Sanchari Ghosh

GENERATING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN BUILT

HERITAGE CONSERVATION OF CHANDANNAGAR

MA Thesis in Cultural Heritage Studies: Academic Research, Policy, Management.

Central European University

Budapest

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GENERATING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN BUILT HERITAGE CONSERVATION OF CHANDANNAGAR

by

Sanchari Ghosh

(India)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,

Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements

of the Master of Arts degree in Cultural Heritage Studies: Academic Research, Policy,

Management.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Thesis Supervisor

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I, the undersigned, **Sanchari Ghosh**, candidate for the MA degree in Cultural Heritage Studies: Academic Research, Policy, Management declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

The colonial period in India is most often associated with the British rule, also featured several other European nations who had administrative control over small domains in India. Chandannagar, the focus of research in this thesis was formerly administered by the French authorities until the independence of the country in 1947 from British rule. This town, owing to the political administration and influence of the French for centuries, features a unique architectural style in the buildings constructed during that period which is reflective of the confluence of the two cultures.

Recently, however, these buildings have seen rapid decline, mismanagement and demolition owing to rapid urbanization, shortage of funds for restoration and the lack of awareness among the local community in the town about the value of the built heritage. These buildings are both public and privately-owned. In both cases, many of them are either sold to realtors and demolished or left to decay.

This thesis aims to analyze the role of the community in the heritage management system and showcase the relevance and inevitability of community participation to ensure sustainable development and preservation of built heritage. The primary objective of the thesis is to evaluate the reasons for low community participation and offer solutions to include the community into the heritage management process. By making a detailed examination of projects for heritage restoration and community engagement implemented before, I will finally suggest solutions based on best practices for community contribution aimed at relevant authorities for imbibing best practices and methods.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude for the assistance that I continually received from my supervisor, Volodymyr Kulikov, and his excellent advice and critiques, which guided me throughout the course of my research. I am grateful to Gabor Sóos for his expert assistance during my project. I would also like to heartily thank Neline Mondal, Ujjal Mondal, Antara Mukherjee, Basabi Pal and Aishwarya Tipnis and all the other people of Chandannagar who have given me their time and meaningful insight. Lastly, I express appreciation to my colleague and great friend Gulnoza Khasanova for her constant support without which this thesis would not have been possible.

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Introduction

The colonial period in India is mostly associated with the British rule of the country from 1757 to 1947. However, several other European nations had small territories in India under their administrative domain until 1947 when India became free from British colonial rule. Several territories emerged under the French, Portuguese, Danish, and Dutch across India. The magnitude of these administrative units, however, were small compared to the British Indian empire and therefore attracted less attention from researchers. The various European nations had brought with them to India their own culture, language, lifestyle, and architectural style. The European architectural building style found manifestations in the administrative and residential structures constructed during colonial times. However, this thesis does not go into the deep colonial and post-colonial discourse. Colonial being an ambiguous term will be explained later in the thesis. It simply refers to the colonial period of India's history to provide a background for the built architectural heritage and the perception of the local communities towards heritage protection.

The territorial framework of this study is a former French-administered town in West Bengal known as Chandannagar (in French – Chandernagore). Under French political and administrative dominion from 1688 to 1952, Chandannagar features architectural styles that had emerged as a result of the interaction of the two cultures: French and Bengali. In the present day, however, the buildings from the period of French colonialism (henceforth – French period) face management, maintenance and restoration challenges, and many of these structures are under the threat of dilapidation and eventual demolition. As this study demonstrated, this is largely due to the insufficiency of funds of the government bodies for restoration, lack of awareness of the citizens, and more importantly, due to the low level of involvement of the local community in heritage management and social empowerment of the region.

This thesis aims to identify the causes behind the low level of community involvement in heritage preservation in Chandannagar, analyze the determining factors that lead to those situations, and suggest methods by which community involvement might be achieved in Chandannagar's heritage preservation. This thesis is a combination of academic research and suggestions for policymaking which seeks to address the decision-making bodies and relevant heritage management authorities such as the West Bengal Heritage Commission. It aims to underline the unique features of the French period buildings and how they form a significant element of the historic urban landscape and living space for the town so that the stakeholders of the heritage can better comprehend the heritage and potential economic value of the town.

Another important objective of this thesis would be to demonstrate using empirical evidences why community engagement in Chandannagar is the most efficient method for the safeguarding of its built heritage. The questions that this thesis addresses are the following:

- What is the heritage value of the French-period buildings in Chandannagar?

- What are the reasons behind the degradation of these buildings?

- Why is the local community around the heritage not active in the heritage safeguarding process? What are the causes behind low engagement by the community?

- What are the solutions to garner interest and spread awareness about the built heritage of Chandannagar?

- What can be done to generate community involvement?

The conclusion of the thesis provides suggestions on creating an active community which participates in the heritage management process of the town and preserves it sustainably.

To answer these challenging questions, I relied on the variable groups of the primary and secondary source. In order to deeply understand the legal aspect of monument protection in

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India in the colonial period and how it had borne an impact on the perspective of the general Indian public, I rely on the work of Indra Sengupta.[1] I have consulted the data on monument protection laws provided in the website of the Archaeological Survey of India and the "Handbook of Conservation of Heritage Buildings" published online by the Central Public Works department.[2] These sources provide a background for the transformation of the attitude of the local communities in India towards heritage protection and evaluate the laws that have been the reason for such a mindset. They provide a wider perspective of the role of the state as the major guardian of heritage, and how it had affected the attitude of the Indian people towards heritage. These materials offer a general context of the monument protection laws in entire India and do not focus on Chandannagar. Nevertheless, owing to the adoption of the same monument protection laws in Chandannagar as the rest of India, the general publications can be utilized.

For a focused analysis and understanding of the political, socio-cultural, and economic situation in Chandannagar during the colonial period, the doctoral research of Anubha Ukil has been studied.[3] The research accomplished by her delivers insight into the historical evolution and development of the town under the French administrative rule. It also refers to the overshadowing of Chandannagar's prosperity by British-administered Kolkata. The relevance of the architecture and development of the urban landscape has been described in detail and provides background for the need to preserve the structures.

A detailed historical background which provides deeper understanding of the historical context of Chandannagar and the current developments in the town can be found in the website of the

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[1] Indra Sengupta, "Preservation between Empire, Nation and Nationalisms: The Problem of History and Heritage in India." *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 1 (2018): 110–30.
[2] Works Department, Central Public, "Handbook of Conservation of Heritage Buildings," accessed March 2, 2019, https://cpwd.gov.in/Publication/ConservationHertBuildings.pdf.
[3] Anubha Ukil, "Morphology of Chandannagar an Urban Analysis," Ph. D. diss., University of Calcutta, 1996. Available online at *Shodhganga*, accessed January 19, 2019, http://hdl.handle.net/10603/165270. See: Chapter 3: "Historical Evolution".

Chandannagar Municipal Corporation, the website of the Institut de Chandernagore, the doctoral research of Anubha Ukil.[4] These sources have been crucial for the presentation of the geographical and historical context of the architectural style that had emerged in Chandannagar, and why it is relevant today.

For my research on Chandannagar's heritage preservation situation and current projects implemented in the town, the articles published in the online news portal of The Hindu, The Telegraph, The Times of India and The Hindustan Times have provided valuable evidence. The articles published online on these portals have been crucial for me to keep in touch with the recent developments in the heritage sector in Chandannagar, as the sector is undergoing rapid transformations about the signing of new agreements and starting new projects. Being credible Indian newspapers, they also served as reliable sources of information. A Sri Lankan online journal provides access to an interview with a Frenchman, Jean Claude Perrier, who had been commissioned by the French Ministry of Culture to conduct research and produce historical travelogues on the former French areas in India.[5] In the interview, he describes Chandannagar's architecture, people, and the atmosphere in general, with special emphasis on the impact of French administration on education, language, and living culture. His insight provided a valuable perspective of a Frenchman in the town regarding the remnants of French culture and how French is perceived in Chandannagar. His interview contains information about the legal administrative exchanges that had taken place between the French and Indian governments after Chandannagar's independence regarding the management of the Institut de Chandernagore.

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[4] Ibid.
[5] "Chandannagar: The Waning Moon of French India– Echelon," accessed May 19, 2019, https://echelon.lk/chandannagar-the-waning-moon-of-french-india/.

Several other online publications such as articles, blogs, and journals have been used to understand the public perception of the town and its heritage. Two digital communities on Facebook organized and run by the people of Chandannagar known as "The Chandannagar"[6] and "Hello Chandannagar," have also been used as a platform to conduct surveys for my research.[7] The response received from the members of these groups has formed a part of my analytical study has helped me to estimate the level of community engagement and the attitude of the local community towards heritage. These groups, however, do not represent all sections of the population. To make it more representative, I have conducted semi-structured group interviews with school students, middle-aged residents, and university students from Chandannagar, 28 people in total, during field research in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019. Their perspectives shaped my understanding and analysis of the reason for low community involvement and what can be done to deal with the matter.

In my analysis of the heritage identification and restoration projects that have been conducted in Chandannagar so far, I used materials from the official webpages and online publications made by the heritage preservation project organizers. For the "Heritage Chandernagore" Project conducted by Aishwarya Tipnis architects, I have analyzed the results of the project and the description of the activities that were conducted aimed at community engagement. This has provided a thorough knowledge of the work that has been done and the method used to do it. The number of participants for the activities also helped me to measure the level of community involvement. The website of the Aishwarya Tipnis Architects also delivered additional reports on the agenda and objectives of the project. An online publication in the form of a report by the conservation architect Aishwarya Tipnis on the identification of the shared

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[6]"The Chandannagar," accessed May 29, 2019,
https://www.facebook.com/groups/Chandannagore/permalink/2112753328759787/.
[7] "Hello Chandannagar," May 16, 2019,
https://www.facebook.com/groups/403932183100876/?multi_permalinks=1161798700647550&notif_id=1557967442104681&notif_t=feedback_reaction_generic.

cultural heritage in Chandannagar has been essential to apprehend the nature of the architectural heritage and its uniqueness. It also mentions the methodology and the international conventions that were implemented into the framework of the project.

In my analysis of the "Bonjour India" workshop held in 2018, the website of the Alliance Francaise du Bengale has been my primary source of information. The analytical materials published after the completion of the project provided valuable information as to their successes and failures, which enabled me to examine good practices and failed attempts.

For the third project that I have analyzed called the "Hoogly River of Cultures," I interviewed the lead honorary researcher of the project, Dr. Antara Mukherjee. She provided a thorough insight into the reception of the project among the general public, students, and the government bodies, which was crucial for me to comprehend the impact of the project on the community in Chandannagar. The challenges and issues that she is facing in the execution of the project are also important in this regard. To supplement her insight, I have relied on the data uploaded on the webpage of the project. I have conducted interviews with heritage activists and project contributors in Chandannagar such as Neline Mondal, Basabi Pal, and Ujjal Mondal to get first-hand information about the projects conducted[8]. I have also corresponded with conservation architect Aishwarya Tipnis on her viewpoint of the level of community engagement in the Bonjour India project. Neline and Ujjal Mondal's comprehensions were valuable as they are also the owners of unofficial heritage buildings in Chandannagar.

The conceptual background for the participatory heritage management and relationship between communities and heritage have been provided by the work of Elizabeth Crooke in her article published in the International Journal of Heritage Studies, Laurajane Smith's "Authorised Heritage Discourse", an online journal article titled "Why Heritage is an Important

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[8] See the Appendix for the interview questionnaires.

Community Asset", and a study published in "The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy" titled "The Ethics of Cultural Heritage".[9] The concept of participatory management and inclusion of the community into the development process has been provided by the works cited above. These works outline the relationship between communities, heritage, and authoritative bodies. They also underline the deep connections between heritage and identity formation of the community. The necessity of an active community around heritage is emphasized with reference to the theoretical framework sketched by these publications. The basis for the thesis, which is participatory culture and its relevance to heritage protection, has been captured within the theoretical boundaries of these studies. Social empowerment and sustainable development that can be achieved through cooperation between the government authorities and the local community is also discussed.

A comprehensive understanding and guideline for my stakeholder and beneficiaries analysis has been offered by several publications such as "A Systematic Stakeholders Management Approach for Protecting the Spirit of Cultural Heritage Sites", published in the ICOMOS website, an online publication on stakeholder and beneficiary identification published by IUCN, and an online report and guidelines on participatory development by UN FAO. This has been crucial in placing my stakeholder analysis in the broader international context and frameworks.

My suggestions on the possibility and applicability of public-private partnerships in heritage preservation in Chandannagar has been drawn to a large extent by the concept of public and private collaboration for heritage development. For this, I have relied greatly on a journal article titled "Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies" published by the European Union European Regional Development Fund. This publication

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[9] Matthes, Erich Hatala. "The Ethics of Cultural Heritage." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2018.

provides guidelines and case studies of the successful implementation of public-private partnerships in heritage revitalization in European cities. Another significant contribution which has been essential for my analysis is a journal article published in ICOMOS by Susan Mcdonald titled "Leveraging Heritage: Public-private, and Third-sector Partnerships for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Environment." It offers necessary concepts behind public-private partnerships and provides instances of how these concepts can be applied in real-life heritage management processes. I have examined real instances and successful projects in the UK, continental Europe as well as in West Bengal, India to place Chandannagar in the comparative context.

The concept and practice of "Theatre for Development" have been defined and placed in the context of Chandannagar with regard to the analysis provided in a journal article published in the "International Journal of Development and Sustainability". This work examines and evaluates thoroughly the practice and concept of theatre for development and the projects that have been successfully completed with this method. The applicability of this method in Chandannagar has been supplemented and justified by me through the empirical research and data collected my me during field research in Chandannagar, through interviews and my own observations as a resident.[10]

This thesis comprises of four chapters. The first chapter explores the contradictory character of the colonial heritage with respect to the historical, social and political significance of the colonial built heritage in Chandannagar and analyze the reasons for the dilapidation and poor state of maintenance of these structures. The laws regarding monument protection in India will also be studied in this respect as a possible influence on the mindset of the general Indian public. I will also identify the reasons for the low level of community engagement and

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[10] Data collected by the author during field research in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.

awareness in heritage management in Chandannagar. The latter part of the chapter also analyses a case in respect to the importance of community engagement in heritage preservation. The conclusion of this chapter will provide a justification for community participation as a necessary segment of heritage management.

In the second chapter, I will analyze the built heritage of Chandannagar with respect to the architectural styles, state of preservation and the ownership of the buildings. The different approaches towards the classification of the built heritage will be analyzed. I will also present the official or legal protection and designation of the structures and discuss it in the context of the state of preservation. In the later part of the chapter, I will critically discuss why the local community in Chandannagar is detached from the built heritage. Theoretical framework for evaluating the need for communities around heritage will also be placed and examined in the context of Chandannagar.

The third chapter will focus on the stakeholder analysis of Chandannagar's built heritage. In this regard, I will define the stakeholders and the beneficiaries of a project in a general context and use it to identify the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the heritage revitalization process in Chandannagar. The second part of the chapter evaluates the ways in which active engagement on the part of the stakeholders and beneficiaries can be ensured. In this regard, it stresses the need for public-private partnership in heritage restoration and analyses a successful case of restoration in a similar small town in West Bengal.

In the fourth chapter, I will present the results of the analysis of the heritage documentation and conservation projects conducted in Chandannagar. This evaluation is crucial to understand the reasons for success of these projects or inability to reach the desired objectives, and to suggest solutions for increased community participation in heritage revitalization. The chapter

presents arguments as to the level of contribution of the projects in the overall degree of community participation in the town.

The next part of the chapter will provide suggestions on how to adopt different approaches towards the community in order to spread awareness and generate involvement. As one of the possible methods for developing an active community around heritage, it will evaluate the concept of Theatre for Development and place it in the social and cultural context of Chandannagar. A bottom-up approach towards heritage and an informed community have the potential to influence the government and other stakeholders to invest in and safeguard the built heritage of the town.

Chapter 1. Chandannagar's Colonial Past and Problematic Present Heritage

There was a general tension in the air during the final World Cup match between France and Croatia on the night of July 15, 2018 as people huddled together to watch the match on the big screen, their faces adorned with the French tricolor, streets decked in a combination of red, blue and white paper strips as they waited with bated breath, fireworks ready to be lit once the final whistle sounded and France lifted the cup.

This scene was not in France, not in Europe, but in a tiny town in Bengal, thousands of miles away from France geographically but no less distant in spirit. This was in Chandannagar (French: Chandernagore), a former French colony on the banks of the river Hooghly in West Bengal, the first French trading post 1673 and territory in India.[11] [Figure 1] Celebrations continued late into the night until July 16, as Chandannagar resident Sumita Rakshit said, "It was a scene to savor after France won the World Cup. Paris is far from here, but the atmosphere was no different."[12]

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[11] "History of Chandannagar," accessed January 19, 2019, http://www.chandernagoremunicipalcorporation.in/Content.aspx?ID=History.

[12] IANS, "West Bengal's Chandannagar Celebrate's France's World Cup Win," *Business Standard India*, July 16, 2018, https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/west-bengal-s-chandannagar-celebrate-s-france-s-world-cup-win-118071600904_1.html. For more, see: Sumanta Banerjee, "A Tale of Two Cities Under Colonial Rule: Chandernagore and Calcutta," n.d., 28.
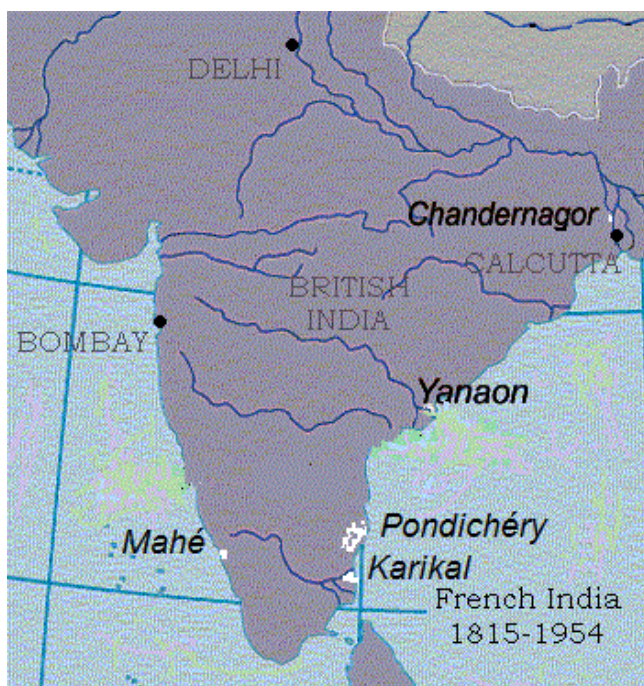
Figure 1 Map of French India showing the location of Chandannagar, 1815-1954. Source: Wikipedia

Chandannagar reached the peak of prosperity as a flourishing French colonial town during the governance of Francois Dupleix, the Governor of Chandannagar, appointed in 1731.[13] By 1740, Chandannagar attained the status of a successful commercial, educational and cultural center. As a researcher Anubha Ukil noted: "Never perhaps did the glory of the French and their prosperity acquire a more extended field than in this colony on the bank of the Ganga."[14]

In order to comprehend the precise nature of the built heritage in the town, it is crucial to examine the history of its evolution which also forms a part of the heritage interpretation. With the establishment of the permanent French settlement in 1688 and the administrative and developmental efforts undertaken by Dupleix, Chandannagar evolved into a center for trade, wealth, and correspondingly, a city that showcased French architectural exploits that bore

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[13] "History of Chandannagar," accessed January 19, 2019,
http://www.chandernagoremunicipalcorporation.in/Content.aspx?ID=History.
[14] Anubha Ukil, "Morphology of Chandannagar an Urban Analysis," Ph. D. diss., University of Calcutta, 1996, page 21. Available online at *Shodhganga*, accessed January 19, 2019, http://hdl.handle.net/10603/165270. See: Chapter 3: "Historical Evolution". See more at: "People of the River: The Ganges Chandannagar- YouTube," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9JNGRB15w4.

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testimony to the significant position of the town for the French in Northern India.[15] Several administrative centers, residential buildings, and entertainment centers were constructed along the banks of the river Ganga, also known as 'Hooghly' in the region, and soon the town became a source of envy for the other European traders in the area, especially the British East India company.

In the Anglo-French war of 1756-57, when French forces were defeated by the English and many significant buildings and trade centers destroyed by the British army.[16] After the war, the town lost its prominence and prosperous trade industry to Kolkata, which then became the most important trade center in the North-Eastern region of India under the British.[17]

The term "colonialism," as defined by the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, is "a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another."[18] The current situation in Chandannagar with regard to the colonial past and legacy however, suggests that this definition is too simple. As illustrated above, the town of Chandannagar had reached the peak of economic, social and cultural development during the height of the Dupleix-led French administration in the area, and consequently lost its former glory to the newly founded city of Kolkata (Calcutta) after 1757. As can be ascertained from the current friendly relations between the French and the Indian governments, and the benevolent attitude of the local community of Chandannagar towards the French colonial past, Chandannagar takes a break from the established notion around the phrase "colonial".[19]

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[15] Ibid.
[16] Ukil, "Morphology of Chandannagar an Urban Analysis", 24.
[17] Ibid, 25.
[18] Margaret Kohn, and Kavita Reddy, "Colonialism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed March 2, 2019 https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/colonialism/.
[19] Video interview conducted with Basabi Pal on May 10, 2019. (See the Appendix).

The colonial history of the town, however, makes the built heritage of Chandannagar a problematic issue as the question of the ownership of the heritage is raised, as, despite being influenced by the French authorities, these buildings are now under the ownership and governance of the West Bengal government. In this chapter I will analyze root causes of heritage disintegration and low community participation with regard to the colonial past of Chandannagar. The level of community participation in the context of heritage protection and management and its necessity in such a case will also be justified.

1.1 The Problematic Character of Built Heritage in Chandannagar

Chandannagar was under French dominion until the independence of India from British rule in 1947, when, following negotiations between the Governments of France and India, a plebiscite was conducted in 1949 among the residents, the majority of whom voted to become a part of India. In 1952, the de jure transfer of Chandannagar to India took place, and the local administration was handed over to the government of India.[20]

After Chandannagar was declared a part of the Indian union, several administrative and changes of use were initiated. The former residence of Francois Dupleix, the French governor was turned into the Institut de Chandernagore, a symbol of the colonial past and French legacy of the town, with a statue of Marianne on its manicured lawn commemorating the French Revolution of 1789.[21] [Figure 2]

The French government proposed appointing a librarian and historian from France to work in the Institut de Chandernagore to maintain ties with the town—a proposal that was soon lost in

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[20]"History of Chandannagar," accessed January 19, 2019,
http://www.chandernagoremunicipalcorporation.in/Content.aspx?ID=History.
[21] "Chandannagar: The Waning Moon of French India – Echelon," May 19, 2019,
https://echelon.lk/chandannagar-the-waning-moon-of-french-india/.

the bureaucratic red tape of the new Indian government.[22] However, the Indian government was not unaware of the historical value of the French buildings and placed the Institut de Chandernagore under the Archaeological Survey of India,[23] a government body responsible for the preservation and conservation of historical and cultural monuments in India.[24]

Figure 2 The Institut de Chandernagore, administered by the Archaeological Survey of India. Source: Round Glass

The term "built heritage of Chandannagar" here will be used to denote the monuments and buildings constructed in Chandannagar during the French administration of the town from 1688 to 1952, that are considered to be of historical and cultural significance to the town, considering

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[22]"Chandannagar: The Waning Moon of French India – Echelon," May 19, 2019, https://echelon.lk/chandannagar-the-waning-moon-of-french-india/.
[23] Institut de Chandernagore, "Introduction," January 19, 2019, http://institutedechandernagor.gov.in/intro.htm.
[24] "Website of Archaeological Survey of India | National Portal of India," January 19, 2019, https://www.india.gov.in/official-website-archaeological-survey-india.

that Chandannagar was established as a town by the French colonial rulers. However, the use of this term raises the inevitable question: whose heritage are we talking about here?

There is no simple answer to this question. Heritage comes with the attribution of value to an object, culture, monument or site. For the residents of Chandannagar, this value is present in the French-language schools where French is taught as a foreign language. In addition, the Institut de Chandernagore serves also as an Indo-French cultural institute and museum, home to relics and objects from the colonial period, and supports the activities of the Alliance Francaise du Bengale of Kolkata.[25] However, the protection measures taken by the municipal corporation are lagging when it comes to the built heritage of Chandannagar, as is evident from the deplorable condition of the buildings designated as heritage and the quick demolition of several heritage monuments. The French heritage that is so eminently maintained in the French administrative unit of Pondicherry (Puducherry) in Southern India is in shambles in the case of Chandernagore.[26]

Based on the number of students enrolled in the French-language schools and the Institut de Chandernagore for French lessons, the enthusiasm and support for France in the World Cup 2018, and from social media pages and posts made by the residents of Chandannagar, it can be assumed that the town's residents continue to harbor Francophilia to some extent, although it is not a well-informed emotion, as is discerned from the use of an incorrect 'French' flag during the World cup support rallies, 2018. The creation of a Facebook page named "Association Des Francophiles Chandernagore College French Department" showcases that the study of French

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[25] "Chandannagar: The Waning Moon of French India – Echelon," May 19, 2019, https://echelon.lk/chandannagar-the-waning-moon-of-french-india/.

[26]"Exploring Pondicherry - Promenade Beach, French Heritage, and Auroville," January 19, 2019, https://www.hotels.com/articles/ar018004/exploring-pondicherry-promenade-beach-french-heritage-and-auroville/.

language is not just a degree course but creation of an identity as a group of people who share the same love and admiration for French language and culture.[27]

Francophila about Chandannagar, although, is not only the mandate of the residents, but also harbored and marketed by several website and online tour booking pages, which offer Chandannagar as a 'compulsory place to visit' for a 'Francophile living in India.'[28]A webpage refers to the 'Francophilic experience' that can be expected in Chandannagar and showcases the perspectives of people from other regions of India.[29]

Blogger Nirupama Subramanian in her travel blog narrates her experience of visiting Chandannagar with her family: "I had heard bits and pieces about Chandernagore over the years. It was one of the first outposts of India's colonial past, a French colony rather like Puducherry. The taxi driver we hired for the day from Kolkata stared blankly when we told him our destination. When realization dawned, he said: 'Oh…Chandonnogar. But there is nothing there,' advising us instead to go during the time of Jagadhatri Puja".[30]

The "experience" that visitors expect while visiting a former French colony is French cafes, old French-style residential houses and a French quarter. This suggests the marketability of the French legacy of the town for tourists and visitors. However, Chandannagar, despite the residents' pride in the French legacy of their town, primarily manifested in Indo-French cultural events in the Institut and the culture of the French language, lags behind in the management and conservation of such buildings. The lack of mass initiative by the local residents for the

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[27]"Association Des Francophiles Chandernagore College French Department - Home," March 2, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/ccfrenchugpg/.

[28]"Chandannagar,Kolkata," March 2, 2019, https://www.mapsofindia.com/kolkata/chandannagar.html.

[29]"Chandannagar: That Sweet Francophilic Feel," March 2, 2019, http://experiences.seeksherpa.com/expdetails.php?expid=338.

[30]"The Forgotten French Colony of Chandernagore, an Hour From Kolkata | Nat Geo Traveller India," January 19, 2019, http://www.natgeotraveller.in/the-forgotten-french-colony-of-chandernagore-an-hour-from-kolkata/.

maintenance and restoration of heritage buildings can be first approached from the angle of the history of monument protection in colonial India.

1.2 Monument protection during the Colonial period in India

The comprehension of the colonial history of monument protection in India is crucial for the understanding of the modern policies of protection of historically and culturally significant sites. The status of India as a crown colony, which made its people the subjects rather than the citizens of the British crown, meant that their rights could easily be curtailed by the British authorities without much hassle.[31] Regarding their role in the management of public buildings, the passing of the Bengal Regulation (XIX) took place in 1810, and the Madras Regulation (VII) was passed in 1817.[32] These regulations vested the government with the power to intervene whenever public buildings were under threat of misuse."[33]

The task and responsibility of heritage protection and management in India is mostly with the state authorities, a practice rooted in the colonial history of monument protection. Upon Viceroy Lord Curzon's (1899-1905) initiative,[34] came a new era in monument and heritage protection in British India, as he set a benchmark for heritage conservation in colonial India. In a speech that he made at the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta (Kolkata) in the year 1900, he mentioned how it is an "obligation" for the British authorities to facilitate the efficient management as the self-proclaimed custodians of the architectural heritage of the country.[35]

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[31] Indra Sengupta, "Preservation between Empire, Nation and Nationalisms: The Problem of History and Heritage in India." *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 1 (2018): 110–30.
[32] Works Department, Central Public, "Handbook of Conservation of Heritage Buildings," accessed March 2, 2019, https://cpwd.gov.in/Publication/ConservationHertBuildings.pdf.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Indra Sengupta, "Preservation between Empire, Nation and Nationalisms: The Problem of History and Heritage in India." *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 1 (2018): 110–30.
[35] Ibid.

The colonial attitude of the British government was also reflected in the post-colonial heritage protection laws and schemes in India, whereby the government or the state became the sole custodian and guardian of heritage. The adoption of already-existing authoritative bodies and laws for the protection of monuments and heritage from the colonial era like the Archaeological Survey of India serves to illustrate the transmission of perspectives toward heritage protection from the colonial period. The protection of heritage through the enactment and implementation of laws without the involvement of the communities around through a top-down approach to heritage conservation might be one of the causes for the lack of responsibility. The residents of Chandannagar miss a direct connection with the structures that are considered "heritage," as most of them are either government buildings or privately-owned. The British government in India, with the intention of preserving the "authenticity" of built structures, declared them as protected monuments, and thus alienated the local residents and the living tradition from these structures.[36] Many such sites were fenced-off to ensure limited access of people, and either special permission had to be obtained to enter such a site, or an entrance fee had to be paid. Chandannagar, which fell under the administration of the government of independent India, fell under the legislation of the Archaeological Survey of India, established in 1861 by the British Indian government "to initiate legal provision to protect the historical structures all over India."[37]

The French connections of Chandannagar are not immediately noticeable in the town's lifestyle and townscape. There is no French quarter in Chandannagar, similar to that in a French colonial town: Strand Road, the promenade along the river Hooghly, is the only distinct feature reminiscent of French history. The Institut de Chandannagar, an Indo-French cultural institute and museum, was, however, inscribed as a protected heritage building under the

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[36] Ibid.
[37] Works Department, Central Public, "Handbook of Conservation of Heritage Buildings," accessed March 2, 2019 https://cpwd.gov.in/Publication/ConservationHertBuildings.pdf.

Archaeological Survey of India. However, although the Institut proudly communicates the shared heritage of the two cultures, French and Bengali, as an institution it suffers from lack of maintenance and presentation methods.[38]

Blogger Nirupama Subramaniam, after her visit to the Insitut de Chandernagor, writes in her blog: "From the condition of the museum, it seemed like no one really cares much about its history or current state. The old four-poster bed, the run-down sofas, the pretty crockery, and the odd statues and lithographs are scattered about the rooms in no particular order. They looked shabby, yet stolid and proud, all mute witnesses to another era."[39]

The Institut has very few visitors who are local residents of Chandannagar, and very few visitors from elsewhere, although the number has increased since the visit of the French Ambassador and unveiling of heritage plaques[40].The absence of an attractive permanent exhibition and museum guides who can capture the attention and interest of the visitors has led to the museum being almost non-functional. The objects in display suffer from the lack of protection and conservation measures against humidity, temperature and so on, and some of them are covered in dust. This is reflective of the condition of the French-era buildings in Chandannagar— in poor condition and low level of interest from the local community. This not because they are not proud of the built heritage, but because of the lack of integration and initiative of the people into the management of the heritage. This approach might also have been generated by the monument and heritage protection laws and legislation that have been practiced in the state.

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[38] Group interviews conducted by the author among residents and students in Chandannagar between February 2 to 14, 2019.

[39] "The Forgotten French Colony of Chandernagore, an Hour From Kolkata," Nat Geo Traveller India, accessed January 19, 2019. http://www.natgeotraveller.in/the-forgotten-french-colony-of-chandernagore-an-hour-from-kolkata/.

[40] Log-book of visitors in the Institut de Chandannagar and interview conducted with the receptionist of the Institut on February 8, 2019.

1.3 State of Heritage Conservation and Community Involvement in Post-colonial India

After the country was declared independent in 1947, the new Indian government set to work to bring the heritage of the nation to the forefront as a tool for nation-building. This was a monumental task, considering the vast size and the diverse religious, linguistic and ethnic groups that lived in each region. The strict implementation of such rules and regulations by the government bodies alone served to drive a wedge between the local communities and the management.[41] A similar instance of local perspectives can be illustrated with the example of the historic walled city of Ahmedabad, which was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2017.[42] The historic area of the city is a residential area with many religious structures such as mosques, Hindu and Jain temples.

The municipal corporation of Ahmedabad was hopeful that the UNESCO World Heritage listing would mean that the local communities in the area would start to appreciate the heritage value of the structures and start taking measures to safeguard them. [43] However, the municipality failed to take into consideration that beatifying the area alone would not make the city a valuable heritage site for the residents, when basic sanitation facilities, drainage and the necessary amenities of modern-day life are missing or poor. Studying the case of Ahmedabad, it can be argued that in some cases, intervention and action by the government alone does not simply alienate the people from their natural habitat but makes them regard it as something that

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[41]Indra Sengupta, "Preservation between Empire, Nation and Nationalisms: The Problem of History and Heritage in India." *Nations and Nationalism* 24, no. 1 (2018): 110–30.
[42] "Ahmedabad: A World Heritage City." Sahapedia, January 30, 2018. https://www.sahapedia.org/heritage-preservation-of-the-historic-city-of-ahmedabad.
[43] Rutul Joshi, "What Ahmedabad Needs to Do beyond Celebrating Its 'World Heritage City' Tag," Text, Scroll.in, accessed May 29, 2019, https://scroll.in/article/843299/what-ahmedabad-needs-to-do-beyond-celebrating-its-world-heritage-city-tag.

belongs to the state and not them. Vandalism is a common expression of this disposition, and sadly is a widespread phenomenon in India.[44]

On the local level, the same issue is present in the case of the colonial architectural structures and buildings in Chandannagar. It is noteworthy that most of the prominent structures are owned and run by the government, and access is limited to ordinary residents. Accessibility here is an important aspect for the inclusion of the residents, which is lacking in the case of Chandannagar. The Institut de Chandannagar, one of the most prominent buildings administered by the Archaeological Survey of India has certain rules and regulations which make it difficult for the local community to integrate themselves. All visitors to the museum are required to put away their phones and bags in the lockers, making it impossible for them to take pictures of the artefacts and objects in the museum.[45] Although this might sound reasonable for the protection of the museum displays, in the case of this particular museum it does not apply as the objects are displayed in a haphazard manner without proper protection for the papers and manuscripts: original objects that are covered in dust, displays without any caption or logical arrangement, and broken pieces of artefacts. These rules make the visitor, especially a local resident feel like an outsider in a place which supposedly is their heritage. The limitation of information flow and the exclusion of the local residents from the management of heritage is something that is prevalent in India and contributes to the apathy that the local communities have towards heritage.

Community involvement in the management and conservation of heritage would be the first logical step towards bridging the gap of understanding and cooperation between the state and

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[44] Rutul Joshi, "What Ahmedabad Needs to Do beyond Celebrating Its 'World Heritage City' Tag," Text, Scroll.in, accessed May 29, 2019, https://scroll.in/article/843299/what-ahmedabad-needs-to-do-beyond-celebrating-its-world-heritage-city-tag.

[45] Based on the empirical data collected by the author during field research in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.

the local community, as they are the ones who will be living in the heritage site and interacting with the structures and monuments on a daily basis. To exclude them from the management would result in indifference, barrier of understanding and in some cases, resentment leading to vandalism. A small section of educated residents of Chandannagar, as a community are aware of the heritage value of the town's French-period buildings, which is vested in the creation of Facebook groups and pages for the town's heritage, the publishing of books and articles about the town's French legacy, and the participation of many students in the Bon Jour India Indo-French cultural exchange and the Hooghly River of Cultures project. However, this is only a small section of the population and the larger mass need a more integrated approach towards the inclusion and participation in the heritage management.[46]

The Municipal Corporation of Ahmedabad has already begun to address this issue by organizing educational sessions for local people in the World Heritage area, heritage walks for schoolchildren who are residents in the area, and with the establishment of a research institute for the city.[47]

In the case of Chandannagar, however, community participation is more difficult as there is not enough support from the state authorities at local and regional level and the task of ensuring community involvement is vested in NGOs which do not always have the sufficient resources to facilitate such an action successfully. Hence, community involvement is more urgently required in this area because of the immediate danger threatening the heritage buildings due to lack of proper protection measures.[48]

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[46]"The Chandannagar," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/groups/Chandannagore/permalink/2112753328759787/.
[47] "Ahmedabad: A World Heritage City." *Sahapedia*, accessed January 30, 2018. https://www.sahapedia.org/heritage-preservation-of-the-historic-city-of-ahmedabad.
[48]"Ibid.

1.4 Heritage Policies of the State and its Impact on Community Perceptions

The heritage protection policies and measures adopted by the current Indian government accentuate the alienation that the local communities feel from their heritage. The State as the sole custodian and guardian of 'heritage' is authoritarian, also the very word 'heritage' itself is not understood by many people of Chandannagar who come from the lower classes of the society with little or no education. 'Heritage', therefore, becomes something that is the possession of the upper and upper-middle classes – the elites, disrupting the connection of the buildings with the local community that is interacting with it daily.

The 'othering' of the people from the buildings and sites declared as 'heritage' is also one of the primary causes for the indifference of the local community towards the built heritage. Also, the authority of the state to declare something as 'heritage' is somewhat reminiscent of the colonial practice of the British Indian administration of proclaiming itself as the upholder and protector of heritage and declaring buildings and sites they found worthy, to be declared as heritage, not involving the local communities. They are 'told' to respect and consider the buildings as heritage because the government and the experts employed by the government to study the sites and buildings said so. The creation of the idea of 'heritage' by expert studies and legal declarations only serve a superficial purpose; heritage is inseparable from the local communities and an artificial and enforced alienation only ensures that the residents are completely irresponsible for the management and protection of such sites.[49]

In Chandannagar the case is similar to what has been stated above. The listing of the heritage buildings and sites and the declarations are made by the government bodies, namely the Archaeological Survey of India, the West Bengal Heritage Commission, and the French

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[49] Petronela Spiridon, "Conservation of Cultural Heritage: From Participation to Collaboration" 5, no. 1 (n.d.): 10.

Consulate which, although sometimes consult the residents of the town, mostly do not inform them except for a selected few. This can be illustrated with the help of a recent development that took place in the heritage sector of Chandannagar. On the 6th of February 2019, the West Bengal Heritage Commission, along with the French Consulate, held a grand event where the French Ambassador to India visited the town to unveil the memorial plaques to be placed in front of three buildings in Chandannagar that had been declared heritage by the West Bengal Heritage Commission.[50]Although the event was open for public, the atmosphere around the Institut de Chandernagore, which was chosen as the venue, was one of intimidation and officialness, with a large convoy of West Bengal police vans around the area, policemen manning the premises and the entrance to the Institut, and the formal ambience that discouraged local residents to take part in it. In addition, the local people of Chandannagar, except for the few who had been involved with the heritage designation process or somehow connected with the heritage commission, had no prior information from the part of the municipal corporation of Chandannagar or the government authorities regarding the event that was about to take place. It was as if it was a private event for the unveiling of private plaques for buildings that are the heritage of the elite Indian citizens and the out-of-bounds French Consulate. The residents of Chandannagar only came to know of this event by word-of-mouth and social media posts later, after the plaques magically appeared in front of the buildings which they have been familiar with since they first arrived in the town.[51]This practice of non-interaction and lack of open dialogue with the local residents regarding heritage causes deep-rooted issues such as indifference, ignorance and low level of engagement which currently is the case in Chandannagar.

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[50] "France and West Bengal Sign a MOU for Heritage Revitalization in Chandernagore," La France en Inde / France in India, accessed May 29, 2019, https://in.ambafrance.org/France-and-West-Bengal-sign-a-MOU-for-Heritage-revitalization-in-Chandernagore.
[51] "The Chandannagar," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.facebook.com/groups/Chandannagore/permalink/211275332875787/.

Summing up, despite having the problematic segment of "colonial heritage" which raises questions of the ownership of the built monuments, does not seem to possess the negative conceptions about colonial heritage as has been demonstrated through the cordial relations between the two governments and a certain level of Francophilia exhibited by its residents. The issue of heritage management and low level of community participation in Chandannagar does not have a simple solution. There are several segments to the roots of this problem, one of which is the nature of the monument protection laws in colonial and present-day India which mandates the responsibility and ownership of built heritage to the state. This causes the alienation of the local community around the heritage. Heritage and communities interact with each other, and the exclusion of the local community from the management and planning leads to lack of accountability for the safeguarding of heritage.

Chapter 2 – State of Conservation and Use of Built Heritage in Chandannagar

Chandannagar, the first French trading post on the Eastern part of India established in the year 1696 grew and flourished during the governance of Joseph Francois Dupleix, the French governor-general, and it was during his rule that several buildings were constructed in the town which showcased a unique blend of Bengali and French architectural styles.[52] This chapter will analyze the present state of preservation and maintenance of these buildings, and examine the classification of these structures by the Heritage Chandernagore project in 2010. The relation between the state of preservation and the current use and ownership of the buildings will be also be evaluated, in addition to the legislative measures undertaken. The second part of the chapter critically discusses the correlation between heritage and local communities and places this theoretical structure in the context of Chandannagar.

Chandannagar attained the status of a prosperous trading post, which encouraged wealthy Bengali merchants to build residential houses and settle in Chandannagar for the purpose of trade and commerce.[53] At present, the buildings from the French colonial period constructed by the French authorities located mostly on the banks of the river Hooghly are government offices, college, sub-divisional court, and museum, while the houses built by the Bengali merchants are either still residential palaces or used as public property.

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[52]Shiv Sahay Singh, "Love Heritage? Fund Restoration," *The Hindu*, January 27, 2018, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/love-heritage-fund-restoration/article22537389.ece.
[53] Ibid.

In 2010, conservation architect Aishwarya Tipnis, after extensive research around the public and private buildings and mansions of Chandannagar, compiled a list of 99 buildings constructed during the colonial period which were historically and architecturally essential and therefore possessing heritage value, and also a separate list containing the names of the buildings that need immediate restoration.[54] The project sparked many initiatives by both the West Bengal state government and the French Consulate in Kolkata. However, the restoration of the buildings listed was never carried out due to insufficient financial resources. As the architect herself remarked, "Every time we have asked for a restoration project, nobody has had the funds."[55]

The project of identification, listing, and documentation of the heritage buildings by Aishwarya Tipnis, carried out by her organization Aishwarya Tipnis Architects, was supported jointly by the Embassy of France in India and the Foundation Vielles Maisons Francaise (VMF).[56]The list of heritage buildings in danger and need of urgent restoration was compiled in 2010, where after the process of integration of the local public with their built heritage was started, resulting in 2016 in a website named heritagechandernagore.com, which not only presents the list of heritage buildings on a map of the town, but also provides detailed information about the location of the building, the date of construction, the architectural style it represents, and the state of conservation.[57] The map also contains the different categories of classification of the buildings and a bigger map of the whole of India with information about the other French posts in the country.[58] A detailed study of this project has been done to serve as a basis for the analysis of the number, ownership and state of preservation of the classified heritage buildings

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[54]Heritage Chandernagore," accessed May 29, 2019, http://www.heritagechandernagore.com.
[55]Shiv Sahay Singh, "Love Heritage? Fund Restoration," *The Hindu*, January 27, 2018, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/love-heritage-fund-restoration/article22537389.ece.
[56] Ibid.
[57]"Heritage Chandernagore," March 9, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/frenchheritage.html.
[58] Ibid.

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in Chandannagar. The data regarding the conditions of the buildings presented in the project website has been the primary source of information for my analysis of the built heritage in Chandannagar.

2.1 Endangered Heritage of Chandannagar

According to the website of the heritagechandernagore.com, which contains the list of the built heritage, the buildings and sites have been classified with reference to several characteristics: assessment of significance, grading(provided by the architect), state of preservation, typology and architectural style.[59] A survey of the map where the heritage buildings are marked shows that many of the buildings that were constructed during the French era and possess heritage values are located close to the river. Almost all the French buildings, constructed by the French administrators and used as important government buildings, are noted to be in a good state of preservation. This can be owed to the legal protection and present government ownership of the mentioned afore-mentioned structures.

Aiswarya Tipnis Architects, in their project report on "Identification of Shared Cultural Heritage – French Heritage in India" published in July 2011 state the methodology and the criteria of assessment used for the documentation and identification of the built heritage of the town.[60] The project has been conducted in accordance with the principles defined by the Burra Charter adopted by ICOMOS in 1999.[61] The research and documentation have been done in two phases for the identification and listing of the heritage sites: Phase one, which comprised of archival and documentary research and reconnaissance survey, including field survey, photo

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[59]Shiv Sahay Singh, "Love Heritage? Fund Restoration," *The Hindu*, January 27, 2018, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/love-heritage-fund-restoration/article22537389.ece.

[60] Tipnis, Aishwarya. 2011. "Identification of Shared Cultural Heritage – French Heritage in India." Publication. *Identification of Shared Cultural Heritage – French Heritage in India*. New Delhi: Aishwarya Tipnis Architects: Architects and Conservation Planners, 14.

[61] "Charters," accessed March 10, 2019, https://australia.icomos.org/publications/charters/.

documentation and the preparation of a draft list of heritage buildings, was followed by the Phase two of the project, that conducted historical, archival and documentary research, field surveys, fabric mapping and assessment of significance of the buildings.[62]

The report defines heritage assets as "Assets of not only outstanding values and excellence produced historically under a set of cultural conditions but also tangible and intangible cultural manifestations and resources that explicitly or implicitly play a significant role in people's livelihoods; the loss of which would be irreversible and severely affect their living conditions."[63] However, in the case of Chandannagar, it recommends the need for further research and study for discerning the French influence on the built heritage.

2.2 Classification of the Built Heritage of Chandannagar

According to the list compiled by Aishwarya Tipnis Architects, the consultancy firm belonging to Aishwarya Tipnis, some of the buildings in Chandannagar needed urgent conservation.[64] These included government and non-governmental buildings, private buildings and spaces. The list has been divided into several classification criteria, out of which two buildings have been declared dilapidated. In this regard, the relation between the state of preservation and the ownership is taken a departure from, as the two structures declared to be in a dilapidated condition is owned by the sub-divisional controller of Food and Supplies.[65] The first is the Registry Building(French Tribunal), constructed in 1875 in the French architectural style and designated under the classification "French colonial" by Aishwarya Tipnis, which played a

[62] Tipnis, Aishwarya. 2011. "Identification of Shared Cultural Heritage – French Heritage in India." Publication. *Identification of Shared Cultural Heritage – French Heritage in India*. New Delhi: Aishwarya Tipnis Architects: Architects and Conservation Planners, 39.
[63] Ibid.
[64] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed March 22, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/phpsqlsearch_map.html.
[65] "Chandernagore's French Correction," accessed March 22, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/chandernagore-39-s-french-correction/cid/1452590.

significant role in the lives of the residents of Chandannagar during the French administration, as many lawsuits and marriages were registered in this building.[66] [Figure 3]

Figure 3 The Registry Office (French Tribunal), Chandannagar. Source: Aishwarya Tipnis Architects

This building was declared a "moderately significant" building in a dilapidated condition that was in need of urgent conservation.[67] At present, however, the building remains in the same ruined condition with the addition of only a plaque in front of it which declares that it is a heritage building with historical significance. The chairperson of the West Bengal Heritage Commission, Mr. Shuvaprasanna and the French Ambassador to India, Mr. Alexander Zeigler unveiled the plaque in the month of February 2019, but were still unsure as to the source of funds that would be employed in the project of restoring the building to its original state.[Figure 4] The situation with the building is in a deadlock, as the French government has not made any commitments for the provision of funds which the West Bengal Heritage Commission is expecting. "It is our goal to restore and conserve the glorious past of this

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[66] Shiv Sahay Singh, "Buildings in Former French Colony Await Restoration," *The Hindu*, February 7, 2019, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/buildings-in-former-french-colony-await-restoration/article26207063.ece.

[67]"Heritage Chandernagore," accessed March 22, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/phpsqlsearch_map.html.

historical town. You can all understand that an undertaking of this nature cannot be served by the limited funds of the West Bengal Heritage Commission alone. We need all the support and help from the French government, if they come forward," Mr. Suvaprasanna is said to have remarked in an interview.[68] Alexander Zeigler declared that the French government would provide a team of architects to study the building and "provide inputs" on the restoration, but no funding was mentioned. A crowdfunding project designed by the French consulate in 2018 to fund the restoration of the Registry building failed, and since then the building has been a heritage building in a state of ruin.[69]

Figure 4 French Ambassador Alexander Zeigler and West Bengal Heritage Commission Chairperson Shuvaprasanna unveil the heritage plaque outside the Registry Building, 6th February 2019. Source: The Hindu

The second building in a dilapidated state according to the list was the Chandannagar Hospital (Hospital Morgain). It was constructed in 1871 in French colonial style, and despite being a building that had a high historical and architectural significance according to the classification,

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[68] Shiv Sahay Singh, "Buildings in Former French Colony Await Restoration," *The Hindu*, February 7, 2019, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/buildings-in-former-french-colony-await-restoration/article26207063.ece.
[69] Ibid.

it failed to be restored to a functionable state and finally was demolished. The case of this building can serve to reflect the state of several heritage buildings in Chandannagar, which, despite identification as a building of high significance, was not provided legal protection by the government authorities.

The case of the Registry building, however, has made it clear that mere enlistment and provision of legal protection to heritage buildings by the West Bengal Heritage Commission cannot be the guarantor of the preservation, restoration and maintenance of such buildings. It serves only to make sure that the building cannot be demolished or altered in any manner: the question of restoration, however, remains unanswered.[70]

The list identifies 35 of the buildings in a poor state of conservation. This includes buildings ranging from high to low significance, predominantly belonging to the French Colonial, Indo-French and Hybrid architectural styles. A definition of what a hybrid architectural style constitutes and comprises of in this respect is unavailable on the webpage of the listing.[71]

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[70] Interview conducted with Neline and Ujjal Mondal, heritage activists and private heritage building owners, February 9, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.
[71] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed March 9, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/frenchheritage.html.

Figure 5 Doyal Manjil and Sleepy Hollow, both privately-owned unofficial heritage buildings in Chandannagar. Source: Aishwarya Tipnis Architects

It is notable that most of the buildings that are in a poorly-maintained state are privately owned buildings, predominantly residential houses.[Figure 5] This might be the basis of the argument that the function and ownership of the building is directly related to its state of maintenance and conservation. As the buildings only serve residential purpose, are owned by a private individual and inhabited by his family, the building is not seen as significant enough in current use for the broader public. However, there are exceptions in this regard which pose a challenge to the argument made above, embodied in two heritage structures that are owned by the Municipal Corporation of Chandannagar and serve a significant purpose for the public life of the residents of the town.[72] [Figure 7] The first building is the office building of the municipal corporation itself, that is ranked moderate in significance but is highly important from the aspect of the function it serves. The outer façade of the building has been painted, but the restoration that it requires has not yet been initiated by the authorities. The second is an open

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[72] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed March 9, 2019,
http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/frenchheritage.html.

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space originally designed as a park for public use when it was constructed in 1820, known as Marie Park. [Figure 6] It is a square-shaped space, close to the building of the municipal corporation that had "decorative pillars and cast-iron grills."[73] These grills, however, are gone and space is now in use as a sports ground for public. Despite being a highly significant historical site and a space for public use, the condition of the remaining pillars has not been improved.

Figure 6 Marie Park, Chandannagar. Source: Aishwarya Tipnis Architects

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[73] Ibid.

Figure 7 Chandannagar Municipal Corporation. Source: Chandannagarmypride

2.3 Heritage and Communities

The notions of communities and heritage, despite being considered as ambiguous ideas, are nevertheless fundamental for the formation of each other.[74] The heritage definition and formation undertaking in an area is viewed "as a means to define a community by its customs, language, landscape, history, artefacts and monuments".[75] Heritage therefore serves to represent the identity and the values harbored by the community that claims ownership over it. Is community a political and social construct, therefore? As heritage is created by a certain community that owns, nurtures, develops and identifies with it, so must a community be created based on political and social ideologies around a potential heritage site. "The community group

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[74] Elizabeth Crooke, "The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority and Control," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2010): 17.
[75] Ibid.

is defined and justified because of its heritage and that heritage is fostered and sustained by the creation of community."[76]

The relationship between heritage and the community has been identified by heritage researchers as a natural connection that negates the requirement for justification.[77] There can be no heritage without a community, as the communities render a 'spirit of place' to the buildings which might otherwise be simple material structures.[78] While establishing the need for the existence of a community around a heritage site, the necessity of defining the community becomes inevitable. The definition of who the community includes is crucial for determining the often-conflicting interests behind, motivations for involvement, connection to the heritage site and the means to engaging the community within the heritage management system.

Owing to its French colonial past, Chandannagar's heritage community transcends national boundaries with both of the French and the Indian government agreeing on the shared quality of the heritage.[79] In addition to the French authorities that consider the historical buildings in Chandannagar as part of their heritage, the immediate community that lives around the heritage sites are the local residents, for whom the heritage buildings comprise a significant part of their living space, urban environment and visual landscape.[80] This community, owing to its social, linguistic, religious and cultural diversity can be further classified into several groups. In this context, however, all these groups of communities will be classified as the community of

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[76] Elizabeth Crooke, "The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority and Control," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2010): 17.
[77] Ibid.
[78] "Community Involvement in Cultural Heritage Conservation |," accessed May 10, 2019, http://www.shabait.com/about-eritrea/history-a-culture/25543-community-involvement-in-cultural-heritage-conservation-.
[79] Tourism Breaking News, "West Bengal & France Sign MoU to Redevelop Chandannagar as Heritage Tourism Destination – Tourism Breaking News," accessed May 10, 2019, https://tourismbreakingnews.com/west-bengal-france-sign-mou-to-redevelop-chandannagar-as-heritage-tourism-destination/.
[80] Ibid.

Chandannagar which constitute the holders of the heritage of the town. The notion of the ownership and sharing of heritage brings with it a certain level of responsibility on the part of the community for the safeguarding and protecting of the heritage structures. This sense of responsibility and the motivation for engagement at all levels is always accompanied by an expectation for some form of gain, whether economic, social, political or cultural. For individuals, economic gain is arguably the most dominant factor behind community participation and active involvement in the heritage revitalization process. The community, however, often features a hierarchy comprising of the individuals or groups of individuals who are the most active members and gradually attain the role of leaders and idea-initiators within the community.[81] This section of society serves to bring the other members together and inspire them to get engaged with the heritage management process. However, it is important in this case to ensure that the rest of the community does not feel intimidated, excluded or ignorant of the heritage which can negate the interest in participation.

The conditions of the Registry building and the Marie Park serve to illustrate the need for the development of an active community around the heritage sites that is enlightened about the heritage value of the place and identifies the site as a part of their local heritage. The private buildings, although evoking a sense of place and forming an integral part of the living space of the community, do not necessarily initiate active engagement in the safeguarding procedure of such buildings. This might be because of the state of ownership of the buildings. The building might have been a significant element of the community's urban living space, but since it belongs to a private individual of the community, the other members do not have a say in the administration, sale and alteration made to the structure. However, as the designation of privately-owned buildings as heritage made by the West Bengal Commission in February 2019

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[81]. Elizabeth Crooke, "The Politics of Community Heritage: Motivations, Authority and Control," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (January 1, 2010):19.

demonstrates, the private buildings have transcended the notion of private heritage and entered the domain of shared public heritage which is owned by private community members.[82]

The declaration of the selected buildings as heritage by the West Bengal Heritage Commission, however, did not increase the participation and awareness level of the residents of Chandannagar towards heritage. No attempt had been made by the governing authorities to integrate the local community with the heritage designation and identification process, and the official plaque-unveiling event had taken place in a formal setting in the Institut de Chandernagor, heavily manned by police officials.[83] It is interesting here to note that although the event was an open entry for all visitors, there were not many local people who dared to venture into the event hall to attend it. There can be two reasons for the non-attendance of the residents in such a situation: the first is the limited access to information. The knowledge of the scheduled heritage designation and declaration event had not been circulated by the responsible authorities among the residents, and therefore the residents who were not directly working alongside the relevant authorities of the project were ignorant of such a happening. "Heritage declaration? When did that happen?", exclaimed Anusua Sabui, a resident of Chandannagar when asked why she didn't attend the formal declaration event.[84] Secondly, the closedness of the event, coupled with the heavily-manned entrance to the venue and the presence of a large number of authoritative officials might have led to intimidation of the general public. "Clear out, the French ambassador is coming", West Bengal policemen on duty could be heard saying to the local people who had their vehicles parked outside the museum, a space which is generally used for this purpose.[85]

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[82]Shiv Sahay Singh, "Buildings in Former French Colony Await Restoration," *The Hindu*, February 7, 2019, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/buildings-in-former-french-colony-await-restoration/article26207063.ece.

[83] Based on field research conducted by the author in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.

[84] Text messages exchanged with Anusua Sabui, resident of Chandannagar on April 10, 2019.

[85] Based on field research conducted by the author in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019

In her conference paper titled "Class, Heritage and the Negotiation of Place", Laurajane Smith argues that heritage is not merely a site, place or a material object but has deep associations with the interplay of power, political legitimacy, and the "negotiation of identity, place and memory."[86] Heritage is then not just the material value of the objects and sites but rather is defined by the socio-cultural interplay and the activities that take place around these sites.[87] This, therefore, makes the living community around the heritage the determinant of what is collective heritage and what is not. In this context, can it be argued that the cause for the neglect of Chandannagar's heritage by the local people is a result of the detachment from the heritage sites?

Professor of French in Chandannagar College, Basabi Pal is of the opinion that the general indifference towards the heritage buildings come from collective ignorance, lack of education and lack awareness of the local communities about the history of the town. "There are many people who have lived for years in Chandannagar without knowing that there is an institution [Institut de Chandernagore and Chandannagar college] which caters to French education and French can be studied up to the Masters' level here. The French past has just become something that can be discussed over a cup of tea, but the knowledge they have about it is superficial."[88] Why do the citizens of Chandannagar not actively participate in the heritage revitalization and management process? In answer to a question about what heritage means to them which I had posted on a Facebook group made for the residents of Chandannagar, fourteen respondents out of around 16,000 members had varied ideas of what heritage means for them. While for some, it was a particular building or a type of architectural style in Chandannagar, for others heritage signified the living culture of a community that includes buildings, monuments, culture,

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[86] Laurajane Smith, "Class, Heritage and the Negotiation of Place," accessed May 11, 2019, https://www.academia.edu/348666/Class_heritage_and_the_negotiation_of_place.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Interview conducted by the author with Basabi Pal on video, May 10, 2019.

language and religion.[89] It is important to note, however, that most residents of Chandannagar are aware of the French legacy of the town and feel the need to conserve it for the future generations. As is mentioned by Professor Basabi Pal, "From interacting with people from various sections of the society in Chandannagar, it is evident that the people of Chandannagar do not have any resentment towards the French, and consider the beautiful buildings constructed during the period as heritage." She recalls the older generation of the residents who had witnessed French administration reminiscing the nostalgic 'good old times.'[90]

As has been observed through my field research and the interviews conducted, the cause of the present situation of isolation of the community lies in several factors. The first is the absence of measures taken by the government authorities to impart education to the local community, especially the younger generation, about the history of the town and the legacy that has been left behind. "I don't blame the young people, it is the lack of effort from schools and other educational institutions which is responsible for this ignorance," Basabi Pal remarks when asked about why young residents of Chandannagar are ignorant of the town's history.[91]

The second cause of the non-involvement might be attributed to the inefficient circulation of information and deficiency of attempts on the part of the heritage management authorities to involve the ordinary residents of Chandannagar. While some efforts are being made to include the students from the local educational institutions in research, heritage walks and workshops, a large section of the population remains uninformed, and hence unaware of the progress being made in this sector.

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[89] "The Chandannagar," accessed May 11, 2019,
https://www.facebook.com/groups/Chandannagore/permalink/2112753328759787/?comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22O%22%7D.
[90] Interview conducted by the author with Basabi Pal on video, May 10, 2019.
[91] Ibid.

Evaluation of the factors behind the low level of engagement of the residents of Chandannagar in the management of their built heritage has highlighted several concerns: inefficient communication between the government and relevant authorities and the local community regarding heritage management, absence of coherent initiatives and measures for the inclusion of the local community, and inaccessibility to the privately-owned built heritage aids in further detachment. Establishment of free dialogue between the relevant authorities and the local community, inclusion in the decision-making process, and steps to raise awareness among the local population about the history and heritage value of the town are necessary to ensure the increased engagement of the local community.

Chapter 3 - Stakeholders and Beneficiaries of the Heritage of Chandannagar

Chandannagar's colonial past enables a unique connection regarding the ownership and responsibility of heritage between the French government, the West Bengal government, and the residents of the town. As has been stated by an ICOMOS publication on the systematic approach for stakeholder management regarding cultural heritage sites, "Stakeholders are individuals and organizations that are actively involved in the works, or whose interests may be affected as a result of works execution or completion. They may also exert influence over the objectives and outcomes." [92] It is therefore important, before the commencement of any research or management project, to identify the stakeholders for the project and to measure their expectations and requirements, and how the results of the project might affect the stakeholders. Stakeholder groups might also have conflicting interests and ideas, which should be taken into consideration while planning heritage revitalization so as to ensure that their interests and abilities are mobilized and directed in a sustainable manner. In a historic urban setting like Chandannagar where the heritage buildings and sites feature multiple-ownership, economic development is more complex. This is because the area is a living space vested with certain traditions, values and use by the community who lives around it. "Conservation efforts therefore need to identify the various values present and must involve local owners and communities who contribute to these values. Multi- actor engagement is vital and partnerships of some sort or another are inevitable," states Susan Macdonald in her essay, "Leveraging Heritage: Public-private, and Third-sector Partnerships for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Environment."[93] Absolute reliance on the government sector for providing solutions to

[92] Mohammadreza Hajialikhani, "A Systematic Stakeholders Management Approach for Protecting the Spirit of Cultural Heritage Sites," 2008, 10.

[93] Susan Macdonald, "Leveraging Heritage: Public-private, and Third-sector Partnerships for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Environment," n.d., 12.

the heritage disintegration issues is undesirable and doomed to fail. Sustainable development of the urban heritage can only be achieved with cooperation from the heritage property-owners, as well as the community members who are shareholders of the intangible heritage value.[94] Chandannagar already has groups of stakeholders who are involved in the heritage management process such as the West Bengal government and the French Consulate. Several other groups in the community, although not involved, are potential stakeholders of the heritage. Beneficiaries of the heritage revitalization project and the changes that it will probably bring to the town constitute an integral segment of the population. As has been noted by a UN FAO guidelines report, the success and sustainability of development projects relies greatly on the continued and productive involvement of the group of beneficiaries of the project.[95] In Chandannagar, therefore, the effective participation of the segments of stakeholders and beneficiaries at various levels is crucial for the sustainable safeguarding of the heritage and development of tourism. This chapter aims to analyze the aims of the existing groups of stakeholders and identify the potential stakeholders and beneficiaries of the project. Later in the chapter, causes of participation and interest or the lack of it from different groups will be analyzed to suggest a solution to the issue of non-participation.

3.1 Stakeholders of Chandannagar's Heritage

In Chandannagar, both the French and the Indian authorities play the role of the most influential stakeholders of the heritage sites. The director of the French institute, Hartingh, had said, "Like Marrakech in Morocco, Chandernagore can be a tourism destination in India if the owners of the heritage buildings are able to refurbish their own properties and manage to get enough support. One possible way will be to invite people from outside to stay in their traditional

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[94]Susan Macdonald, "Leveraging Heritage: Public-private, and Third-sector Partnerships for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Environment," n.d., 12.
[95] "Participatory Development: Guidelines on Beneficiary Participation in Agricultural and Rural Development," accessed May 13, 2019, http://www.fao.org/3/ad817e/ad817e03.htm.

houses." This statement made by Hartingh was supported by Indranil Sen, the West Bengal Minister of State for Information and Cultural Affairs, and the government of West Bengal announced their commitment to promote Chandannagar's heritage in collaboration with the French Consulate.[96] The statement had already identified the direct stakeholders of the heritage of Chandannagar: the owners of the heritage buildings. The other was tourism agencies, hotels and restaurants which would have to cater to the needs of the visitors who came to Chandannagar. The 'Bonjour Chandernagore' workshop co-conducted by Aishwarya Tipnis also featured sessions where people from all sections of the society in Chandannagar were invited to take part in chat sessions, including owners of well-known sweet shops.[97]

The West Bengal Heritage Commission is involved, in collaboration with the French Embassy, in the identification and the declaration of built structures as heritage, out of the list of 99 buildings that were accessed as having some heritage value by Aishwarya Tipnis. Both the French and the West Bengal authorities are significant stakeholders who can be considered as 'positive', as the conservation of heritage and facilitation of tourism in Chandernagore can be beneficial for them economically, culturally and politically. This collaboration and joint conservation effort, if it bears fruit, will also result in better diplomatic relations between the two nations.

When Aishwarya Tipnis was commissioned to conduct research on the potential heritage structures of Chandannagar, it was an effort made jointly by the Embassy of France in India, VMF Paris, and the French Heritage in India Society.[98] As can be ascertained from the effort that was made by the French Embassy, it is clear that for the French authorities, the buildings

[96]"French Call to Make Chandannagar a Tourism Hub," Outlook, accessed April 20, 2019, https://www.outlookindia.com/newsscroll/french-call-to-make-chandannagar-a-tourism-hub/1229363.
[97] Ibid.
[98] "ATA - Projects Details," accessed April 20, 2019, http://www.aishwaryatipnisarchitects.com/frenchcolonialtownofchandernagorewestbengal-7a171368-06f9-11e5-b289-38eaa7fef46a.html.

of Chandannagar that were built in the French colonial period is also a part of French heritage in India. This can be further illustrated through the speech made by Bertrand de Hartingh, the Director of the French Institute in India, where he urged all the 'stakeholders' of the heritage in Chandannagar to actively initiate the development of Chandannagar into a touristic area, where he received support from the West Bengal government. The notion and definition of a 'stakeholder', in this context is very crucial.[99]

The second-most influential group of stakeholders is formed by the owners of the private heritage buildings in Chandannagar. Although the decision-making powers are vested with the West Bengal government and to some extent the French Embassy, no decision taken by the government can be enforced upon the owners of a building. The consent of the owners was taken when two privately owned buildings were declared as state heritage by the West Bengal Heritage Commission.[100] Cooperation and support from the private owners of the heritage buildings in Chandannagar is crucial for the heritage conservation and promotion. The owners of the private buildings may be categorized into positive and negative groups, or a mixture of the two. This means that the conservation of the buildings and the declaration of the buildings as 'heritage' by the government might be favorable to them, but some might not like the intervention that will inevitably occur in their private property. This raises the question of how a heritage is made, when it is created and to whom it belongs. A certain building possessing heritage value owned by a private individual, however crucial to the history of the people of the community, is still a private property and hence out of bounds for them. This makes the project of heritage conservation problematic; it is not clear whose heritage it is. If it is not accessible to the local people, it will not be heritage for them and will result in apathy for the

[99] "French Call to Make Chandannagar a Tourism Hub," https://www.outlookindia.com/, accessed April 19, 2019, https://www.outlookindia.com/newsscroll/french-call-to-make-chandannagar-a-tourism-hub/1229363.
[100] Interview conducted with Neline Mondal, activist and private building owner, February 9, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.

certain structure. The intentions and expectations of the different categories of stakeholders, therefore, must be evaluated, as they are often found to conflict with the expectations and needs of other groups.

As the Bonjour Chandernagore project had revealed, residents from all sections of the society are interested in the conservation of the heritage of the town. The one-week workshop that was organized for students was attended by students from four institutions- one French and three Indian, Chandernagore College, Jadavpur University, Indian Institute of Management, Nagpur, and Confluence Institute for Innovation and Creative Strategies in Lyon, France.[101] Out of these three institutions, only the Chandernagore college is located in Chandernagore, revealing that universities and other educational institutions are also very important stakeholders in the heritage conservation project. The workshop was conducted with students from the architectural field, focusing on the development of sustainable restoration methods and planning for the buildings, using the Registry building as a case study.[102] Chandannagar is an important case study for many universities which focus on culture, history, colonial architecture, and the restoration and sustainable development of an urban space with historically significant structures.

Schools in Chandannagar and in other towns and cities are also involved in the heritage mapping, identification and the spreading of awareness among the students[103]. The "Bonjour Chandernagore" project had a program specifically involving students from schools both in and outside of the town, using drama, skits, exhibitions and plays as the medium of expression.

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[101] Coordination Culturelle, "Know Your Indo-French Heritage, Co-Creation Workshop | Bonjour India," *Alliance Française Du Bengale* (blog), January 6, 2018, https://bengale.afindia.org/events/know-your-indo-french-heritage-co-creation-workshop/.

[102] "Chandernagore's French Correction," accessed May 13, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/chandernagore-39-s-french-correction/cid/1452590.

[103] Coordination Culturelle, "Know Your Indo-French Heritage, Co-Creation Workshop | Bonjour India," *Alliance Française Du Bengale* (blog), January 6, 2018, https://bengale.afindia.org/events/know-your-indo-french-heritage-co-creation-workshop/.

This involvement gives the school students a learning and expression platform and brings a good name to the institution. However, some schools have been difficult to reach, even though the institutions themselves are part of the heritage of Chandannagar. One such institution is St. Joseph's Convent, which was established by a French missionary and has buildings which are some of the oldest French colonial architectural structures of the town. The institution however, had refused to be involved and participate in the project, despite dedicated effort and repeated offers by the Bonjour India team.[104]

Students from the Chandernagore College, which was given heritage status by the West Bengal Heritage Commission in February 2019, have also been actively involved in a project dealing with the heritage of the small towns along the banks of the river Hooghly that had been administered by various European nations. With the aim of involving the local residents and making use of their knowledge and expertise, the project, known as "Hooghly River of Cultures" attempts to make the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the heritage aware of their own responsibilities as major contributors and project partners, which is the first step to embark on a successful project. However, this initiative has a major drawback in that it leaves out a lot of grassroot level local organizations and does not attempt to connect with the lower strata of the society. The people involved on the local level are mostly educated, middle or upper middle class, English-speaking residents of the town. This excludes less influential but crucial stakeholders and beneficiaries who form a substantial part of the local community. The different initiatives and events organized for the local community in Chandannagar have so far targeted only the educated group of citizens, while the lower-middle class and lower class are almost not involved at all. Antara Mukherjee is aware of this shortcoming and believes that new initiatives will be formulated in the future to involve all the different layers of the society.

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[104] Interview conducted with Antara Mukherjee, author, professor and heritage activist, February 6, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.

The project aims at forming a strategy for heritage management with the use of volunteers at the grassroot level in order to better understand the hybrid built and intangible culture that has arisen as a result of Indo-European exchanges.[105] It is a joint initiative by the University of Liverpool, School of Architecture and the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, collaborating with the Indian Council for Historical Research and the Newton Fund/GCRF and Art and Humanities Research Council(AHRC) by which it is funded[106]. The research team for the project includes not only the student researcher teams from both the universities in Liverpool and Kharagpur, but also professors from both the universities, volunteer researcher students from Chandannagar college, and individual researchers from Chandannagar.[107] The project helps the issue of heritage management and restoration in Chandannagar to transcend geographical and national boundaries to involve universities outside of the country.

This project brings different kinds of stakeholders with various levels of involvement and interests under the same umbrella and coordinates their actions for the achievement of the set goals of the project. It has involved the local educated residents of Chandannagar as volunteers, researchers and as contributors to the project. Dr. Antara Mukherjee, the lead honorary researcher for the project is of the opinion that everybody in the town is a stakeholder at some level, although they might not realize it. According to her, the students of the Chandannagar college were enthusiastic when they learnt about the project, although they had to be motivated and made aware of the importance of the heritage of the town. "The motivation developed in the course of the work, and they were given incentives too."[108] The student volunteers received

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[105] "The Hugli River of Cultures Pilot Project, from Bandel to Barrackpore - Archiam," accessed April 30, 2019, https://www.archiam.co.uk/the-hugli-river-of-cultures-pilot-project-from-bandel-to-barrackpore/.

[106] Ibid.

[107] Interview conducted with Antara Mukherjee, author, professor and heritage activist, February 6, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.

[108] Ibid.

certificates of participation and appreciation from the University of Liverpool for their contribution to the project.

When the French Embassy had collaborated with the West Bengal Heritage Commission to declare three buildings as heritage in February 2019, a Memorandum of Understanding had also been signed between the West Bengal government and the French Embassy and the West Bengal government in which both the authorities agree on a collaborative project to restore the built heritage of Chandannagar.[109] The tourism and home secretary of West Bengal, Atri Bhattacharya is confident that the Memorandum of Understanding between the two bodies would facilitate the development of Chandannagar's heritage. "There are some buildings that are either government property right now or can possibly be acquired. The French will do research and provide expertise in restoration and we will see in what phases we can fund restoration of heritage precincts."[110]

The French Ambassador to India describes Chandannagar as a 'jewel' and believes that it has great potential to develop into an important tourist destination, whereby the heritage of the town would also help in its economic development through tourism.[111]

Although the memorandum only refers to the restoration of the Registry building by name, it is clear from the words of the tourism and home secretary that the agreement would restore, preserve and promote the built heritage of the town. "The Strand will be rejuvenated. Most of the (heritage) properties are on the Strand, though a few are inside. There will also be further studies to identify which properties can be included in the project," he said.[112] While talking

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[109] "French Boost for Chandernagore as Heritage Tourism Destination," accessed April 30, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/french-boost-for-chandernagore-as-heritage-tourism-destination/cid/1684001.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.

about the development of tourism in Chandannagar in the future, he also mentions the need for facilities for tourists like sanitation, lighting and drainage that would have to be improved if tourists were to be hosted in substantial numbers. This implies the necessity for cooperation with the municipal affairs and the urban development department in West Bengal. The Municipal Corporation of Chandannagar would also be an important stakeholder in this project, as also the Public Works Department of the government of West Bengal, which is responsible for the building of roads, highways, bridges and buildings.[113]

The tourism development would also bring other potential stakeholders into the picture, as is stated by Bhattacharya himself, while mentioning the great potential that the river offers: "whether we have eateries on the Strand itself or have a vessel moored at the shore in which to run a restaurant are options we will consider."[114] Small business owners are significant potential stakeholders in the tourism promotion project of Chandannagar and the protection of its heritage. This includes already existing restaurants and eateries as well as businessmen who would be interested in investing funds for the establishment of new ones for tourists and local visitors. The river also makes it possible to have organized guided cruise tours of Chandannagar and the neighboring towns which have traces of European heritage, and this involves the ship industry and local residents of Chandannagar who speak various Indian and European languages such as French and English. It also involves the local transport systems, both governmental and private-sector transport businesses such as rickshaws, cabs and totes. Tourism development would also indicate the building of new hotels or residence centers that involve promoters and contract builders. This step, however, can prove detrimental to the preservation of the built heritage of the town as some old building would have to be acquired

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[113] "Public Works," accessed April 30, 2019, https://wb.gov.in/portal/web/guest/public-works.
[114] "French Boost for Chandernagore as Heritage Tourism Destination," accessed April 30, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/french-boost-for-chandernagore-as-heritage-tourism-destination/cid/1684001.

and demolished for a new one to be constructed. One possible solution to this would be to encourage the private heritage house-owners to host the guests at their home, which would bring them economic benefit as well as ensure that the visitors get the experience of residing at a heritage building for the duration of their stay. As the heritage value of the buildings is enhanced by traditional use, enabling the private owners to keep the property is desirable for both the community members and the private owners. As stated by the National Lottery Heritage Fund in the UK, private owners can be financially assisted with the restoration of their heritage buildings when it is also considered by the public to be an important heritage asset and the public education overweighs the private gain.[115] The restoration project of a privately-owned glasshouse belonging to the Bury family in the UK will not only benefit the private owners, but also provide access to the broader public to a heritage structure and spark their interest in, and knowledge about the history of the town. Public investment in private heritage also serves to ensure they (heritage buildings) have a secure future that will enable many more people to enjoy and experience heritage that, hitherto, they might only have glimpsed from a distance."[116]

The tourism and home secretary Atri Bhattacharya had stated earlier that the West Bengal government would try to acquire properties in Chandannagar that are deemed of as possessing historical and cultural significance. This gives rise to a crucial question: is it the best solution for the government to buy the properties from the private owners? As important stakeholders of the cultural heritage of the town, this action by the government will only lead to further detachment of the private house owners from the heritage, as the government will be deemed to be the sole possessor and guardian of these buildings. The isolation of the residents from the heritage buildings can be only be accentuated by such a step, adding to the already existing

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[115] "Investing in Privately Owned Heritage | The National Lottery Heritage Fund," accessed May 13, 2019, https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/news/investing-privately-owned-heritage.
[116] Ibid.

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already lack of awareness and sense of responsibility. Should the state alone be responsible for the maintenance and revitalization of heritage? The state, of course, as a decision-maker is a major stakeholder in the heritage identification, legal designation, restoration, maintenance and promotion of heritage. However, the involvement of the state alone in the heritage identification and maintenance project might result in the further alienation of the community that lives around it. As the Heritage Perth mentions, heritage and communities cannot exist without each other. Heritage plays a highly significant role in the development of a community, creates a 'sense of place' for the people of the community and acts as a driver for community-led actions. It also contributes to the social life, economic benefits and employment generation through tourism development. [117] Local communities, when linked strongly with the heritage, tend to be more accountable for the conservation and safeguarding of the heritage.[118]

Gautam Sett, owner of a heritage building, had been making incessant and dedicated efforts to get his ancestral home to be declared an official heritage building.[119] The reason for his action was to ensure protection of his home from being consumed by realtors who had been pressurizing him to sell the property.[120] His house is now a state heritage building, a designation which forbids the sale or alteration of the property but does not promise assistance with the maintenance or restoration whatsoever.[121]

An alternative method that can be adopted by the government, in this case, would be to provide aid and assistance to the private house-owners in the renovation and restoration of the buildings, impart legal protection to the houses from forced sale to property sharks, and to

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[117] "Why Heritage Is an Important Community Asset," *Heritage Perth* (blog), accessed May 8, 2019, https://heritageperth.com.au/your-heritage/why-is-heritage-important-to-communities/.
[118] Ibid.
[119] "Chandernagore's French Correction," accessed May 13, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/chandernagore-39-s-french-correction/cid/1452590.
[120] Interview conducted by the author with Neline Mondal, February 9, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.
[121] Ibid.

provide opportunities for the house-owners to establish their own small income initiatives from the houses, such as hosting groups of tourists in the houses and sharing personal histories, memories and interesting stories about living in such buildings. Making it possible for the original owners to keep their properties helps to maintain the authenticity of the structure and usage and enables the visitors to experience the real heritage house complete with the tales and guided tour from the owner himself. It crucially serves to keep the house-owners connected to the buildings that they own and consider as part of their personal heritage rather than separate them from it, and this in turn can boost the participation and the level of interest shown by the house owners as influential stakeholders.[122]

3.2 Beneficiaries of Chandannagar's Built Heritage

A distinction between stakeholders and beneficiaries of the heritage conservation and revitalization of Chandannagar is necessary in this regard. The beneficiary of a project is defined as the target group for the project, whose circumstances are directly or indirectly impacted through the implementation and completion of the project goals.[123] Beneficiaries are different from stakeholders in that the stakeholders exercise a sense of control over the project proceedings and are responsible participants for the implementation process, whereas beneficiaries may not be responsible for the project implementation, but are affected by the achievements of the project. [124] However, the cooperation and contribution from the beneficiaries is fundamental to for the fruitful implementation and sustainability of the heritage revitalization process. One of key principles and first steps towards developing an integrated heritage revitalization project plan, as laid out by the Interreg Central Europe Project Restaura

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[122] Susan Macdonald, "Leveraging Heritage: Public-private, and Third-sector Partnerships for the Conservation of the Historic Urban Environment," n.d., 12.

[123] "Project Beneficiaries," *Proposal for NGOs* (blog), March 14, 2018, https://proposalsforngos.com/project-beneficiaries/.

[124] Dr Isabelle Fauconnier, "Session 7. Identifying Stakeholders and Beneficiary Mapping," n.d., 17.

is to ensure responsibility of the community towards the heritage, encouraging participation, and maintaining transparency in policy and decision-making. Relevance is another key factor listed here, which stresses the need for the requirements of the stakeholders and beneficiaries to be met.[125]

Chandannagar has several categories of beneficiaries who are also stakeholders in the heritage revitalization process. One such group includes the school and university students in the town who are significant beneficiaries: involvement in the restoration and development of heritage enables them to gain a first-hand experience and knowledge of the heritage sector. The participants of the several projects in Chandannagar had received material rewards for their contribution in the form of certificates of acknowledgement. [126] While this group of beneficiaries are becomingly increasingly involved in the process, as affirmed by heritage activists Basabi Pal and Antara Mukherjee, there are also groups of beneficiaries who are completely unaware of the revitalization project.[127]

One way of ensuring participation may be co-creation, which enables the citizens to directly be included in the planning and management of the heritage. It also creates a 'sense of ownership' for the local community. One such co-creation workshop had been organized by the Bonjour India project team in Chandannagar in 2018.[128] It is important, however, to keep the community involved continually throughout the decision-making, planning and management process so as to keep them informed and included.

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[125] Daniela Angelina Jelinčić, Sanja Tišma, and Neva Makuc, "Guidebook for Local Authorities on PPP in Heritage Revitalisation Strategies," n.d., 35.
[126] Interview conducted with Antara Mukherjee on February 6, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.
[127] Interview conducted by the author on video with Basabi Pal, French professor at Chandernagore college and heritage activist on May 10, 2019
[128] Coordination Culturelle, "Know Your Indo-French Heritage, Co-Creation Workshop | Bonjour India," *Alliance Française Du Bengale* (blog), January 6, 2018, https://bengale.afindia.org/events/know-your-indo-french-heritage-co-creation-workshop/.

3.3 Successful Restoration Case: The Denmark Tavern

Serampore is another town along the river Hooghly, currently under the research area of the "Hooghly River of Cultures Project" that will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.[129] Although it was under the administrative dominion of the Danish East India company, this town is similar to Chandannagar with regard to the state of maintenance of the built heritage. One of the buildings constructed during the Danish governance was the Denmark Tavern, established in 1786 by a British innkeeper, James Parr.[130] It served as a hotel and tavern for the European traders who would visit the town. For several years since it fell out of use, the tavern had been slowly falling into ruin, and had been a dilapidated structure declared by the Public Works Department in Serampore. [Figure 8]

Figure 8 The Denmark tavern in ruins in 2009 and after restoration in 2018. Source: The Hindu and Navrang India

In 2015, however, a project known as the "Serampore Initiative" undertaken by the National Museum of Denmark in collaboration with the West Bengal heritage commission and a local organization named Shrirampur Heritage Restoration Initiative.[131] A team of Indian and Danish architects worked on the restoration plans for the tavern, while local masons and craftsmen were employed with the task of recreating the dilapidated walls of the ruined building. Alternative materials were used wherever necessary, but the tavern has been restored to look almost the same as it used to look before.[132] Funded jointly by a private association in Denmark called Realdania that funds philanthropic architectural projects, and the West Bengal Department of Tourism, the project has resulted in successful restoration and reopening of the tavern in 2018.[133] This restoration project showcases good practice in the realms of planning, engaging local architects and organizations, keeping the original use of the building intact. The tavern was opened as a restaurant and a lodge, offering a solution to yet another issue with the small towns which lack residential facilities. As opined by the current French Consul-General Virginie Corteval, "Residential facilities need to come up all along the riverside tourism belt. In Chandernagore, for example, to enjoy the festival and see the lights you need to be present at night but there are no places to stay. You are forced to go back."[134] The tavern has been marketed to the public as a heritage building where the visitors can experience what the visitors in the 18th century had felt. [Figure 9]

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[131] Arup K. Chatterjee, "With the Restoration of a Danish Tavern in Serampore, a Forgotten Chapter of History Comes to Light," Text, Scroll.in, accessed May 29, 2019, https://scroll.in/magazine/862233/with-the-restoration-of-a-danish-tavern-in-serampore-a-forgotten-chapter-of-history-comes-to-light.

[132] Amita Ghose, "Serampore's 232-Year-Old Denmark Tavern Gets a Glorious Restoration: Take a Look Within," Firstpost, accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.firstpost.com/living/serampores-232-year-old-denmark-tavern-gets-a-glorious-restoration-take-a-look-within-4412165.html.

[133] Shiv Sahay Singh, "232-Year-Old Denmark Tavern Opens Doors Again in Serampore - The Hindu," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/232-year-old-denmark-tavern-opens-doors-again/article22891066.ece.

[134] Sudeshna Banerjee, "Night Stay at Restored Danish Tavern Soon," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/restored-danish-tavern-in-bengal-s-serampore-almost-ready-for-night-stays/cid/1675684.

Figure 9 Promotion Advertisement of the Denmark Tavern. Source: Daily Hunt

Several stakeholders have been brought into involvement with the project, including well-established companies. One such stakeholder is The Park group of hotels, who had been given the management of the restaurant in the tavern. The project sets a good precedent for the neighboring town of Chandannagar, which features almost a hundred unofficial heritage structures, many of which urgent restoration and re-use. As the tavern has been flourishing and progressing rapidly as a restaurant and lodge since its grand opening, it is a good source of income for the government and an incentive for potential stakeholders who might be willing to invest in the heritage tourism sector. Chandannagar, with its proximity to the river and several heritage structures that are in an unused state, holds immense potential for heritage tourism, as is also reflected by Antara Mukherjee when she talks about the privately-owned heritage houses in the town.[135]

Although the project has been conducted jointly by the National Museum of Denmark and the West Bengal government, it has cooperated with smaller organizations at the local level, thereby involving the organizations run by members of the local community.

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[135] Interview conducted by the author with Antara Mukherjee on February 6, 2019, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.

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The restoration of the Denmark tavern has also had a significant impact on the local community of Serampore, as is reflected by the vast crowd of local residents who were present at the grand opening of the tavern in February 2018.[136] According to the conservation architect Manish Chakraborti, half the residents of the town of Serampore were present at the opening.[137]

The Denmark Tavern restoration project had not involved the local community of the town on a grand scale, and the project had been handled by authoritative bodies. However, it was instrumental in drawing the attention of the residents to the value of the dilapidated heritage buildings in the town. Jhumur Basu, a resident of the town, said, "We come here often for the ambience. Who knew that the dilapidated structure that was an eyesore for years would become such a lovely destination?"[138] Community awareness and future involvement would be even more fundamental for the growth of heritage tourism in the town and the preservation of other heritage structures.

As the analysis of the stakeholders and beneficiaries of the heritage of Chandannagar, and the subsequent case study of the neighboring town of Serampore has shown, the process of heritage management is closely connected to these two groups. Without an active group of stakeholders and beneficiaries, preservation and maintenance of built heritage cannot be accomplished. In the case of Serampore, the initiative had been undertaken by the influential stakeholders with cooperation from other stakeholders such as the Park Group, to restore and reopen the rundown tavern. However, it relies greatly on the other stakeholders and the beneficiaries for the project to be a sustainable one. Development projects cannot be implemented successfully without cooperation and involvement from the beneficiaries of the project.[139] Therefore, it is imperative

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[136]Deepanjan Ghosh, "The Concrete Paparazzi: Serampore's Danish Tavern Re-Opens," March 1, 2018, http://double-dolphin.blogspot.com/2018/03/serampores-danish-tavern-re-opens.html.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Sudeshna Banerjee, "Night Stay at Restored Danish Tavern Soon," accessed May 29, 2019, https://www.telegraphindia.com/states/west-bengal/restored-danish-tavern-in-bengal-s-serampore-almost-ready-for-night-stays/cid/1675684.

[139] "Participatory Development: Guidelines on Beneficiary Participation in Agricultural and Rural Development," accessed May 29, 2019, http://www.fao.org/3/ad817e/ad817e03.htm.

for all sections of the stakeholders and beneficiaries to be approached, analyzed and included

in the realms of the overall planning and management.

Chapter 4. Generating Community Involvement: Successes, Failures and Suggestions

4.1 Chandannagar's Heritage and its Local community

Although Chandannagar has a small but active community of heritage enthusiasts and individual researchers who contribute greatly to the heritage revitalization and promotion, it still lags behind when it comes to active participation from all sections of society. By now it is evident that the primary reason for non-participation by the residents is lack of awareness regarding the heritage value of the buildings in the area and inefficient communication on the part of the government authorities.[140] Community involvement, fundamental for the growth and development of the heritage management processes, is however not a new occurrence in Chandannagar. Several projects have been conducted and implemented in the town as part of collaborative heritage identification and community engagement projects by both government and non-governmental organizations.[141] Community participation in cultural activities is a long-established and functional practice in Chandannagar, introduced long before the initiation of the built heritage revitalization projects of the town.

The most remarkable and large-scale annual event which exhibits community participation at various levels is the Jagaddhatri Puja of Chandannagar, the celebration of the Hindu goddess Jagadhatri. Although the festival was originally a Hindu religious ritual, it has long since transcended religious boundaries to become a cultural symbol of the town of Chandannagar

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[140] Based on interviews conducted by the author during field research from January 2 to 14, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India, 2019

[141]"Former French Colony in Bengal to Soon Attract Tourists Thanks to Its Heritage Buildings," Hindustan Times, January 14, 2018, https://www.hindustantimes.com/travel/former-french-colony-in-bengal-to-soon-attract-tourists-thanks-to-its-heritage-buildings/story-CkNLaGnHJUZADLT2tYVSRI.html.

and one of the most iconic annual events, which showcases a remarkable level of community participation at all levels of the preparation, planning and execution of the festival. Another significant feature of this festival is the funding that the organizing committees receive from the local residents of Chandannagar and its outskirts.[142] Around a hundred local committees formed and administered by the residents involve hundreds of people in the community, who are involved in fund-raising, planning, execution and logistics of the festival. This is an outstanding example of community participation at all levels of the local community that has been successfully implemented in Chandannagar for several years. Although the very essence of this festival owing to its religious character, is very distinct from the heritage revitalization projects mentioned in the previous chapter, it is important to note that it has long since overcome religious boundaries and become a part of the heritage of Chandannagar.[143]

Why are the people of Chandannagar active in the organization and execution of the Jagaddhatri puja but not in the safeguarding of the built heritage? This question does not have one definite answer. However, several propositions and assumptions can be made based on the current legal status of the heritage and the empirical evidence collected during field research. The first reason can be that the Jagaddhatri puja, for the residents of Chandannagar is a part of intangible heritage and living culture of the town. It is not an object, place or site but rather forms a living practice of the residents which has been passed on for generations. The built heritage, on the other hand, has been in private or government ownership. Although it has formed an integral segment of the living urban landscape, non-engagement with the buildings has created a wedge between the heritage buildings and the local community.[144]

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[142] "Jagadhatri Puja," Chandannagar My Pride - A Society For Chandannagar City, accessed May 8, 2019, https://chandannagarmypride.weebly.com/jagadhatripuja.html

[143] "Urdibazar Chunagali Sarbojonin Jagadhatri Puja Committee, Urdibazar Chunagali, Chandannagar (2019)," accessed May 8, 2019, https://www.localprayers.com/IN/Chandannagar/1032093613507459/Urdibazar-Chunagali-Sarbojonin-Jagadhatri-puja-committee.

[144] Group interview of school students aged 16-17 conducted by the author in Chandannagar, February 10, 2019

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Accessibility to the heritage buildings and sites is arguably another concern. Jagaddhatri puja is accessible for everyone in the community. Every member of society participates in it in some way or the other and is involved in the organization, planning and execution of the event. When heritage is accessible, it gives the community a sense of ownership over the structures. With restricted access, heritage might cease to become the heritage of the community but rather a structure with a legal heritage status given by the higher authorities.

"But they don't even allow us to take pictures," responded Priyanka Saha, a young resident, when asked if she considers the Sacred Heart Church (a state heritage) as her own heritage for which she is supposed to take responsibility.[145] Several of the government-owned heritage structures are also not easily accessible for the local residents. Several restrictions are imposed on the visitors to these establishments.[146] The Institut de Chandernagore which functions both as a museum and as an Indo-French cultural institute is one of the most well-known heritage buildings in the town.[147] As the only museum and institution housed in a historic building and containing objects from the French period, it possesses a massive potential to mobilize and educate the local community about the heritage and history of the town. At present, visitors to the museum are required to put away their phones and cameras in lockers, preventing them from taking pictures.[148] Inefficient maintenance of the objects in display, uninformative and missing captions, dusty objects and want of museum guide can be attributed as one of the causes for the dysfunctional state of the museum.[149] Development of the museum, a pivotal

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[145] Interview conducted by the author with Priyanka Saha, student, February 10, Chandannagar, West Bengal, India.
[146] Empirical data collected by the author during field research in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.
[147] "Institute De Chandennagore," accessed May 16, 2019, http://institutedechandernagor.gov.in/.
[148] Empirical data collected by the author during field research in Chandannagar from 2nd to 14th February, 2019.
[149] Ibid.

institution for education and community building, can be a fruitful step towards the creation of an active community around heritage.[150]

Many of the heritage buildings recognized by Aishwarya Tipnis are in private ownership which makes them inaccessible for the general public including the local residents.[151] Alienation and dissociation from the buildings lead to the unaccountability and non-identification on the part of the local community. The unofficial identification of the privately-owned buildings as heritage by the Heritage Chandernagore project does not guarantee the acceptance of the local community as they cannot access it. Responding to a question about whether the community should take responsibility for the restoration of the heritage buildings, several citizens of Chandannagar were of the opinion that it is the job of the government bodies.[152] Some others opined that if the government authorities were declaring some object or building as heritage, the responsibility of restoring it should be theirs. The perspectives of the citizens are not homogenous. Several other residents responded by saying that the citizens have the responsibility of maintaining and safeguarding the heritage and should take steps to ensure that the government is doing so.[153]

4.2 Projects Implemented in Chandannagar and their Impact

Although literature about the French history of Chandannagar had been published in the past, the first attempt to systematically map the heritage buildings in Chandannagar and categorize them was initiated by Aishwarya Tipnis on the behest of the French Consulate in Kolkata in

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[150] "The Museum's Community Role," accessed May 16, 2019, https://pages.uoregon.edu/culturwk/culturework33b.html.

[151] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed May 16, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/maps/phpsqlsearch_map.html.

[152] Based on responses to a question posted by the author on the "Hello Chandannagar" Facebook group on 15th May, 2019 https://www.facebook.com/groups/403932183100876/?multi_permalinks=1161798700647550&notif_id=15579 67442104681&notif_t=feedback_reaction_generic.

[153] Ibid.

2010. Thus, it can be safely assumed that the first attempt at community engagement in heritage mapping and identification was made with this project, where programs were designed to spread awareness among the local community about the value of the built heritage. It is important, at this point, to analyze the projects implemented and measure to what level it had impacted the awareness and participation of the local community in the heritage administration and preservation. A clear understanding of these aspects is crucial to develop and implement new approaches to the public about participatory heritage management. What impact have the projects created among the local community in Chandannagar? What more needs to be done in this regard to ensure all-round awareness and participation? This is a recent development in Chandannagar in the field of built heritage management which encourages active participation on the part of the citizens, and therefore serve as effective cases for analysis and progress.

4.2.1 The Heritage Chandernagore Project

As Basabi Pal states, "One of the first steps that should be taken is to make the people of Chandannagar take pride in their heritage and value it."[154] The Heritage Chandernagore project that commenced in 2010, was jointly initiated by the Aishwarya Tipnis Architects, a private architectural consultancy firm, Foundation VMF (Foundation Vieilles Maisons Françaises) in Paris, Les Amis du Patrimoine Pondicherien (Friends of Pondicherry Heritage), French Heritage in India and the Institut de Chandernagor.[155] The implementers of the project, having recognized the crucial role that the communities play in the development and growth of heritage, and the necessity of community awareness and value allocation to the built heritage, devised community engagement and consciousness as the major goal of the project.

The project focused on the empowerment of the youth of Chandernagore and the building of their pride in the local heritage as the primary objective. It aimed to encourage local residents

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[154] Video interview conducted by the author with Basabi Pal on May 10, 2019.
[155] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed May 8, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/about-us.html.

from all age groups to discover more about the history of their hometown through active engagement with the local heritage[156]. "There is a far greater chance of the survival of this heritage with the community as its custodian in present scenario where there is no legislation local or state to protect these heritage buildings", the webpage of the project states.[157]

The primary focus group of the awareness project included school children and youth of Chandernagore, who were invited to participate at various events that were organized as part of the awareness campaign.

The participants in the project, however, were very few compared to the number of the residents in Chandannagar. Basabi Pal is of the opinion that the calls for participation were not circulated in time among the citizens, which she thinks is the primary cause for the very small group of students and individuals who had attended the project events.[158]

'Painting on Heritage and People of Chandernagore', a painting competition for students, was attended by students from 7 schools in the area. Participants were asked to paint the image they have of the heritage of the town, and what they would like the next generation to see in Chandernagore. The primary observation that was made by the organizers after the execution of the competition was that most of the children identified some of the most well-known buildings in the town, such as the Institut de Chandernagore and the Sacred Heart Church as their heritage, and not their own homes or public spaces in which they reside.[159]

Why do the young residents of Chandannagar not recognize their immediate living environment as heritage? This might be attributed to the official recognition and legal heritage status given to some structures by the government while others are not.[160] As is emphasized by

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[156] "Heritage Chandernagore," accessed May 8, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/about-us.html.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Video interview conducted by the author with Basabi Pal on May 10, 2019.
[159] Heritage Chandernagore," accessed May 8, 2019, http://heritagechandernagore.com/about-us.html.
[160] Tourism Breaking News, "West Bengal & France Sign MoU to Redevelop Chandannagar as Heritage Tourism Destination – Tourism Breaking News," accessed May 10, 2019, https://tourismbreakingnews.com/west-bengal-france-sign-mou-to-redevelop-chandannagar-as-heritage-tourism-destination/.

Laurajane Smith in her evaluation of the Authorised Heritage Discourse, 'official heritage' is something that is recognized and endorsed by governments and cultural institutions.[161] The legal heritage status granted to some buildings that are in public domain and owned by the government makes it heritage for the young residents. There is a distance between the heritage and non-heritage buildings, in the sense that the buildings officially declared heritage are seen as something above everyday life. Is this distance being harbored by the lack of communication between the government authorities and the citizens? There seems to be a disconnect between the two bodies, and exclusion of the local community from the decision-making and planning process accentuates the matters. Open public discussions on the part of the decision-making authorities, and public forums would be beneficial for the inclusion of the community in the heritage-making and conservation process. The relatively small number of participants in the project compared to the number of students in Chandannagar showcases the result of ineffective communication by the relevant authorities.

The project had some positive impacts on legal status of the buildings in Chandannagar which were found to possess heritage value. Following the list compiled by Aishwarya Tipnis, 14 out of the 99 buildings were declared as protected heritage buildings by the West Bengal Heritage Commission. This step, although guaranteeing the protection of the structures against demolition and sale, have not been successful in creating awareness and sense of responsibility among the local community. This can be suggested after an analysis of the answers provided during a group interview conducted during my field research in Chandannagar.[162]

[161] Erich Hatala Matthes, "The Ethics of Cultural Heritage," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2018 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2018), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/ethics-cultural-heritage/.
[162] Group interview conducted by the author among two groups – students in and adult residents of Chandannagar between February 2 to 14, 2019.

4.2.2 The Bonjour India Co-Creation Workshop and Crowdfunding Project (2018)

After the Registry Building in Chandannagar was given legal heritage status by the West Bengal Heritage Commission, there was a discussion between the French and Indian authorities as to the source of funds required for the restoration of the building. In 2018, the French Consulate in Kolkata had devised a crowdfunding initiative to collect money for the restoration of the building. The initiative however, had failed owing to the low number of respondents to the project.[163] The Registry building has not yet been restored to its former state with the authorities still formulating innovative methods of acquiring funds.[164]

Why did the crowdfunding project not work in Chandannagar, where it is not an alien concept? The Bonjour India co-creation workshop, designed to be a collaborative workshop between students from both French and Indian educational institutions, took place in Chandernagore College in 2018.[165] As mentioned in the webpage of the event, "Bonjour India aims to change the perception of heritage, showcasing how it become can a source of economic growth and employment."[166] Aishwarya Tipnis, the designer and curator of the workshop, said , "Through workshops and events with the mantra of 'do it together' we are launching this crowdfunding for protecting the Registry building."[167] The workshop was successful in garnering participation from the students of the participant educational institutions who created a design plan for the restoration of the Registry Building. The goal of gathering funds, however, was not successful.

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[163] Shiv Sahay Singh, "Buildings in Former French Colony Await Restoration," *The Hindu*, February 7, 2019, sec. Kolkata, https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/kolkata/buildings-in-former-french-colony-await-restoration/article26207063.ece.
[164] Ibid.
[165] Coordination Culturelle, "Know Your Indo-French Heritage, Co-Creation Workshop | Bonjour India," *Alliance Française Du Bengale* (blog), January 6, 2018, https://bengale.afindia.org/events/know-your-indo-french-heritage-co-creation-workshop/.
[166] Ibid.
[167] "Crowdfunding to Restore French-Era Registry Building in Chandernagore | Kolkata News - Times of India," The Times of India, accessed May 16, 2019, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/kolkata/crowdfunding-to-restore-french-era-registry-building-in-chandernagore/articleshow/62374505.cms.

Interviews conducted during my field research in Chandannagar among 12 residents living in different localities of the town revealed that they had no information about an active crowdfunding project. When asked if they would be willing to donate money for the restoration project, most of them revealed that they do not know where the building in question is located. The people who knew about the building believed that it should be the government who should provide the money for the restoration.[168]

Despite the number of people interviewed being relatively small in the context of the total population of Chandannagar, it can be argued that the group is representative of the perspective of most of the population, as was revealed by the answers to the Facebook post mentioned earlier. The reason for the failure of the crowdfunding project remains a matter of conjecture. It might be attributed to a certain extent to the inefficient communication by the responsible authorities. As a resident of Chandannagar and follower of the heritage processes taking place in the town, I can vouch for the fact that most people of Chandannagar were not informed about the possible crowdfunding initiative for the restoration of the Registry building. Neline Mondal, heritage activist and a resident of Chandannagar, seconds the opinion that they (the residents) were not informed about the project. It is therefore an unanswered question as to whom the authorities were planning to target as possible donors for the project. Why they had not approached the residents of the town for whom the buildings were a part of everyday urban landscape and living environment?

Another perspective to the project, however, is brought forward by conservation architect Aishwarya Tipnis, designer and curator of the Co-creation workshop who thinks that the project was successful even though the crowdfunding initiative was not successfully done. According to her, the crowdfunding initiative was not launched completely because of the

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[168] Interviews conducted by the author among residents of Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.

interest shown by the West Bengal government to be a partner in the project.[169] The result of this was the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding mentioned earlier between the governments of West Bengal and France. "The signing of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) took about a year from the completion of Bonjour India and I think it is the best result one could have asked for," said Aiswarya Tipnis.[170]

Although this can be viewed as a successful stakeholder bonding with the West Bengal government for the restoration of heritage and development of tourism in Chandannagar, it was not successful in raising community awareness. The result of the project, the MOU is reminiscent of the practice of heritage as the responsibility and domain of the government and authoritative bodies. A vast number of residents of Chandannagar still remain unaware and unengaged with the heritage management system in the town.[171]

The first step towards successful fundraising for heritage would be to engage the public and the local community in the dialogue and to present the project in a convincing manner. In the context of Chandannagar, crowdfunding would function effectively only when there is an active and enlightened community around the heritage. From the interviews conducted, the insight provided by professor Basabi Pal and Neline Mondal who are both resident heritage activists in Chandannagar and from empirical research it can be argued that before the launch of a crowdfunding project, the first step should be effective communication between the local people and the relevant authorities. Understanding the needs and requirements of the community is fundamental to the design and planning of any community engagement project.

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[169] Text correspondence with Aishwarya Tipnis on May 17, 2019.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Group interviews conducted with 56 residents in Chandannagar from February 2 to 14, 2019.

4.2.3 Hooghly River of Cultures Pilot Project (2018 and ongoing)

An ongoing two-year project commenced in 2018, this project is the result of a collaboration between the University of Liverpool, Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur and administered by the Art and Humanities Research Council.[172] This project focuses attention not only on the built heritage of Chandannagar but four other towns along the banks of the river Hooghly that possess instances of built heritage belonging to the colonial times.[173] The primary aim of the project was to document the intangible heritage surrounding the tangible heritage buildings and to engage the local community in the process of identification and planning process.[174] As a method for ensuring community participation, the project reached out to the local community, schools and colleges. Some of the principal respondents and participants in the project were students from the Chandernagore College. The students were invited to participate in the documentation process, and although they were interested, motivation was lacking. "The motivation developed during the course of their work," remarked Antara Mukherjee, the lead honorary researcher of the project. The incentives given to the volunteers and contributors can also be an important aspect of the motivation and interest. All the student researchers received certificates of participation from the university of Liverpool.[175]

An analysis of the level of participation in the Heritage Fest organized by the project members in Chandannagar will be useful here in discerning good practices for engaging the young members of the community. Held in November 2018, this event had their target audience the students of educational institutions in Chandannagar.[176] Through the garnering of the support of the Municipal Corporation of Chandannagar, the local governing body, it was able to engage

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[172] "The Hugli River of Cultures Pilot Project, from Bandel to Barrackpore," *Archiam* (blog), February 22, 2018, /the-hugli-river-of-cultures-pilot-project-from-bandel-to-barrackpore/.
[173] Interview conducted by the author with Antara Mukherjee in Chandannagar on 6th February 2019.
[174] "The Hugli River of Cultures Pilot Project, from Bandel to Barrackpore," *Archiam* (blog), February 22, 2018, /the-hugli-river-of-cultures-pilot-project-from-bandel-to-barrackpore/.
[175] Interview conducted by the author with Antara Mukherjee in Chandannagar on February 6, 2019.
[176] Ibid.

several schools and colleges in Chandannagar to participate in the fest. The methodology adopted by the project organizers for engagement of the student participants can also be analyzed with regard to the method of outreach. Interactive quiz competitions, power-point presentations by heritage experts about the history of Chandannagar, debate competitions and drawing contests were held, and a book on the heritage of Chandannagar was handed out to all the participants [177]. The articles published in the book were contributions of individual researchers working in the project team, many of whom were student residents of Chandannagar.

The impact of this project can be measured against the level of engagement it has managed to ignite among the young generation in Chandannagar who the principal target audience are. By offering the project volunteers and honorary researchers recognition and incentives in the form of certificates, the project has managed to gather the interest and motivation of young residents of Chandannagar. In a broader context, it might be argued that the number of participants and volunteers are minor compared to the number of residents. However, this project, along with its predecessor, the Heritage Chandernagore project, is starting to engage a section of the community to be involved with their heritage.

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[177] Interview conducted by the author with Antara Mukherjee in Chandannagar on February 6, 2019

4.3 Suggestions for Broader Public Outreach

Community involvement in built heritage conservation is still a major issue in Chandannagar which cannot be solved with a definite action. The young section of the population is the main target audience for the projects that have been implemented or are ongoing. This is a step that also ensures the participation and involvement of the older generation, that is, the families of the participant students. However, apart from this, the communication of the initiative has not been broad enough to reach all the sections of the community. It has remained in the educated and interested spheres, and the publication of books on heritage is also not a guarantor of public awareness. The target group is still the educated mass of people who would be economically able to purchase a book and motivated enough to read it.

Awareness programs using methods that reach out to the broader public may be one of the effective ways of involving the community. One such example of inclusive public outreach initiative is the 'Theatre for Development' method. This method is described as "an art in which community theatre is used as a tool for community mobilization, education, awareness, sensitization and conscientization all for the purposes of effecting change either in individuals or the community as whole."[178] This is viewed "as an avenue where community members get the opportunity to identify their own problems and issues that concern them and through discussions and consultations lay down strategies to overcome them."[179] By making use of the vernacular language of the community for communication, it gives the members of the community a sense of ownership and inclusiveness in the process. It employs popular forms of

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[178] Evans Asante and Samuel M Yirenkyi, "Engaging Communities for Development Action: The Theatre for Development (TfD) Approach" 7, no. 2 (2018): 15.
[179] Ibid.

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communication like theatre, dance and music which encourages the feeling of inclusivity and participation in the development process.[180]

The question of the suitability and applicability of this method to raise community awareness and participation for heritage conservation in Chandannagar now arises. In this respect, several arguments for the support of this method can be made. The local community of Chandannagar, at present are excluded from the decision-making process regarding heritage management, and the usage of this method to generate awareness about this method is desirable keeping in mind the diverse social groups. Communication to the audience using dance, theatre and music facilitate the better understanding of the primary message and encourage the unintimidated exchange of ideas between the audience and the organizers. Apart from boosting communication and direct discussion about the heritage issues, it also would facilitate the incoming of suggestions from the community members. The methods that have been employed by the projects executed in Chandannagar have so far been targeting the educated, and the young generation of the population. Using performative arts as a means of engagement would be useful in reaching out to the other segments of the community who would not be willing or eligible to take part in academic or intellectual activities.

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[180] Evans Asante and Samuel M Yirenkyi, "Engaging Communities for Development Action: The Theatre for Development (TfD) Approach" 7, no. 2 (2018): 15.

Conclusions

Chandannagar, as a former French colony features hundreds of buildings constructed during the French administrative era in India. These buildings are not homogeneous in style and form but demonstrate different architectural patterns such as French-colonial, Indo-French and purely indigenous designs. After India attained freedom from British rule in 1947, Chandannagar was declared a free city by the French authorities and merged with the India. The buildings in Chandannagar constructed during that time-period has seen decline, rapid dilapidation and eventual demolition. Due to rapid urbanization and transformation of the urban landscape of the town, these old buildings are fast lost their relevance in the urban setting and being razed to the ground to make way for structures which are seen as architecturally and economically more suitable today.

Another major issue with the maintenance and management of these buildings is that most of them are in the ownership of private individuals. These owners often do not have enough resources to maintain and restore the buildings, which eventually are bought by developers and demolished, as the cost of restoring the old buildings is much higher than building a new one. Some buildings are also divided into sections by the family members who live in them, which makes restoration very difficult as a complete whole. Being a legacy from the colonial period, it is also a controversial issue with the question of whose heritage it is and who should take responsibility for conservation.

This research takes a break from the usual notion that surrounds the phrase 'colonial heritage'. Chandannagar's administration under the French, although colonial in nature, is not associated with the hated political ideology that accompanies it. Empirical data, publications and field research has shown that the citizens of Chandannagar do not harbor a resentful attitude towards

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the French authorities. Francophilia, although not present in its complete form, is reflected in the activities and existence of associations and groups in Chandannagar which promote French language and culture. The living urban landscape comprised of the buildings also have a significant role to play in the historic urban setting of the town. The architectural style of the private houses constructed during the French administration has immense value in terms of the history and evolution of the town. It also showcases the interaction and mingling of the French and Bengali architectural styles. In addition to possessing architectural significance, the buildings form an integral and indispensable segment of the urban historic landscape of the town, regarding the town planning and spatial pattern. The above factors serve to illustrate the historical, architectural and cultural significance of these buildings and why they are worth safeguarding.

One of the vital causes for the degeneration of the built heritage in Chandannagar is due to low level of community awareness and involvement in the management of heritage. A considerable segment of the population of Chandannagar are not aware about the history and heritage value of the structures. The absence of such a community in Chandannagar is one of the reasons for the decline of its heritage. Active community involvement, based on the results of concepts, empirical research and comparative case evaluation, can be used as a starting point of ensuring the protection and sustainable development of tangible heritage.

Communities consist of groups of people with different interests. Therefore, it was necessary to identify and study these groups and understand where and in which way their current and potential interests are connected to the heritage. There is an emerging body of governmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions who have interest in safeguarding the French-era buildings. This includes also decision-making and administrative bodies such as the West Bengal government and the Chandannagar Municipal Corporation. Being considered a

shared heritage, the stakeholders interested in the heritage preservation also include the French government, French non-governmental organizations and educational institutions. Apart from these groups of involved stakeholders, several potential stakeholders can be identified and classified based on interests and degree of influence. These include local educational institutions, business owners and non-governmental research associations. The private owners of the buildings are also important in this respect. The identification and mapping of the stakeholders and beneficiaries is important for devising methods to include them in the planning and management. The interest and expectation of an educational institution might be the betterment of education and the improvement of the practical and research skills of its students, in addition to a good name for the school. Other stakeholders, for instance businessmen might want to invest in the heritage properties or other areas for the sake of getting good returns on the investment and being involved in a good cause.

It is, however, not impossible for the different stakeholder interests to coincide, as the precedent projects in Chandannagar and the case of the Denmark Tavern showcase. The projects that have been already executed in Chandannagar for heritage identification and preservation show the legal and social context of heritage preservation in the area. Analysis of the methodology of the projects reveal that community involvement has now been recognized as an issue to be dealt with. Each of the project conducted has had a segment on community involvement, but the progress is slow owing to the methods of outreach and small target audience group. Through cooperation with educational institutions and government bodies, the projects have included local students and heritage enthusiasts in documentation and research activities. Most of these initiatives, however, have so far targeted only the educated group of residents or students. Although it is yielding slowly the desired results of community participation as more and more people are getting involved, a significant portion of the local community remains uninformed.

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One way of dealing with the issue of maintaining the privately-owned buildings would be to encourage and propagate public-private partnerships. This would ensure the restoration and preservation of privately-owned heritage, while giving the community a chance to access the heritage. Crowdfunding initiatives would be applicable in the case of Chandannagar only when there is an active and organized community which renders value to the built structures. Cases such as the successful restoration of The Denmark Tavern has shown that through cooperation between government authorities, business investors and the general public, it is possible to maintain heritage in a sustainable manner without change of original use. Therefore, measures to involve non-governmental organizations, individual stakeholders and the local community for restoration and maintenance of heritage can prove to be fruitful.

The "Theatre for Development" method is a potential approach for generating active exchange of dialogues between the community members and authorities. Through popular forms of entertainment such as dance, theatre and music, it seeks to deliver important messages and engage the audience in conversation. This method is a desirable approach for raising community consciousness and establishing communication between the members of the community and the relevant authorities. The community members feel included in the heritage management process and therefore seek to contribute to the heritage preservation projects.

There are several measures and steps that can be undertaken to ensure the increased awareness and participation of the local community in the heritage management process:

- The decision-making bodies such as the West Bengal government and the West Bengal Heritage Commission should take steps to keep the general public in Chandannagar informed about the initiatives being taken and projects implemented in the town for heritage restoration.

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- The local community should be included in meetings, seminars and open discussions organized by the relevant authorities for the discussion about the fate of the buildings.

- The method of "Theatre for Development", with the usage of music, dance and singing should be employed in order to garner the interest and attention of the general public in Chandannagar. Skits, dance performances and flash mobs can be organized in public spaces to raise awareness about the issue. Collaboration with local cultural institutions can be a good method of achieving this objective.

- The Institut de Chandernagore, as a museum and Indo-French cultural institute, can organize free participatory events for the residents. For instance, photography contests, drawing competitions and quiz focusing not only on the history and built heritage of Chandannagar, but on the daily life of the local community in Chandannagar.

- The Institut, owing to its function as a museum, requires improving the state of preservation, maintenance and presentation of the exhibitions, and make it more interesting, interactive and engaging for the visitors.

- Cooperation between schools and the Institut is desirable to ensure the transmission of knowledge and awareness about the history and heritage of the town. The Institut can invite groups of school students to visit the exhibition and take part in interactive seminars focusing on what heritage means to them.

- The Institut has the potential to organize heritage walks for the visitors. Absence of museum guides provide a good incentive for the local people to work as a guide for the heritage walk around the town or the museum. Students can also be given training and opportunity to volunteer as a tour guide in return for incentives such as certificates.

- Grassroot-level organizations in Chandannagar should be involved in the process of the heritage revitalization, with the role of informing different segments of the local

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community and raising awareness among them about the value of the heritage buildings.

- Public-private partnerships, that is, cooperation between the government bodies and private organizations and individuals is desirable for the restoration of the buildings and ensuring the public value and use. Development project can also be based on this method, with focus on the cooperation between private heritage owners and investors, and the desired goal of public gain.

Through cooperation between the local community, governing bodies, and the relevant stakeholders, it would be possible to attain the desired goals of community involvement in the sustainable development of heritage and tourism. However, more intense research needs to be done on the historical, socio-cultural, political, and legal background of the town in order to establish better ways of heritage preservation.

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Appendix

I.   Interview with Dr. Antara Mukherjee

Date- 06.02.2019

Location – Chandannagar, West Bengal, India

Dr. Antara Mukherjee is a heritage activist and lead honorary researcher for the "Hooghly River of Cultures Pilot Project." As a researcher and editor of two publications on the history and heritage of Chandannagar, her insight provided me with both practical and academic perspectives and knowledge of the ongoing community engagement project in the town.

Interview Questions

- What projects have you been involved with in Chandannagar?

- What is the main idea behind the projects that you have conducted? What are the goals?

- What were the cultural activities that you have organized as part of the "Hooghly Heritage Day"?

- What was the reception that you got from the community in Chandannagar?

- What do you think about the degree of awareness among the local residents of Chandannagar regarding the built heritage?

- Who were the other individuals and organizations that were involved in the "Hooghly River of Cultures" and "Hooghly Heritage Day"?

- What kind of reception is the "Hooghly River of Cultures" project receiving from the Chandannagar Municipal Corporation and from the other government bodies? Are they cooperative?

- Who comprise your volunteer team for the project?

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- Who are your audience for the Heritage Walks that were conducted as part of the project by the student volunteers of Chandannagar College?

- The primary focus of the project is domestic houses which are outside the legislation of the government, how do you plan to promote and preserve the privately-owned buildings?

- What is the age range of the second generation of private house owners who are not interested in the preservation of their houses? Why is there a detachment between them and their houses?

- What can be the solution to develop a cohesive community of active members around the built heritage in Chandannagar?

II.   Joint Interview with Neline and Ujjal Mondal

Date – 09.02.2019

Location – Chandannagar, West Bengal, India

Neline and Ujjal Mondal are both residents of Chandannagar and owners of an unofficial heritage house in the town. Neline is actively involved with the heritage projects that have been conducted in Chandannagar and in correspondence with the French Consulate in Kolkata. As a private heritage-house owner and a researcher working on the heritage revitalization projects in Chandannagar for several years, her perspectives and opinion were crucial for me to get first-hand knowledge of the state of heritage management in the town at the government level and the degree of participation and awareness about the heritage of Chandannagar.

Ujjal Mondal is the husband of Neline Mondal, whose family had constructed the grand house in which he and his family currently reside. As also a heritage activist and old resident of the

town, his insight is crucial to understand the changing legislations and perspectives of the general public towards the built heritage of Chandannagar.

Interview Questions

- What is the legal situation of the private buildings that were declared heritage by the West Bengal Heritage Commission in February 2019?

- What are the implications of such legislations for the fate of the buildings? What is the role and responsibilities of the private owners in this case?

- Will financial help be provided to the owners of the official heritage buildings for restoration and maintenance?

- What steps do you think should be taken by the government authorities for the heritage restoration and revitalization projects?

- How can the Institut de Chandernagore be improved and used as a common community space?

- Who are the individuals in Chandannagar(residents) who are involved in the heritage revitalization projects?

- You had been offered to get an official heritage tag for your house. What were the reasons for you not to accept the invitation?

- What is the reception of the heritage preservation projects among the local residents of Chandannagar?

- What are the main issues with the approach of the government bodies and project organizers towards the local community in Chandannagar?

- What are the main reasons why the local people are not involved in the heritage management process?

- What can be done to involve the community and raise awareness about the built heritage of Chandannagar?

III. Video Interview with Prof. Basabi Pal

Date – 10.05.2019

Medium – Messenger Video Call

Basabi Pal is currently serving as the head of the Department of French at the Chandernagore Government College. As a fluent French speaker, she is in regular correspondence with the French Consulate and with the West Bengal Heritage Commission. As a heritage activist, she has been co-organizing the various workshops and projects for heritage protection and community involvement that were initiated in Chandannagar. Her views on the degree of community participation in Chandannagar, insight on the approaches that have been used to garner the interest and participation of the students in the Chandernagore college in the projects, and the reception that the projects have received from both the government authorities and communities have been valuable to examine the legal, social and political aspects of the heritage management initiatives in the town.

Interview Questions

- What are your perceptions about the level of awareness about heritage among the people of Chandannagar as a resident and researcher and heritage activist?
- What do you think is the reason for the low level of awareness about the heritage value of the town among the residents of Chandannagar?
- What were the problems that you encountered as a heritage activist and project co-organizer in Chandannagar for the "Heritage Chandernagore" project?

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- Why do you think there was a small number of participants for the activities prepared by the "Heritage Chandernagore" project?

- What is the perception of the students of Chandernagore college of the heritage value of the building, which is now an official heritage under the West Bengal Heritage Commission?

- What was the public opinion in Chandannagar about the hosting of the "Bonjour India project" in the town?

IV.   Focus Group Interview: School students and University students in Chandannagar

Date – 11.02.2019

Location – Chandannagar, West Bengal, India

Names of Interviewees: Priyanka Saha, Disha Ghosh, Souvik Ghosh, Avra Ghosh, Biswadeep Sarkar, Abir Sarkar, Shreyanka Nandan, Aishwarya Nandi, Triparna Sanyal.

Interview Questions

- What does the word heritage mean for you?

- What do you think constitutes the built heritage of Chandannagar?

- Why do/or not do you consider these buildings as the heritage of Chandannagar?

- Do you consider these buildings as your heritage? Why/why not?

- What do you feel about the current state of maintenance about these buildings?

- What do you think needs to be done in order to preserve these buildings?

- Do you think that it is your responsibility to ensure the protection and restoration of these structures? Why/why not?

- Do you think of the private buildings as your heritage? Why/why not? What would make you consider them as part of your heritage?

- Are you aware of the projects and activities that have been taking place in the town?

- Would you be willing to actively participate in the heritage management and regeneration process? Why/why not?

- What would be a good incentive for you to take part in the activities organized by the projects for heritage renewal?

V. Group Interview: Residents of Chandannagar

Date – 10.02.2019

Location – Chandannagar, West Bengal, India

This is a diverse group of interviewees, who were interviewed either in a group or individually in a non and semi-structured form. The age range of the group ranges from 19 to over 70, and features people from various work and educational backgrounds, from teachers, engineers, housewives, government service workers, pensioners, business owners and freelancers.

Names of Interviewees – Trisha Chatterjee, Susobhan Das, Srabani Ghosh, Dhira Nandi, Shrabani Nan, Trina Chatterjee, Rekha Saha, Gourab Das Gupta, Pintu Ghosh, Sourav Nandy, Rupomoni Das Gupta, Nina Kahar, Anirban Nan, Shefali Pal, Anusua Sabui, Amit Singh, Sumit Baral, Poulomi Ganguly, Dipannita Ghosh.

Interview Questions

- What is heritage for you?

- Which are the buildings in Chandannagar which you consider as fundamental constituents of the heritage of the town? Why?

- Do you have any personal memories attached to these structures?

- Do you privately-owned heritage buildings constitute heritage for you? Why/why not?

- Are you aware of the rapid demolition of many such private heritage buildings in the town? What do you feel about this phenomenon?

- In what way do you think that these buildings can be saved? How can this problem be solved?

- Whose responsibility do you think it is, to manage and preserve the heritage buildings, both private and public? (Most of them answered that it is the responsibility of the government)

- Do you consider it as your responsibility as a citizen to take part in the heritage management process? Why/why not?

- Are you aware about the projects that have been undertaken? (Most answers were "no", some had read about it in newspapers, but had no detailed information)

- Do you know that there has been an attempt at a crowdfunding project to restore the Registry Building? Would you contribute to it?

- Do you think that the government should include the citizens of Chandannagar in the heritage preservation process?

VI. Classification of Built Heritage of Chandannagar made by Aishwarya Tipnis[181]

Name	Assessment of Significance	Year of Construction	Preservation State	Architectural Style
Seal Bhaban	Low	1931	Good	Hybrid
Upendra Bhavan	Low	1880	Fair	French Colonial
Nandi Badi	Moderate	1911	Good	Hybrid
House of Motilal Roy	High	1860	Fair	Hybrid
Prabartak Sangha	High	1920	Fair	Vernacular
Abriti Parishad Recitation Centre	Low	1905	Fair	Indo-French
Gala Kuthi(Ruplal Bandi Cancer Research Institute)	High	1905	Fair	Indo-French
Chandannagar Hospital (Hospital Morgain)	High	1871	Demolished	French Colonial
Rameswar Marwari Bari	Low	1918	Fair	Hybrid
Krishna Bhabini Girl's School	High	1926	Fair	Hybrid
The Sacred Heart Cemetery	High	1690	Good	French Colonial
Lakhraj Bhaban	Low	1946	Poor	Hybrid
Chaandernagore Sporting Club, Centenary Block	Moderate	1888	Good	French Colonial
Chandannagar Pustakghar, Nritya Gopal Smriti Mandir	High	1873	Fair	Hybrid
Seth Badi, Sudhakar Seth	High	1860	Fair	French Colonial
Bagbazar Houses	Moderate	1875	Fair	Indo-French
Matrismruti	Low	1880	Poor	Indo-French
Shanti Kutir	Low	1882	Poor	Hybrid
Indumati Girl's High School	Moderate	1890	Fair	Hybrid
R.B. Avenue, Bonobihari Bose	Moderate	1870	Poor	Indo-French
Ecole Durga	High	1885	Poor	French Colonial
Bholanath Rakshit Badi	Moderate	1910	Poor	Indo-French

[181] This information has been extracted from the website of the Heritage Chandernagore Project, which has formed the basis of my research. Some of the buildings listed have been demolished and might have undergone changes since the listing. I have used here only the categories under the listing which have been significant for my research.

Name	Assessment of Significance	Date of Construction	Preservation State	Architectural Style
Jotindranath Pal Badi	Low	1911	Poor	Hybrid
House off Budhbeb Mukherjee Road	Moderate	1885	Poor	Indo-French
Rani Ghat	High	1888	Good	French Colonial
Welfare Department	Moderate	1865	Fair	French Colonial
Shalimar Restaurant (Old Post Office)	Moderate	1880	Fair	French Colonial
French Press	Low	1885	Poor	French Colonial
Magistrate House	Low	1911	Fair	Indo-French
Registry Office (French Tribunal)	Moderate	1875	Dilapidated	French Colonial
Chandannagar Sub Divisional Court	High	1878	Fair	French Colonial
SDPO Office	Moderate	1898	Fair	Hybrid
Clock Tower and Jail	High	1880	Fair	French Colonial
Home of Late Sheetal Prasad Mondal	Low	1830	Poor	Indo-French
House of Late. Shivshankar Nandi	Low	1880	Poor	French Colonial
House of Jayanta Kumar	Moderate	1905	Fair	Hybrid
Pathorkuthi (House of Ramennath Datta)	Low	1885	Good	French Colonial
Trinamool Congress Party Office	High	1880	Fair	French Colonial
Sarat Villa	Low	1840	Poor	Indo-French
Rakshit Bhaban	High	1880	Good	French Colonial
Lalbagan Girl's School	Low	1926	Fair	French Colonial
Abani Bhar Badi	Moderate	1933	Fair	Indo-French
Shashibhushan Nandi Badi	Low	1811	Poor	Indo-French
Bholanath Das Estate	Moderate	1880	Fair	French Colonial
Kalidas Chatuspathi	Low	1832	Poor	Hybrid
Abandoned House at Lalbagan	Low	1890	Fair	French Colonial
Bhabani Bhaban	Moderate	1861	Poor	French Colonial
The Sleepy Hollow	Moderate	1830	Poor	French Colonial
Nandadulal Mandir	High	1740	Good	Vernacular

Name	Assessment of Significance	Date of Construction	Preservation State	Architectural Style
Dayal Manjil	High	1875	Poor	French Colonial
Narayan Villa	Low	1875	Poor	French Colonial
Chinsurah Testing Unit (WSSEDC)	Moderate	1880	Poor	French Colonial
Kartick Villa	Low	1875	Poor	French Colonial
Das Co. Bakery	Poor	1875	Poor	Hybrid
Sacred Heart Church	Good	1875	High	French Colonial
Marie Park Ground/Park Dupleix	High	1820	Poor	French Colonial
Kanailal Vidya Mandir: Section Francaise	High	1862	Fair	French Colonial
Chandernagore College	High	1862	Fair	French Colonial
Jora Ghat	High	1921	Good	French Colonial
Institut de Chandernagore	High	1812	Good	French Colonial
St. Joseph's Convent	High	1861	Good	French Colonial
Motilal Bhar Badi	Low	1870	Fair	Indo-French
Chandi Bhaban	Moderate	1765	Fair	Indo-French
Prasad Press	Moderate	1936	Fair	Hybrid
Narayan Chandra Malls House	Low	1870	Poor	Hybrid
Patal Bari	High	1904	Good	French Colonial
House at Hatkhola	Low	1905	Poor	French Colonial
Aurobindo Vidya Mandir	High	1873	Fair	French Colonial
Town Houses	Low	1880	Fair	Hybrid
Matrishriti (Ahimsa Paramdharam)	Low	1920	Poor	Hybrid
Narendra Bhavan	Moderate	1890	Fair	French Colonial
Pearl Press	Low	1880	Poor	French Colonial
Unused House	Low	1870	Poor	Hybrid
Tapash Ganguly's House	Low	1890	Poor	Indo-French
Nandi Badi	High	1870	Good	Indo-French
House of Late Haradhan Khara	Low	1850	Poor	Hybrid

Name	Assessment of Significance	Date of Construction	Preservation State	Architectural Style
Mukherjee Bari	Low	1862	Poor	Indo-French
Mondol Bari	High	1752	Poor	French Colonial
House in Gondolpara	Moderate	1910	Fair	French Colonial
House at Gondolpara	Moderate	1902	Fair	Indo-French
Rathir Pramanik's House	Low	1872	Fair	French Colonial
Mondol Awas	High	1870	Good	Hybrid
House of Trailoknath Mukherjee	High	1910	Fair	Indo-French
House of Dr. S.K.Chatterjee	Moderate	1910	Fair	Indo-French
Nilkantheswari Temple House	High	1913	Fair	Indo-French
Gondolpara Jute Mill	High	1880	Fair	French Colonial
Ghatak Badi	Moderate	1905	Fair	Indo-French
Kundu Badi	Moderate	1890	Fair	Hybrid
Gopal Bhavan	Moderate	1820	Poor	Hybrid
Dey Badi	High	1711	Good	Indo-French
House at Dey Para	Moderate	1905	Fair	French Colonial
House on G.T. Road	High	1910	Fair	Colonial Hybrid
House along G.T. Road	Moderate	1880	Dilapidated	Indo-French
House at Junction of G.T. Road and Ditch Road	Low	1870	Poor	Indo-French
Entrance Gate Posts to city of Chandernagore	High	1937	Fair	French-colonial
Khan House	High	1875	Good	French-colonial
Mental Hospital	High	1933	Poor	French-colonial
Sett Bari	High	1870	Good	Indo-French
Chandannagar Municipal Corporation	Moderate	1860	Poor	Indo-French
House at Manasthala Club	High	1830	Poor	French Colonial
Rabishankar Das Badi	Moderate	1925	Fair	French Colonial
Gopal Babu Badi	High	1872	Poor	French Colonial

VII. Assessment of Significance in Relation to Preservation Status of the Built Heritage[182]

Categorized Histogram: Assessment of Significance x Preservation State

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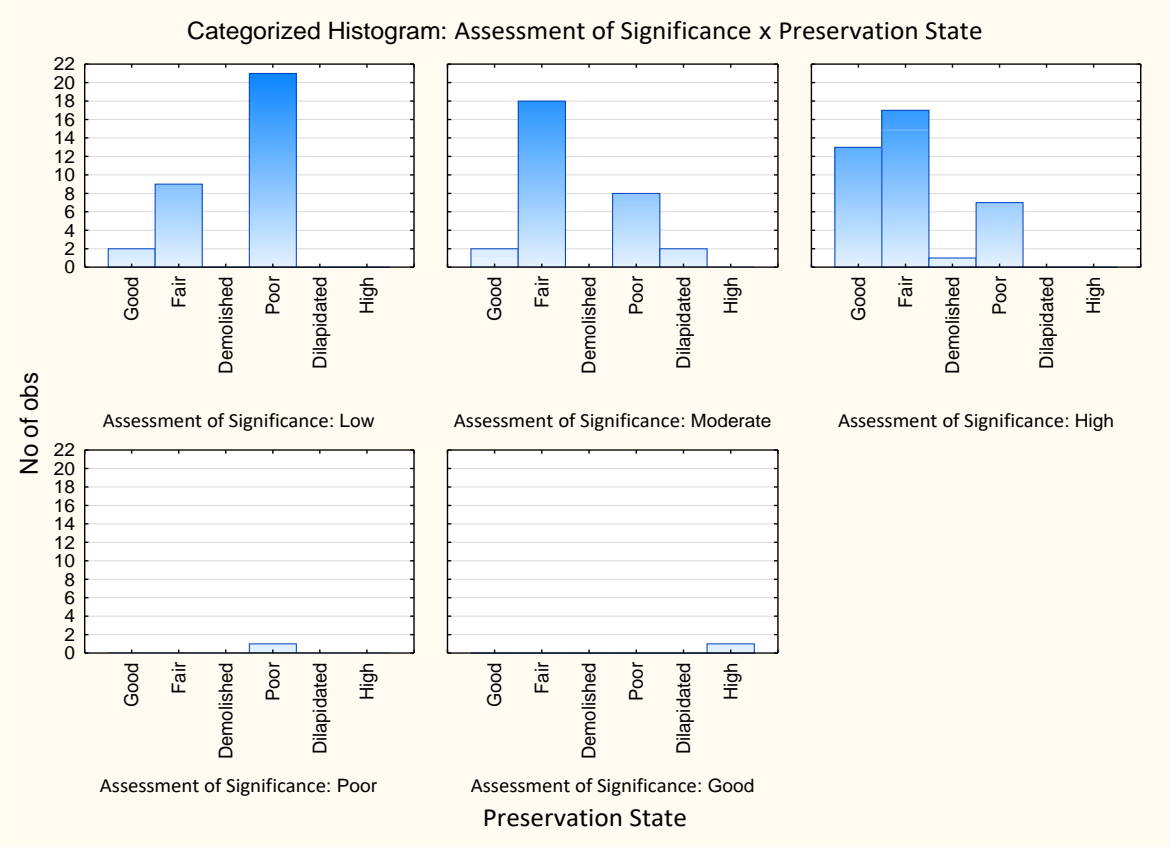
[182] Based on the data extracted from the Heritage Chandernagore Project.