of Paithan, an ancient town with a rich heritage and cultural identity for the future comprehensive sustainable development, to keep in with pace of the current trend of urban development in its surrounding.

## **Methodology:**

The writing of the paper has been carried out after a study of evolution of settlement of Paithan in close vicinity of major city Aurangabad, with respect to culture. Study of the present scenario of the cultural industry – weaving at Paithan has been carried out. The attempt is to understand the need for conservation of this ancient town, for its development as a sustainable cultural economic hub.

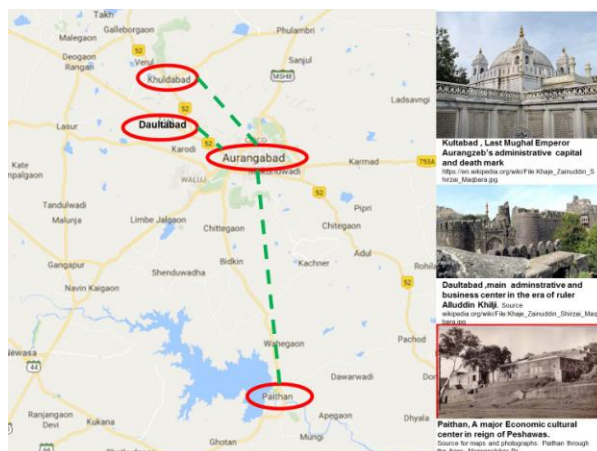
## **1. Living Heritage: Metropolitan cities And Surrounding Towns:**

It can be usually observed that some of the modern cities are built around the grand monuments and historical buildings. These buildings or monuments are the icon of the city or town. While there are some cities which have been built or developed away from their historical origins and past ruins. In today's context, the focal point of development may have got shifted away from the ancient original settlement/towns, the

historical core of these ancient towns ('the inner cities' in urban planning terminology) is the reflex of a blend of the grand monuments of the past and the socio-cultural activities thereof. These cores are the resultant of the layers of developments formed due to people settling down around the cores. These ancient towns may not be the partakers in the present process of development, but what is note-worthy is that, the people who are residing in these towns are responsible for keeping these elapsed (forgotten) empires alive along with its traditional/cultural supremacies. These areas are characterized by the sector of population who are involved in production of traditional crafts and goods. These living heritage towns should be preserved not only for their past monuments but also the 'culture' of the people who have settled down therein, in the recent past. The houses/workshops of these craftsmen/artists were built to accommodate the machinery related to their particular art/craft giving it an architectural unique.

## 2. Historical Settlements With Respect To Culture

India has long been perceived as vast storehouse of art, craft and culture, supreme creativity and skills. Arts, handicrafts and heritage of India tell us about the traditions which are not only enormously rich but extremely varied. Every state has its own uniqueness, Maharashtra being no exception. The State of Maharashtra is famous for its cotton and silk Handloom Industries. Interestingly, in most places in India, different handlooms are known by names of towns where they are woven. Kanchi, Benares, Mysore, Chenderi, Kota, Chettinaad are a few examples in the country while Maharashtra is famous for its Nagpur saris, Paithani saris, Himroo Silks, Solapuri Fabrics, etc. each of them having a distinct style.



**Fig 1.** Region map of Heritage and Cultural centers around Aurangabad .Source: Authors.

The Marathwada region of the Deccan plateau of Peninsular India, with its rapidly developing center, present day Aurangabad, need no introduction as a tourism hub, surrounded by many historical monuments. The most of its surrounding towns which had been grand empires in the past such as Daultabad, Kultabad, and Prathisthana (present day Paithan) have witnessed all shades of development right from the Satavahana Period to present day. The region had been a treasure land of many traditional and cultural supremacies, The Bidri work, Himroo weaving and Paithani weaving to name a few.

A poem had woven in silk and gold, Paithani sarees are known across the world for its delicate silk and unmatched legacy. The art of weaving started in 200 BC during the Satvahana Era and flourished to its peak in the Peshawa reign. It is considered one of the precious heritage passing from one generation to the next briefing the history of over 2000 yrs.

This exclusive silk from Paithan was even exported to many countries and was traded in return for gold and precious stones. The weaving industry played a leading role in economics, establishing Paithan as a major economic center. However today the workers, workshops, trade of raw material and goods, infrastructure and flow of money has a very slower pace.

## 3. Culture And Economy

Culture is an inseparable feature of the ancient towns which are fast developing. Culture may act as a catalyst in the process of urban development with sustainability. It makes the bridging roots among all level income groups of different parts of the society. Culture and city co-relation gives us social stability, in which different societies deal with each other to become different civilizing identities. The main functions stimulate are personal establishment, fulfillment, and pride, with common cultural features like language, food, cloth and appearance. For this reason cultural development and planning are to be regarded as valuable strategies to accelerate processes of urban growth or regeneration. Culture is the trigger to stimulate fully fledged business sector and urban setup. Thus, the growth of these towns due to employment generation takes place. The main characteristic of sustainable urban economy is an integrated “cult-eco”, (cultural and economic) development. This development, thus, results in the strengthening of the base to make the city culturally rich and as a successful business hub.

The cultural industries are generally small scale; where artisans and employees can directly interact and are responsible for each micro level procedure. One can say that, this type of business or industry is highly individual and appropriate at its own. The economy of industries or business sectors which prominently based on the culture seems to be followed by the distinguished qualitative approaches like Individuality, Scarceness, Intense, Heterogenic, unique symbolism, peculiarity in production. For the regeneration of the towns, culture acts as a boosting element of urban development. With proper awareness of these cultural industries amongst the policy makers, hopefully the industry may reach to a higher level where it can be an economic force for the overall growth of the city. In conclusion, influence of culture on the local economic environment is as follows:

1. Direct economic impacts from employment and indirect expenditure effect the growth of the city.
2. Induced effects of cultural activities on the quality of a place, among which the tourist attractiveness is a major concern.

#### 4. Study Of Paithan: Understanding Linkage Of Settlement Planning And Cultural Industry:

Located on the bank of famous river Godavari, an ancient town, Paithan (hardly 50 kms south of Aurangabad) has been a seat of various dynasties and each of it had an influence on the city and its development.

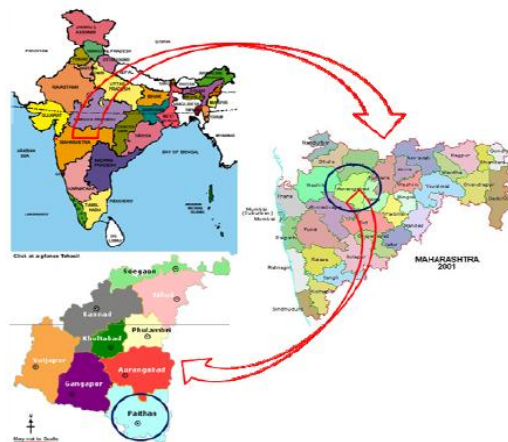
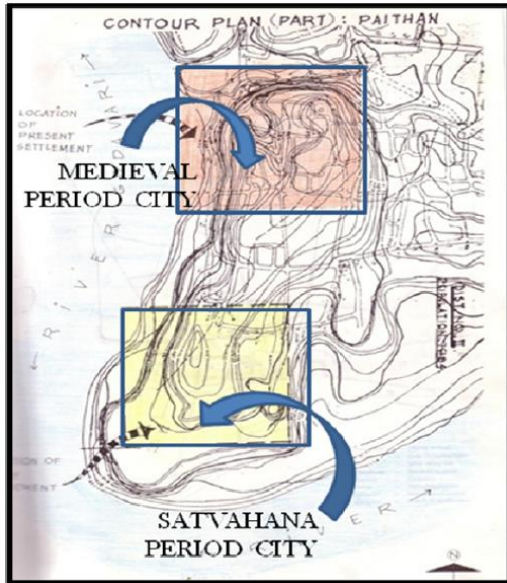
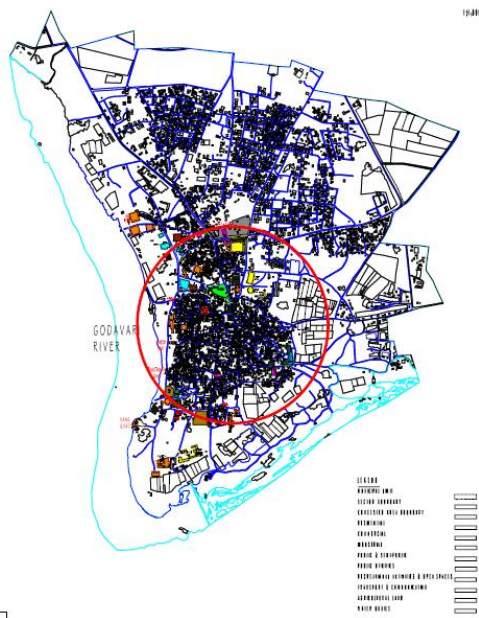


Fig 2. Index Map Of Paithan (Source: Author)

In many Jatak kathas, Paithan is referred to as “Pratishthan” (meaning an enterprise). On the basis of available archaeological data, it may be stated that Paithan was in existence even before 2nd Century B.C., when it was made capital city of Satvahana Kings. The ruler which hold the place were, Vakatkas (230 AD onwards), Chalukyas of Badami (upto 700 AD), Rashtrakutas (From 730 AD to 912 AD) Yadav (upto1296 AD), Allaudin Khilji- Mugal power, and then came the Maratha rulers by 16th Century AD .The most noteworthy period being the reign of the Peshwas, wherein the town was the most flourishing and the economic capital. Paithan witnessed the emergence of totally a new community of Sahukaras, who flourished as a resultant of the incredible intricate working of Paithani weaving community.

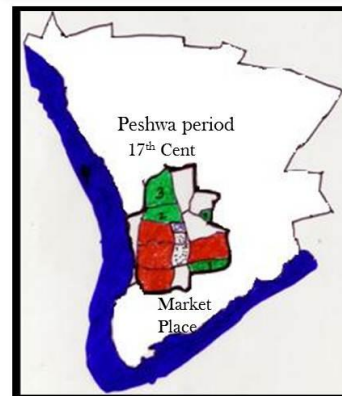
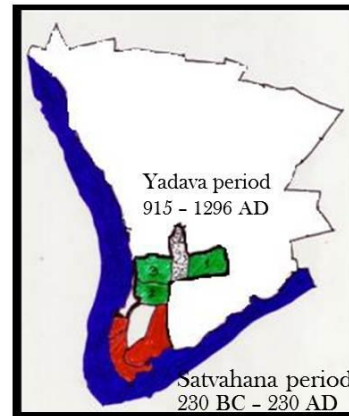


**Fig 3.** Ancient town Through the eras  
 Source: Morphological study of Paithan: Some aspects .- Ar. Jayashree Gogte



**Fig 4.** Present Day Map of Paithan Source: Author

(weaving industry- flow of raw material, process involved) social (communities involved in the skilled processes) and political (rulers and their aspirations) conditions. Traditionally, these places have had many families who have taken up weaving as their livelihood, worked from home building their houses accommodating the handlooms machinery and processes.

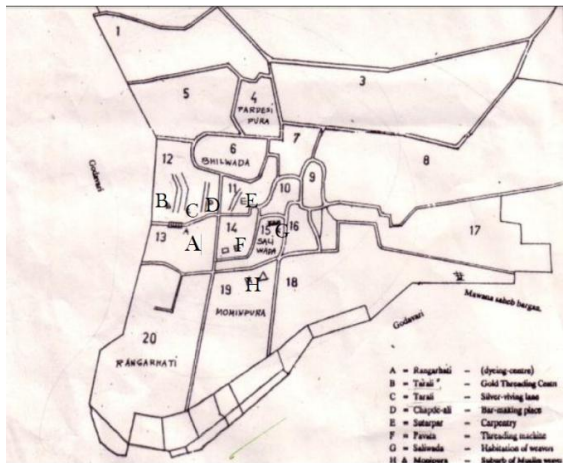


**Fig 5.** Map of Paithan showing location of Weaver community in various eras.  
 Source: Authors.

The old town has been divided into different 'puras' or suburbs belonging to people of different communities. There are different 'alis' named after professions of their people. The occupational community settlement pattern can be found in the city.

**Settlement Pattern developed as per the occupation:**

A study of this town clearly shows that, their spatial patterns and architecture had evolved over centuries based on the requirements of the handloom weaving. It had evolved in response to the prevailing economic



- A- Rangar-hatti – dyeing center
- B – Tarali – Gold threading center
- C - Tarali – Silver threading center
- D – Chapade – ali – Loom Bar making Space
- E – Sutarpara – Carpentry
- F – Pavalegalli – Threading Machine
- G – Saliwada – Habitation of Weavers
- H – Mominpura – Suburb of Muslim Weavers

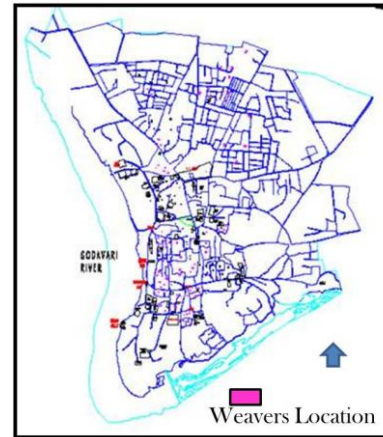
**Fig. 6.** Map of Paithan Showing different PURAS  
 Source for maps: Paithan through the Ages, Morwanchikar R.

The areas are characterized by weavers working from home or near-by work places. The houses / working sheds of these skilled workers are built / modified to accommodate the tools / activities related to the particular art / craft, making an architectural character unique.

### 5. Housing Environment And Workplace Relationship:

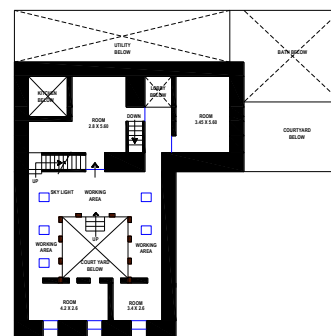
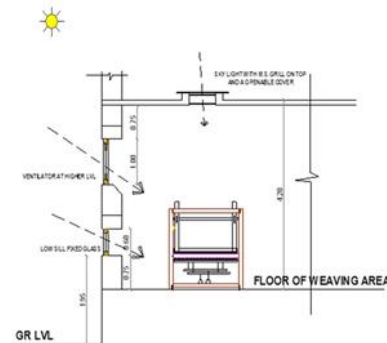
Housing Settlements and the Architecture of these weavers stems from a deeply felt reciprocation of a time, and place. They provide an insight into the various processes that went into giving this Architecture uniqueness. The environment goes beyond mere provision of shelter. They were designed to suit a typical culture and way of life. These dwellings reflect the personal needs and the social needs the wants and the yearning of people more directly.

Today only few (around 150-175) families, practicing this age old tradition of weaving and have kept the cultural industry alive are left.



**Fig. 7.** Location of Weavers Today's Scenario. Source Authors.

These dwellings are different in all sense than any of the traditional dwellings like Havelis or palaces which pertain to the noble or wealthy sector of the society. They are the places where the mind souls and hands of the artisans are worked day and night for accomplishment of a task. The task are not mere the jobs which earn them the livelihood but forms a precious part of the generational legacy and exemplifies the richness and diversity of the culture and the creativity of the weaver.



## FIRST FLOOR

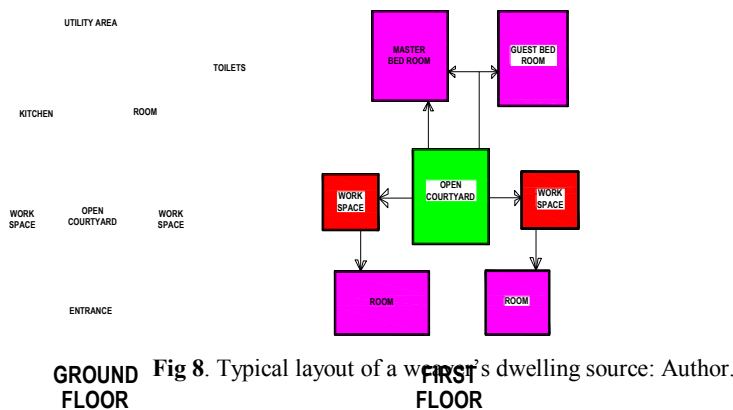


Fig 8. Typical layout of a weaver's dwelling source: Author.



Fig 9. Glimpses of some of the cultural industries left alive.  
 Source: Author.

Occupation and the processes involved therein, tools, implements and techniques etc., are coherently associated with traditional occupational dwelling and patterns of living. Extensive use of the outside, courtyards, multiplicity of space used, simple sequences that clearly define space use in the context of the family habits, occupation etc., are some of the dominating characteristics of the traditional dwelling with an environment that seeks acceptance rather than recognition. Such houses are incentives for investing in welfare and accommodation services and even can cause the development and prosperity of local cultural industries, which are usually significant and attractive to the eyes of tourists.

## 6. Need For Ancient Settlement Conservation In The Today's Pace Of Sustainable Development:

The ancient and traditional occupations shall be included in the frame work of modern and urban development, so as to retain its cultural value with a speed and eternal development proposed in the near future of the region in terms of industrial developments. These age old traditional occupation has sever unseen threats of heavy out-migration of the weaver's

community into other job sectors. The weavers are the backbones of the weaving industries.

The unmatched fabric had once been the backbone of Paithan's economic development. In today's date this traditional occupation is on the verge of dying. It has an untapped potential which can be utilized not only for the revitalization of the traditional art form but also for the overall growth of town in the coming years. Paithan is now on an edge of sustainable development, where it is finding its way from converting from a rural area to a semi-urban or urban area, keeping in pace with the development in and around it.

At present Aurangabad is witnessing full swing urbanization with the industrial development pacing through a very amiable DMIC (Delhi Mumbai Industrial corridor) Project and the ongoing infrastructural developments through AURIC (Aurangabad Industrial City). Proposed Nagpur-Mumbai Super Communication Expressway- "Samrudhi Mahamargh", passing through Aurangabad will definitely increase the rate of future development of the region.

As in the case of many cultural industries- weaving too shall be affected by this urbanization and fast growing industrialization of region making these artists and weavers give up their traditional occupation due to the fascination of magnetizing opportunities which may seem to give them a better lifestyle. Moreover once a skilled artist or the family leaves the traditional occupation, the dwelling or the work place also undergo a change, modification or even demolition – a reason to worry and attention.

Nowadays it's a big challenge, to retain these heritage and cultural based towns, as the coming generation is under influence of globalization, modernization and many more de-cultural activities this could be one of the many reasons for the haphazard reshaping of these ancient towns today.

This is a very ironical situation that, the region is gaining heights of new development while its own roots are ruined. Now this is a vital need of the time to reweave the development along with the heritage and age old cultural threads. These architectural records make us realize the identity of our past to make it sustain for our coming generations to reveal the fact,

what and where our roots are. Conserving such ancient structure doesn't mean only protecting the heritage but also implies holding firmly back our rich values, along with maintaining the welfare of the habitants. There is an urgent need to take steps for preserving these places with ancient heritage and cultural identities. Otherwise the art and culture of weaving may go extinct very soon, taking along with it the unique architecture and characteristic features of settlements and their patterns.

### Conclusion:

Steps needed to be taken for regeneration of the ancient town with cultural identities at three integrated stages.

- 1) Focus area - the cultural industry revitalization considering the small scale and unorganized sector. Taking a note of the historical values of the goods produced. Important aspect is outmigration of artists.
- 2) Cultural industries to be brought in the scope work of development as a source of income generation.
- 3) Identification and documentation of built cultural and historical heritage and policy making for enhancement of these as tourist attractions.
- 4) The focus today is that rural-urban linkages are vital in order to promote rural and urban development in a sustainable manner, hence the emphasis has to be on linking the development of core of ancient towns with the surrounding development in urban areas

### Acknowledgement

We thank colleagues from our institution who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted the research, although they may not agree with all of the interpretations/conclusions of this paper. We thank Ar. Kishor Talnikar, and Ar. Jayshree Gogate, Aurangabad, for comments on an earlier version of the manuscript. We thank "anonymous" reviewers for their so-called insights. We are also immensely grateful to Prof. R.S. Morwanchikar, for the guidance and support that greatly improved the manuscript. Errors if any, are

our own and should not tarnish the reputations of these esteemed persons

### References:

#### a. Books and Magazines.

- [1] Paithan through the Ages, By R.S. Morwanchikar
- [2] INDIA: Rural Communities Turn to Traditional Climate Mitigation By Keya Acharya.
- [3] Urbanization and Urban Systems in India by R.Ramachandran.
- [4] JIIA Jan 2006- "Kanadukathan Reflections of Culture" By- Ar. (Ms.) Kumudhavalli Sasidhar, Asst. Professor.

#### b. Websites and Journals.

- [1] [http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol\\_2\\_No\\_8\\_Special\\_Issue\\_April\\_2012/12.pdf](http://www.ijhssnet.com/journals/Vol_2_No_8_Special_Issue_April_2012/12.pdf)
- [2] <http://openarchive.icomos.org/1134/>
- [3] <https://www.wien.gv.at/meu/fdb/pdf/intern-vergleichsstudie-ci-959-ma27.pdf>

#### c. Dissertation

- [1] Morphological study of Paithan: Some aspects – Ar. Jayashree Gogte