

https://dspace.org/

Shaucha: the urban and the sacred as means for rehabilitation of Mithi River

Shah, Vrushali

2020

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/31363

Shah, Vrushali. (2020). Shaucha :the urban and the sacred as means for rehabilitation of Mithi River, University of the Witwatersrand, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/31363

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

Water is pertinent to human existence. Water is what sustains us and cleans our physical body, and if we neglect it and disrespect it, that could lead to our demise. As it stands, roughly 35% of the worlds population do not have access to clean and filtered water, and as a result of that are affected by the presence of water-borne diseases. Furthermore, ecology existing within and around the water is getting destroyed. This defilement of water-bodies is actively catalysed by humankind by contaminating them with industrial and chemical waste, and sewage dumps. This thesis will investigate the water pollution crisis of Mithi River, located on the edge of the infamous slums of Dharavi in Mumbai, India. Mithi, once a source of life has transformed over time into Mumbai's open sewage system.

Industries upstream release their heavy chemicals and oils, while the slum dwellers produce large amounts of sewage, garbage and light yet potent industrial waste. The existing ecology such as the mangroves are at risk of complete destruction due to the water pollution and slum encroachments. By investigating the nature of Mithi River and how humans interact and respond to it, and its relationship to architecture, I hope to bring light to the question of how water pollution can be addressed and be resolved by architecture as a facilitator and provide for better community interaction with the edges of Mithi River.

Lastly my thesis will unpack the notion of sacred and urban space and redefining the definition in relation to my site. Through the investigations of these themes, I hope to answer my primary research question being; can an urban and sacred architectural intervention work in tandem with the existing ecology while simultaneously rehabilitating the polluted Mithi River? Can a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship be established between the community of Dharavi and Mithi river?