Heritagescape, Urban Planning and Strategies: Studies from India

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1 SCALE OF THE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES AND INDIAN SCENARIO

Out of 878 heritage sites in the world (as in February 2010; cf. Table 10.1), 29 heritage sites (Cultural 24, Natural 5) from India are included in the World Heritage List (cf. Table 2, Fig. 1). However, the Indian government has declared 150 places as national heritage sites on the basis of the criteria adopted by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). The UNESCO committee consists of the three types of programmes, which include research and documentation, training and awareness, and conservation and sustainable planning.

Zone	Natural	Cultural	Mixed	Total	%	State Party represented
Africa	33	42	3	78	9	28
Arab States	4	60	1	65	7	16
Asia-Pacific	48	129	9	182	21	28
Europe & North America (including Israel, Russia)	56	375	9	440	50	51
Latin America & Caribbean	35	83	3	121	14	25
TOTAL	**176**	**689**	**25**	**890**	**100**	**148**

Table 1. Unesco World Heritage Properties; February 2010

Presently a proliferation of international agencies attests the global character of concern for tangible heritage and its preservation; these include the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Architectural Works (IIC-HAW), the World Heritage Centre (WHC) of the UNESCO, and Sacred Sites International Foundation (SSIF). Efforts to develop heritage programmes and heritage resource conservation are promoted by these agencies in different ways and on priority basis in various parts of the globe.

Se.	Category	No.	Heritage Properties (Year of inscription)
	Cultural Heritage		
1.	Fort, Palaces, Tomb	6	Agra Fort (1983), Fatehpur Sikri (1986), Humayun's Tomb, Delhi (1993), Qutb Minar complex, Delhi (1993), Red Fort Complex (2007), Taj Mahal (1983)
2.	Monuments	4	Hampi (1986), Mahabalipuram (1984), Pattadakal (1987), Khajuraho (1986)
3.	Caves, ancient murals	3	Ajanta Caves (1983), Elephanta Caves (1987), Ellora Caves (1983)
4.	Buddhist Monuments	2	Sanchi (1989), Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya (2002),
5.	Ancient temples	2	Great Chola Temples: Gangaikonda, Airateshvara, Brihadeshvara (1987), Sun Temple at Konârak (1984)
6.	Archaeological Landscape	2	Champaner-Pavagadh Park (2004), Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (2003)
7.	Mountain Railways (*counted as one group*)	3	Darjeeling (1999), Nilgiri Mountain Railway (2005), Kalka-Shimla (2008)
8.	Church	1	Churches and Convents of Goa (1986)
9.	British Architecture	1	Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (formerly Victoria Terminus) (2004)
	Total	24	-----
	Natural Heritage		
1.	Natural Park	4	Kaziranga (1985), Keoladeo (1985), Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers (1988), Sundarbans (1987)
2.	Sanctuary	1	Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)
	TOTAL	**29**	------

Table 2. India: Heritage Properties as in Unesco World Heritage List, August 2009.

Fig. 1. India: Unesco World Heritage sites, February 2010.

In India, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the Indian National Trust for Art, Culture and Heritage (INTACH) and Indian Heritage Society (HIS) are the prime organisations responsible for protection, conservation and preservation of heritage sites. Recently, the Department of Tourism at the Centre and also its counterparts in all the States are promoting various programmes for sustainable heritage tourism.

Se	Heritage Properties (year of submission)
1.	Temples at Bishnupur, West Bengal (1998)
2.	Buddhist Monastery Complex, Alchi, Leh (Alchi Chos-kor) (1998)
3.	Golconda Fort, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh (1998)
4.	Dholavira: a Harappan City, Gujarat, District Kachchh (1998)
5.	Rani-ki-Vav (The Queen's Stepwell) at Patan, Gujarat (1998)
6.	Mattanchery Palace, Ernakulam, Kerala (1998)
7.	Tomb of Sher Shah Suri, Sasaram, Bihar (1998)
8.	Group of Monuments at Mandu, Madhya Pradesh (1998)
9.	Ancient Buddhist Site, Sarnath, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (1998)
10.	Hemis Gompa (1998)
11.	Sri Harimandir Sahib, Amritsar, Punjab (2004)
12.	River Island of Majuli in the Brahmaputra River in Assam (2004)
13.	Kalka Shimla Railway (2004; inscribed in List: 9 Nov. 2008)
14.	The Matheran Light Railway (exts. to the Mt. Railways) (2005)
15.	Western Ghats (sub cluster nomination) (2006, again in 2009)
16.	Namdapha National Park (2006)
17.	Wild Ass Sanctuary, Little Rann of Kutch (2006)
18.	Kangchendzonga National Park (2006)
19.	Urban and Architectural Work of Le Corbusier in Chandigarh (2006)
20.	The Kangra Valley Railway, an extension to the Mountain Railways of India (2009)
21.	Mumbai's Churchgate building, presently the Western Railway headquarters (2009)
22.	Mussorie's Oak Grove School premises (2009)
23.	Gwalior's Maharaja Light Railway (2009)
24.	Excavated Remains at Nalanda (2009)
25.	The Jantar Mantar, Jaipur: Astronomical Observatory of India (2009)

Table 3. India: Properties on the Tentative List, February 2010.

Both history and heritage make a selective use and connotation of the past. In most of the cases, the symbolic representations or the visual artefacts are deliberately transformed into a commodity for the satisfaction of the contemporary consumption, and this is commonly referred as 'heritage resource'. This 'commodification' process and its marketing are the basic reality of heritage tourism. To preserve, conserve and maintain the continuity of the essence of heritage is related to the intrinsic nature of heritage planning. This leads to the concept of 'place making' that refers to 'the art and practice of building communities in which all human beings transform the places they find themselves into the places where they live'. Historic

buildings, monuments and associated landscapes are of enormous value in creating places of character — in place-making. Their value stretches at least in three contexts, viz. aesthetic value, community value, and economic value. The three layers (time, city, planning) within the triad nature of their components, ultimately reached to the end process of heritage planning where placemaking exists as pivot.

According to UNESCO a country must first take an inventory of its significant cultural and natural properties, called the Tentative List, a country may only nominate properties that have already been included on this List. The World Heritage Centre offers advice and help in preparing this file. The Indian List includes 25 such properties (Table 3). India has been requested, together with all other State Parties, to develop a Tentative List that is more representative of the time depth of Indian history, the diversity of its cultures and cultural manifestations, and the typology of heritage places. A great number of the current World Heritage Sites in India are ASI (archaeological Survey of India) monuments from different historic periods. These sites are far from representing all relevant periods in Indian history. They also do not reflect the typologies of heritage as defined in the World Heritage Convention. Although being one of the most ancient urban civilizations, India does not have a single city on the World Heritage List. Other heritage types missing are, for example, 'cultural landscapes', 'cultural routes' (silk route, salt route, etc.), industrial monuments, and many other categories.

2 HERITAGE RESOURCE CONSERVATION: SCENARIO FROM INDIA

With a view to promoting dialogue between tradition and modernity and cultural preservation, the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) is actively engaged in heritage preservation. The concept of "cultural heritage zone" refers beyond more buildings and artefacts of culture; it also includes a spatial territorial approach to integrate the monuments with people's faith and performance system (sacred ecology). The basic idea behind this approach is "placemaking."

The cultural heritage zone is similar in concept to the European historic town centre and the North American historic district, and implied in Indian context with additive thrust on preservation, overall maintenance, sustainable development, provision of recreation, and maintenance of land reserves. The planning of Cultural Heritage Zone is to be guided by the broad principles and objectives of conservation of urban historic areas, as summarised by the ICOMOS (cf. Menon 1989: 6):

- For the conservation of a historic town to be most effective it should be an integral part of a coherent policy of economic and social development and of urban and regional planning.

- The values to be preserved include the historic character of the historic site and all those material and spatial elements that create this character, especially:
  - o the urban pattern and network;
  - o buildings and green and open spaces;
  - o appearance and morphology of buildings;
  - o natural and cultural regional settings; and
  - o Changing role of a historic city and consequences.

- The participation and the involvement of the towns people of every age is essential for the success of the conservation programme and must be encouraged. The conservation of historic towns concerns first and foremost residents.

- Conservation in an historic town demands prudence, sensitivity and precision without rigidity, since each case presents a specific problem.

These outlines need modification in Indian condition, as they do not easily fit to our situation. The INTACH had undertaken a heritage preservation plan for the Ganga Ghats, Varanasi, and finally a Master Plan of the entire stretch of the Ghats was framed. It is obvious through this study that an understanding of the characteristics of the heritage of the Ghats provides the appropriate framework for a planning intervention (Menon 1989: 14). A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the site as living organism.

A collaborative Indo-US team performed another study of cultural heritage conservation and planning for Sarnath (VDA & DLA 1990). Accepting Sarnath as a microcosm of the cultural heritage of India, attempt was made to integrate tradition and modernity in a complementary manner: preserve the past, introduce the

modem where both can fit easily to make harmonic continuity of the past. The proposed Master Plan is in accord to the heritage conservation, environmental sensibility, people's involvement, users' feelings and the need for the site as a very important tourist centre (ibid.; also Sinha 1991).

In this context Sinha (1991: 30) remarks that a sacred place is not viewed for aesthetic appreciation only (although that may be a part of it) but is also associated with transcendental experience. Therefore its environmental manipulation should be handled extremely sensitively with full awareness of religious history and contemporary cultural meanings." All such sites and places which are living cultural treasures are the heritage of our existence, therefore must be preserved and maintained. Of course, there exists a line of thought that heritage preservation is a luxury expandable, but it is only and marginally true when times are hard.

2.1 Khajuraho: Scenario of a World Heritage Property

The UNESCO World Heritage List includes Khajuraho (79º 55'E and 24º 51'N; Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh; population 7,900 in 2001) which consists of 23 monument sites built by Chandela kings and dating from the tenth century. Neglected and forgotten after the fourteenth century, this site was reported in 1839 by T.S. Burt, an engineer and explorer, as 'probably the finest aggregate number of temples congregated in one place to be met with in all India'. In 1852 F.C. Maisey prepared the earliest drawings of the temples and in the same year Alexander Cunningham drew a plan of Khajuraho, documenting all the temples, monuments and heritage sites of the area (cf. Fig. 2).
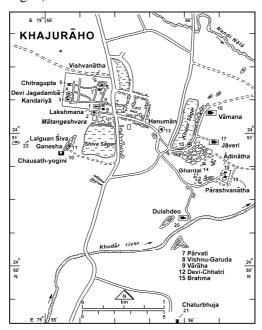

Fig. 2. Khajuraho: Spatial view of monuments.

On the following criteria of the UNESCO WHL enlisting under 'Cultural Heritage', the group of monuments at Khajuraho were enlisted on 28 November 1986:

(i) Criterion I, to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius. The complex of Khajuraho represents a unique artistic creation, as much for its highly original architecture as for the sculpted décor of a surprising quality made up of a mythological repertory of numerous scenes of amusements of which not the least known are the scenes, susceptible to various interpretations, sacred or profane.

(ii) Criterion III, to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared. The temples of Khajuraho bear an exceptional testimony to the Chandela culture, which flourished in India before the Muslim invasion of 1202.

In the passage of time, the comprehensive regional development plan (Master Plan) of Khajuraho is prepared, called 'Khajuraho Vikas Yojana 2011', under the act of 'Madhya Pradesh Nagar Tatha Gram Nivesh Adhiniyam 1973'. The first draft development plan was prepared and published by the Madhya Pradesh State Government on 16 October 1975. Thus, finally following the above perspectives Khajuraho Development Plan came into existence from 10 March 1978, which is replaced by Khajuraho Development

Plan of 1991 that refers to the development vision to 2011 and was approved on 5 June 1995. The main focus of the 2011 Plan is an integrated development of tourism as well as preservation of glorious temples of international recognition and of universal values.

On the line of landscape planning and environmental cleanliness and beautification of the World Heritage Sites of Khajuraho, the INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art, Culture and Heritage, New Delhi) has started its extensive study for the sustainable development of the Khajuraho Heritage Region in 1998. Special emphasis is laid on the expansion and preservation of parkland landscape. The multidisciplinary approach of the restoration project highlights the different historical, archaeological, cultural, social and economical aspects. The final aim is to restore these gardens into their original splendour with their varied horticulture and princely leisure spots, in order to create direct local employment, but also in order to attract the tourists. In accordance with the basic philosophy of INTACH, this restoration is done with the local craftspeople (who receive the appropriate training if necessary); also the exploitation of the domains will be confined to the local population (cf. Robberechts 2005). The motto adopted by the INTACH is: "For and by the local people". Nothing is done without the approval of the local inhabitants, and at each stage in the project efforts are made to use local know-how or to give the training needed to do the work.

Thanks to the recent project of the "Conservation and Sustainable Strategy for the Khajuraho World Heritage Region", under which conservation activities are now taking care. Additionally, under the Restoration of Khajuraho's Gardens Project by the INTACH Belgium, the landscape is coming up in close to historical reality, grandeur and above all the re-visioning the ancient glory (cf. Singh 2006).

2.2 Konark: Scenario of a World Heritage Property

Konark (86º 06' E and 19º 54'N; population 15,020 in 2001), located in the Puri district of Orissa was enlisted as a Un-WHL in 1984. The town area contains monuments which date back to the thirteenth century on a site that was subsequently deserted during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A. Stirling visited the site in 1825, and details of drawings were prepared in 1837 by James Fergusson, and, by 1868, an account made by Rajendralala mentioned that 'the sanctuary was reduced to an enormous mass of stones studded with a few pipal trees here and there' (Mitra 1986: 13).

The main temple complex (Fig. 3) consists of a sanctuary, its attached porch and an isolated pillared edifice. Erected on an impressive platform, the sanctuary and the porch are the two components of a single unified architectural scheme, the whole fabric being designed to represent the celestial chariot of the sun-god who is believed in Hindu mythology to course across the sky in a chariot drawn by seven horses. Treated magnificently, each wheel consists of an axle kept in position by a pin as in a bullock cart, a hub, a felloe and sixteen spokes, of which eight are broad and other eight are thin. Constructed during the thirteenth century, the Sun-god temple is described as 'the most richly ornamented building in the whole world' (UNESCO-IUCN 1992: 182). Now in ruins this temple of the Sun-god once had a tower almost 60 metres high and a massive porch covered with many carvings and sculptures of lions, elephants, human figures and floral decorations (cf. Singh 1997: 124).
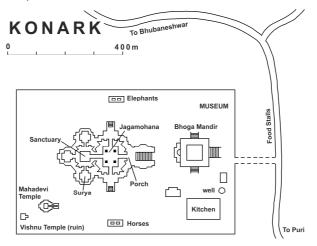

Fig. 3. Konark: the temple complex.

Since the images have long been removed from the main temple, the sanctuary is no longer regarded as a holy place. In the northeast corner of the compound a modem building houses the old doorway arch showing the planets of Hindu mythology; Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn; all seated cross-legged on lotus, carrying in the left hand a water pot and in the right a rosary. In addition, a fierce looking Rahu bearing a crescent in both hands, and Ketu holding a bowl of flames in the left hand and a sword or staff in the right, are depicted. In recent years these have become objects of veneration, and Brahmin priests are now in charge of this building as a place of worship. There has also been substantial recent renovation, some of it protective, some replacing fallen stonework and sculptures, so that the appearance of the whole temple complex is now very different from that of even a few years ago.

The conservation efforts of the temple complex are so extensive that they are treated as part of history in themselves. In 1806 the Marine Board made a request to take measures for preservation, but this appeal was not taken seriously and a portion of the temple tower was lost. In 1859, the Asiatic Society of Bengal proposed to remove the Nine-Planet (Nava Grahas) architrave to the Indian Museum in Calcutta, but an initial attempt at removal, in 1867, failed due to transportation problems and the lack of sufficient funds. In 1892 a second attempt was made to transport the Nine-Planet architrave to Calcutta, but this move was stopped, after the shifting of thirteen sculptured pieces, due to the objections of local people.

In December 1900 the visit of Sir John Woodburn, Lieutenant Governor, to Konark, initiated a new programme for heritage conservation. In February 1901, T. Block, Archaeological Surveyor of the Bengal circle, submitted a proposal for the unearthing of the buried portion of the temple and the compound wall and exposed a wheel by excavating a trench at the base of the porch. Within a decade substantial works were undertaken to rescue whatever survived of this stupendous fabric (Mitra 1986: 15-20). The first phase of conservation was completed by 1910, incorporating all work essential for rendering the monument stable at a cost of nearly Rs. 100,000.

In the next phase by 1922 all the major structural repairs, the rebuilding of the wall-tops, construction of the walls, and removal of sand and fallen stones and the development of a sculpture shed were completed. Since then, small scale repairs, like the clearance of vegetation, resetting of loose stones and painting of filling in the crevices, were affected annually until 1953 when the ASI took over responsibility.

The rapid growth of tourism is now leading to ill-conceived plans which do not promote sustainable development. The irrational plan to dereserve large areas of the Reserved and Protected Konark-Balukhanda and Bhitarkanika wildlife sanctuaries for tourism development will harm both the Sun temple at Konark, and wildlife on the adjoining beaches. The trees and shrubs grown in the recent past are proposed to be cleared by mass felling of trees to accommodate various tourism-promotion oriented constructions, a plan not supported by the Union Government in New Delhi.

Recently large scale reconstruction has been carried out in the name of restoration. The Master Plan (1991-2011) for tourism development envisages the dereservation of portions of the reserved sanctuaries, for the construction of modem means of entertainment, leisure and recreation for tourists. Such works, done in the name of development, involve mass felling of trees and the clearing of forests developed over a long period for the safety of the coastal regions and also the hinterland (Sengupta 1995: 11). The immediate surroundings of the Konark temple, according to the Master Plan, are to be preserved by adequate landscaping. But, to boost tourism and to generate land revenue, the provisions of the plan have been flagrantly violated by the construction of a market complex, an auditorium and an office building. The land attached to the temple, declared prohibited under the Ancient Monuments, Sites and Remains Act 1958, has also been encroached upon by new constructions. Three major hotel chains (Taj, Oberoi and Clarks) have obtained land to build hotels on the beach about three kilometres from Konark and may spoil an already crowded and popular site.

A report of the Union Ministry for Forests and Environment mentions that one might grow forests and develop beaches, but not create another Konark temple. As the media highlighted the negligence and inefficiency of the ASI, a team of UNESCO experts visited Konark in September 1980. Their report contends that 'sand filling has had no obvious damaging effect on the stability of the temple'. But the next UNESCO team of two architect-restorers, visiting in January 1987, thought differently. They suggested that '... the dry-stone-filling and sand fill are not required for the overall structural strength of the Jagamohana (i.e. the extant assembly hall)'. The total estimated cost of restoration would be Rs.75 million, though no allocated money was released. Sengupta (1995: 11) suggests, 'While environmentalists are looking after the

Olive Ridley turtles and forests, adequate attention must be given to properly preserve the Konark temple, the goose laying golden eggs for tourism'.

3 HERITAGE CONTESTATION AND ISSUE OF RELIGION: SOME EXAMPLES

Illustrated with his study of the Indo-Islamic garden in Gujarat, Wescoat (2007: 53-77) has generalised six broad relationships between cultural conflict and heritage conservation, which may occur in any situation and in any part of India or South Asia; they are (ibid: 61-64):

1. Cultural heritage in the context of armed conflict.

2. Places of violence as cultural heritage.

3. Heritage as the object of conflict, destruction, and desecration.

4. Conflict between proposals for economic development and heritage conservation.

5. Conflict among heritage stakeholders over material control and symbolic interpretation of a site.

6. Conflict among heritage professionals over different concepts and methods of conservation.

On 6 December 1992 a mob led by Hindu fundamentalists, the right wing activist from World Hindu Congress (VHP), ultimately in their last attempt succeeded in razing the sixteenth-century Babri mosque (built by Mughal king Babur) in Ayodhya, which was believed to be an important temple site of lord Rama in the early twelfth-century, but converted into mosque after its demolition (Bevan 2006: 134). However, there was no sufficient evidence to prove the existence of Hindu temple at this site. During last four hundred years there had been several attempts to remove the mosque through court, direct action, or planned attacks. After India's independence in 1947 the different religions and their monuments had largely co-existed side by side, as in Bosnia. The Ayodhya crisis must also be seen within the climate of increased tensions between India and Pakistan over the last few decades, and the fundamentalist groups between Hindus and Muslims within India itself (cf. Elst 2003). The VHP extends their agenda for getting under their control several disputed mosques, strongly arguing for the important mosques in the holy cities of Mathura and Banaras (Varanasi). Historian Eaton (2000) clearly shows that cases of destruction of places of worship were not restricted to Muslim rulers alone. He recounts numerous instances of Hindu kings having torn down Hindu temples, in addition to Jain and Buddhist shrines. He says that these must be seen as, above all, powerful politically symbolic acts. Says Bevan (2006: 137), that: "The demolition of sacral buildings has become a key proxy through which post-Partition inter-communal strife is now expressed. Ayodhya is India's Twin Towers – a ground zero from which the waves of violence are spreading to engulf thousands and potentially millions of people".

The Buddhist monastery and temple at Bodh Gaya was built by the king Ashoka during third-century before Christ and remained an active site till 1192 AD when Muslim invaders destroyed it. During the rule of Mughal King Akbar, from 1590, the temple was under the control of a Shaiva Hindu priest who managed to set Shiva Linga in the inner sanctum, which after passage of time turned into religious conflicts. In 1872 under the patronage of Burmese king the temple was renovated and re-built. After independence, since 1949 through an Act both Hindus and Buddhists got authority for worship and joint control. But Buddhist have not accepted this arrangement, thus a continuous movement to liberate this temple from the interference of Hindus is noticed, including peaceful march of around half-million Buddhists from all parts of the world in October 1992 and November 1995. This contestation is still in continuance (cf. Singh 2008).

In Varanasi the existence of an important mosque after demolishing the famous temple of Vishvanatha in 1669 by the order of Mughal king Aurangzeb is a subject of constant conflict between Hindus and Muslims. Aurangzeb did not just build an "isolated" mosque on "a" destroyed temple. He ordered all temples to be destroyed, among them the Kashi Vishvanatha, one of the most sacred places of Hinduism, and had mosques built on a number of cleared temple sites. Until today, the old Kashi Vishvanatha temple wall is visible as a part of the walls of the Gyanvapi (Jnanavapi) mosque which Aurangzeb had built at the site. After demolishing the temple, Aurangzeb had built a mosque there. However, part of the back portion was left as a warning and an insult to Hindu feelings. The Riverfront Heritage of Varanasi underway to get enlisting in the World Heritage site is facing problem of contesting consensus among Hindus and Muslims (see Singh 1993). All other Hindu sacred places within his reach equally suffered destruction, with mosques built on them; among them, Krishna's birth temple in Mathura and the rebuilt Somnath temple on the coast of Gujarat. The

neo-Hindu revivalism and awakening of Hindu identity with vested interest are getting inspiration by the VHP and making their mind to destroy those Muslim monuments built on the razed site of Hindu temples. From the other side, Hancock (2008: 175) notes that "through the creative destruction wreaked by the political economy and the rueful self-regards of cultural intimacy, the same sites disavow the past and anticipate the global connections of the unfolding neoliberal order".

Champaner-Pavagarh (a World Heritage Site, Unesco), like other heritage sites in India, is both an historic and ethnographic landscape. It exhibits both the palimpsest of landscape layers inscribed over time and the juxtaposition of Hindu and Islam traditions in architecture and city planning (see Sinha 2004). Both Hindu and Islamic cultures exploited the visual potentials of the topography. The sense of harmonic relationship between Hindu (like Kalika goddess) and Muslim (like Jami and Shehri mosques) co-exists in maintenance of this heritagescape, which exists facing each other, but this may be questionable in future. The concept of cultural landscape as a heritage resource is a recent development on the line of old idea of historic conservation and certainly did not guide monument-centric colonial efforts at restoration (Sinha and Harkness 2006: 97). On this line the Yamuna riverfront around the Taj Mahal (enlisted in Unesco WHL) is suggested as 'cultural heritage landscape. This also raises the issue of suspicion of tensions between Hindus and Muslims at some places. Defining heritage territory under the strict control of heritage law will help avoiding conflicts and contestation together with active public participation.

4 JNNURM, THE CDP AND CONCERN FOR HERITAGE!

According to the census of 2001 a little over 27.8% of India's total population (1.029 billion; and projected over 2 billions by 2071) lives in urban areas, and it is expected that its share will be close to 45% by 2050. To handle India's rapid urban growth and sprawl and its consequential problems a comprehensive and sustainable development strategy was designed and inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, on 3rd December 2005. This is named Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM), which will work for a period of 7 years beginning from 2005-06 under the central Ministry of Urban Development/ Ministry of Urban Employment and Poverty Alleviation, under the 74th Constitution Amendment Act (CAA), 1992. The main components under the mission include urban renewal, water supply and sanitation, sewerage and solid waste management, urban transport, re-development of inner city areas, development of heritage areas, preservation of water bodies, slum development, basic services to urban poor and street lighting. In the first phase, the Mission is being executed in 63 cities with a population of 'one-million and above', State capitals and 23 other cities of religious and tourist importance. With an estimated provision of Rs, 614.6 billion [1 US $ = Rs 49] for 7 years, the Mission is the single largest Central Government initiative in the urban sector. The PM emphasised the importance of cities that are internationally known for heritage, tourism and pilgrimages and maintained their historical and cultural glories, like Varanasi, Amritsar, Haridwar, Ujjain, Gwaliar, Madurai, etc.

The primary objective of the JNNURM is to create productive, efficient, equitable and responsive cities. In line with this objective, the Mission focuses on: (i) Integrated development of infrastructure services, (ii) Securing linkages between asset creation and maintenance for long-run project sustainability, (iii) Accelerating the flow of investment into urban infrastructure services, (iv) Planned development of cities including the peri-urban areas, outgrowths (OG), and urban corridors, (v) Renewal and redevelopment of inner city areas, and (vi) Decentralization of urban services to ensure their availability to the urban poor. In view of these issues the future vision for heritage cities (Varanasi, Amritsar, Ujjain, Madurai, Gwaliar, etc.) is to keep and develop it as an "economically vibrant, culturally rich tourist city". Under this programme the comprehensive City Development Plans (CDP) were prepared in collaboration with private agencies and INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art, Culture and Heritage). Of course, various CDP reports recognise that 'the process of CDP being a multi disciplinary platform includes various stakeholders who work towards the development of the city. As the stakeholders know the city better and are responsible citizens, their views are important at every step, while preparing the CDP', but in fact, the city authorities have not taken active collaboration with stakeholders or local institutions (cf. Singh 2009a: 135-182).

4.1 Heritagescapes and Riverfront of Varanasi: a case of contestation

The holy-heritage city of Varanasi is known as cultural capital of India since ancient past. The Ganga riverfront with its Ghats (stairways to the river; total 84, cf. Fig. 4) in Varanasi fully fulfil the criteria of

Cultural Landscapes as designated in Article 1 of the UNESCO-WHC Convention (2005) and specifically that of a cultural landscape "that retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress" and an associative cultural landscape "by virtue of powerful religious, artistic, cultural associations of the natural element." These riverfront ghats along with the loft palatial building belonging to royal trusts have successively grown up since the mid 11th century and are even today the most alive and picturesque scene in the city.

The conservation of most heritage properties faces intense pressure. These properties are presently in the same physical conditions as in the last couple of decades and their architectural characteristics are being maintained without many legal and administrative measures, however their architectural integrity is now being threatened. Unless stringent measures are taken for protection, there is high probability that new structures, using new building materials, will increasingly replace old architectural shapes and material. Besides these risks, the buffer zones and the skyline of the old city, whose status quo is preserved at this moment, are also being threatened by encroachments and rising heights of buildings.

The increasing impact of pollution and the decreasing volume of water in the Ganga together have a multiplier effect on the riverfront landscape. The main stream has lost the high speed of the current due to less volume and pressure of water. Close to the Asi Ghat, the first one, the river has already left the bank about 7-8m. The existence of Ghats in Varanasi is in danger because the existence of the Ganga is in danger. Since late 1990s, mainly due to loose administration and lack of viable administrative control from the VDA (Varanasi Development Authority), along the riverfront ghats there has been spate of illegal encroachments and opening of restaurants and guest houses, partly conversion of the houses into shops or paying guest houses, silk and handicrafts shops, and also transformation of heritage properties for more economic benefits (cf. Singh, Rana 2009b).
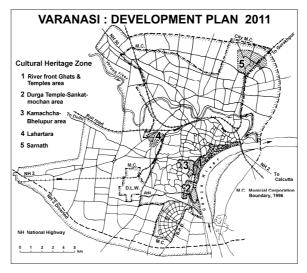

Fig. 4. Varanasi: Riverfront ghats and Heritage Properties.

Based on a survey (2006-7) and understanding the public participation and resultant action (PPRA), it is obviously noted that in order to achieve a long term self-sustained maintenance of the heritagescapes in Varanasi, an extensive programme of public awareness should be conducted to communicate and educate about the value of heritage and their potential socio-economic and cultural benefits that can be enhanced by harmonious integration between the old heritagescapes and the modern constructs. This strategy will help stakeholders to participate in sustainable operations, management and maintenance plan effectively and successfully. The passive fatalism and uncooperative acceptance of 'made-elsewhere' policies that has previously characterized urban planning in Varanasi hygiene, now can be reversed by the methodology of participated programme design, implementation and evaluation that the local development institutions have illustrated and recommended too. In order that this heritage become a resource for development, it needs to be first documented, then protected, maintained and finally utilised according to specific heritage guidelines and legislations.

Let me cite a case of the CDP Varanasi, where surprisingly no where in the CDP these aspects are considered as measures of urban planning, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting religious (like pilgrimages) or sustainable heritage tourism. Since 2001 the city has recorded a mass movement to have the

"Riverfront and Old City Heritage and Cultural Landscape" in the World Heritage List by the UNESCO enlisted. As in case of other nations the process of nominating a certain site or tradition as a world heritage by the UNESCO can be seen as dialectic of the local and the global politics and pressure games. Of course the aim of this global cultural policy as formulated by UNESCO-WHC is to enhance the pride of the local population in their own culture, foster efforts to its preservation as well as to enrich the whole of humanity in creating a cultural memory on a worldwide scale, but the road to reach destination is arduous, time-consuming and full of frustrations (cf. Scholze 2008).

Following the guidelines and identifications of the current Master Plan, 1991-2011, thematic surveys and documentations of the state and conditions of heritage buildings and the regional perspectives were prepared under the auspices of Varanasi Development Authority, and reports were sent to the government. Of course, no progress has yet been noticed, again primarily due to lack of bureaucratic and governmental support, and also of strong public involvement. The critical issues of environmental deterioration, preservation of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible), demographic pressures and illegal encroachments along the riverfront heritage zone are not given a single reference. Additionally, the legislation system and need for citizens' awareness about these subjects are not taken into consideration in the CDP.

5   EPILOGUE

In India, there has been criticism of the roles that urban development and mass media have played in erasing the material relics of the past, as well as in diminishing residents' knowledge of and attachments to those relics. At the same time, the greater value accorded tourism as an avenue for development reflects a perception that the marketing of heritage offers a means of preserving and enhancing the value and visibility of the endangered residues of the past (Hancock 2002: 709). The religious consciousness has left far behind the awakening of the cultural heritage and heritage buildings. Religious buildings form a large part of the cultural heritage in South Asia, but little consciousness of historical value (Feilden 1993: 1).

In India the conservation movement has not yet integrated the religious ethos of Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, Sikhs as well as Muslims and this is a critical area that needs study by persons of their own culture, who understand the ethics and practice of conservation and projection of universal values (ibid.). Cultural heritage in Asian cities is shaped by philosophies and religious systems that emphasize the intangible rather than the tangible, and the built environment is often not integral to memories of the past. Asian cities are treasure of intangible heritages by an abundance of myths, legends, and festivities and rituals associated with sacred places. Without taking these and religious rites into account together, even the best-preserved temple will be merely an empty shell and of little significance to local people (Howe and Logan 2002: 248; cf. UNESCO 2007: 72-73).

Cultural heritage and human rights are entangled with relations of power, and power relations necessarily impact the ideology of universalism underwriting current cultural heritage discourse, which should be inclined to the roots and their cultural setting (Silverman and Ruggles 2007: 17). With the focus shifting from tangible to intangible form of heritage – 'living heritage embodied in people' – the paradigm has shifted with emphasis on 'cultural rights' as a part of 'human right' (Logan 2008: 449). Remember that when tradition is totally ignored, the result can be an environmental and cultural disaster (Orland and Bellaflore 1990: 94). In fact, in most of the developing countries the sacred site and heritage sites are subjected to extraordinary economic pressures and change in lack of sustainable approach and realization by the local inhabitants and authorities. Strategy for sustainable heritage tourism under the purview of 'Healing the Earth' is the message of heritage ecology. This process of healing requires a specific mode of conduct, dharma, a word which root refers 'to hold'. Dharohara, the word for heritage, is derived from the same root, thus the dharma of water is wetness … the dharma of honey is sweetness … the dharma of our culture is to save and sustain its heritagescapes by promoting deeper moral values. The practice of heritage ecology is the 'yoga of place', the sacred attachment to the symbol of the earth spirit which is the meeting point of humanity and divinity (Rana and Singh 2000: 154). Obviously, "with the ongoing integration of new forms of "universal value", the heritagescape will continue to expand, complexifying participants' conceptualisations of their position with others in history and in the world— their very heritage— linking them with disparate times and places, and orienting them towards meaningful future activity" (Giovine 2009: 429). Let us proceed to achieve that noble goal for making happy, friendly and good heritagescapes.

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