

The importance of the conservation and preservation of the monuments of Odisha

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ABSTRACT

The conservation and preservation of monuments are crucial for maintaining Odisha's rich cultural heritage. They serve as a time capsule, reflecting the architectural styles, materials, and cultural values of different eras. By preserving these monuments, we ensure that future generations can learn from and appreciate the beauty and craftsmanship of our ancestors. Additionally, the preservation of cultural heritage boosts tourism, sustains livelihoods, and attracts investment, contributing to the economic significance of cultural sites. It also fosters a deeper appreciation for diversity and history, maintaining a sense of continuity and belonging among communities. The conservation and preservation of monuments are not only essential for safeguarding India's history and culture but are also urgent to prevent irreversible damage caused by environmental, human, and natural factors. Immediate action is needed to secure India's historical treasures for future generations.

Keywords: *Monuments, Cultural heritage, Conservation, Preservation*

INTRODUCTION

Odisha, is an ancient land with a rich history. The temples of Odisha are famous all over the world for its rich cultural art and architectural heritage. It exhibits a majestic grandeur. Monuments that reflect amazing architecture compete with the limitless beauty of the land to attract tourists from all parts of the world. The ancient temples are more than an association with religious beliefs; their architectural splendor reflects the skills possessed by the artisans of the land in the bygone era [4]. Odisha is famous for its natural beauty and rich cultural heritage. Therefore, it is important to preserve and conserve the historical edifice of the state [6].

The historic remnants in the form of monuments, caves, inscriptions etc., still stand as mute witnesses of our past glory. Its culture can be seen in large numbers in the shape of monuments and archaeological sites, which forms an important aspect of our cultural heritage [3]. It consists of pre-historic rock-shelters, rock art and architecture stupas, monasteries, temples, mosques, tombs, churches, forts, palaces, step wells, moats, tanks, bridges etc. that lies scattered all over the land of Odisha. The conservation and maintenance of an archaeological site consists of *fencing, converging,*

repairing, preserving, restoring and clearing of a protected monument and undertaking any act which may be necessary for the purpose of preserving the monuments/ sites or of securing convenient access to the sites [1]. The aim of the present work is to create awareness among the masses about the monuments and remains and to preserve these valuable property from destruction by various means and multiple ways.

Human relationship with cultural and natural heritage is considered more abiding and valuable than any other relationship. The existence of human civilization largely depends on this relationship for better living. Persistent efforts should, therefore, be made to make people aware of their monuments. Heritage awareness may lead to self-awareness. Awareness about art, culture, and environment is essential for expansion of life, peace, progress and self realization. Cultural and spiritual outlook must be cultivated and developed on every front of our lives. Technological and economic development in the absence of cultural and spiritual development will end up in utter failure on all fronts.

Monuments and Antiquities reflect material as well as spiritual aspects of society the evolution of human mind and the development of spiritual thought through centuries can be studied by interpreting various aspects of our culture. Ancient traditions and thoughts enrich our lives and also provide unique opportunity to study and understand life, economy, art, culture, society, spirituality, science and technology of ancient Orissa. Self-awareness is essential for regional building and it is rooted in our heritage and for this reason, best effort must be made to preserve and protect the monuments from falling into ruins.

Problems and prospects of Odishan monuments: issues and challenges

The Orissan monuments at present are utterly neglected. The Central Government and State Governments have not introduced so far any effective measures to protect the monuments from nature and from human vandalism. Surviving cultural vestiges are the mirror of our past achievements. One must know what were the contributions of his ancestors towards the development of rich and valuable society, culture and civilization. One can not take pride of his heritage unless there is a comprehensive State policy for the conservation, preservation and management of the monuments. . These historical edifices or cultural wealth have hoary antiquity. These monuments are of diverse nature *Article 51* of the Indian constitution speaks about the fundamental duties of Indian citizen-It shall be the duty of the every Indian citizen to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture. Some of the Problems of Odishan heritage monuments are Lack of masterplan ,Issue of conservation and restoration, Ownership and scheduling ,Policing and protection, Services of suitable guides, Site museums ,Encroachment, Irresponsible visitors Environmental pollution; noise and visual , Light and sound shows, Urbanisation [7].

Suggestions to tackle the problems like Public awareness, Coordination among all, Encouragement of research, Universal entry policy and ticketing ,Law and administration, Sponsorship from industries, Deployment of police ,Sale of souvenirs..We find many important monuments which throws immense light on culture and history. The Saivite, Vaishnavite, Sakta, Buddhist and Jaina monuments, and Buddhist *antiquites* are important cultural heritage sites of Odisha [5]. A huge number of temples scattered all over the land needs protection and systematic study [2]. It is our responsibility to see that those monuments are protected and preserved. These monuments need to be protected from the ravages of nature and from human too.

But due to industrialisation, urbanization, agricultural extension programmes and mining activities these sites are mindlessly ransacked / razed to the ground. So these sites need to be preserved. Further the archaeological sites in recent times are succumbed to encroachment, human vandalism etc. So in order to protect the priceless heritage, demarcation of protected area which permanent fencing, along with temporary marking of prohibited and regulated zones, soil conservation to stop the erosion of site installation of protection and cultural notice boards are to be provided and constantly monitored by the agencies.

DANGER FROM DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

Free standing monuments, like temples, etc, not only face problems of structural conservation and chemical preservation but also from encroachment due as development skills. But unexcavated sites face a greater danger from development scheme like (I) construction of dams and hydroelectricity project. (II) Irrigation and agricultural development (III) industrial activities (IV) installation of telecommunication and electricity grids. (V) Urban development's and laying out of sewerage line and (VI) quarrying of stones and stealing of ancient building materials for widening of roads etc. These schemes invariably pose danger to the existence of the cultural heritage in Orissa. Therefore, preservation with management of the monuments and sites are essential.

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION

Conservation is a movement activated by the realization that the natural and cultural resources of this planet are limited and are being eroded at an alarming rate. Architecture is an irreplaceable cultural resource. The aim of architectural conservation is to prolong the life of building and the built environment of historic cities so that further generations can enjoy them profitably.

Conservation is the action taken to reduce further decay. It embrace all acts that prolong the life of our cultural and natural heritage. Many disciplines are involved with building conservation, and workers in those areas should understand its principles and objectives because unless their together will be impossible and productive conservation cannot be achieved.

Thus the true concept of conservation is that all the historical evidence are to be kept intact or preserved. The original faces such as old beam holes, existing evidence of slopes of roofs etc. in the building are to be preserved by any method obscured or tempered with. However, when a conservator is compelled to resort to restoration in case of living monument the lost or missing portion with new ones is to be kept intact and well maintained. However the foreign mortar used should not be visible but kept hidden.

The following are the guidelines for carrying out repairs to certain important items of work-

While carrying out plasterwork, the original mortar should be used to match with the colour and texture.

Similarly while replacing veneering stones, the colour should match with the adjacent and the stones should be acquired from the original quarry. Sculpture work need not be restored; only carving or geometrical pattern may be restored if necessary to harmonise and in conformity with the original. However, the new work is to be distinguished from the old work (pl. I). The broken limbs of the images with the old pieces may be joined together.

While replacing the rubble stone masonry or ashlar stone masonry care be taken to the effect that the original characters are maintained.

Same is the case with pavement, brick masonry etc. The modern brick are not to be used in the old work or while repairing any old building. Efforts should be made to procure old bricks (pl. II). Bricks of the same size and the fabric as the original must be used and the mortar joints should be of the same thickness and toned to the same colour as in the old work. The mortar joints should be recessed about ¼” or ½” back from the face.

Preservation deals directly, which cultural property. Its object is to keep it in its existing. Repairs must be carried out when necessary to prevent further decay. Damage and action caused by water in all its forms, by chemical agents and by any pests and organism must be stopped in order to preserve the structure.

CONCLUSION

Even after the independence of India the national authorities and state organizations have failed to evolve and formulate standard, dependable and definite principles and policies for the preservation and protection of monuments and sites.

In order to overcome these blunders, the state authorities must frame sound and fool proof principles and policies, which will govern the system of works for protecting and maintaining aesthetic values of our heritage in a magnificent way based on the use of original materials and traditional approach.

It is our responsibility to safeguard the cultural heritage against ravages of time and human vandalism and also to ensure that the art treasures all over the state are properly looked after.

Our glorious past is reflected through cultural heritage. Quite a large amount of art heritage have been lost due to ravages of time. We possess today only a fraction of what our ancestors created. The neglect has destroyed and battered much of our cultural heritage to a large extent. The responsibility, therefore, lies with all of us especially with those who advocate the significance of our cultural heritage.

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