

# Spiritual Revitalization of Indian Cities through Heritage Conservation

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**Abstract.** The aim and objective of heritage conservation with revitalization under Article 1, UNESCO Constitution is “To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms”. Revitalization refers to bring back the essence of tangible and intangible aspects which has been diminishing on the urge of modernism. Through intervention of conservation techniques such as restoration, adaptation, preservation, reconstruction etc. the above aspect can be achieved efficiently. Conservation and revitalization of old Indian cities and its historic values have so far given low priority in urban development policies. There are 35 (27 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed) World Heritage Sites in India that are recognized by the UNESCO as of July 2016. Eagerness for the taste of development, the Indian cities are losing their architectural and historical assets. Thus, revitalization and conservation have to come in action to celebrate reputable past of our historic areas and to upgrade its way towards life. Various heritage sites are in dilapidated condition which are not being utilized or conserved in an effective manner Indian cities are going through a vibrant phase of urban renaissance; the study methodology of this research is based on continuous and organic approach of revitalization by amalgamating community and policy development followed by analysis of physical and spiritual attributes of the city. Research and study approach concludes with considerations for area revitalization approaches which maintain the typical urban tissue, essential qualities of the historic areas, life of the communities residing there and can also adapt the physical structures and activities to some of the present day requirements. In terms of intangibility, it is stressed to be seen as part of regaining the spiritual identity by suitable conservation approach, sustainability and revitalization will work effectively if they are unified into new concept of development.

## 1. Introduction

The aim and objective of heritage conservation with revitalization under Article 1, UNESCO Constitution is “To contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms”. Heritages are the root system of development; the higher one wants to grow the deeper should be the roots to promote the conservation of all historical monuments, culture, education as well as spiritual values of each and every city of the world and stressed on the complete sustainable development. In the era of industrialization, to maintain the world peace and security among the nations across the borders historical culture and education along with modernity plays a vital role. The term ‘heritage’ has evolved a lot in recent decades; Cultural heritage is not only about monuments and collections of objects, but it also comprise traditions and living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to posterity, such as performing arts, social practices, civility, oral traditions, rituals, festivity,

knowledge and practices regarding nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts and thus with a fine line tangible and intangible heritages are separated. Heritage is being used in a broad sense which include both natural and cultural environment including beliefs, ideas and several ways of life and above all, the intimate link between human psyche and mystical nature. Heritage values are threatened by anthropogenic activity which lacks a commitment to spirituality and respect for symbolic identity. In this situation humanity is adulterated by thought pollution which is hazardous than most of the commonly accepted forms of environmental pollution which claims the world attention. Revitalization refers to bring back the essence of tangible and intangible aspects which has been diminishing on the urge of modernism. Through intervention of conservation techniques such as restoration, adaptation, preservation, reconstruction etc. the above

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aspect can be achieved efficiently. An understanding of Heritage Conservation Cycle diagram (Simon Thurley, 2005) and its different factors help in manifestation of our past and sequentially part of our future.

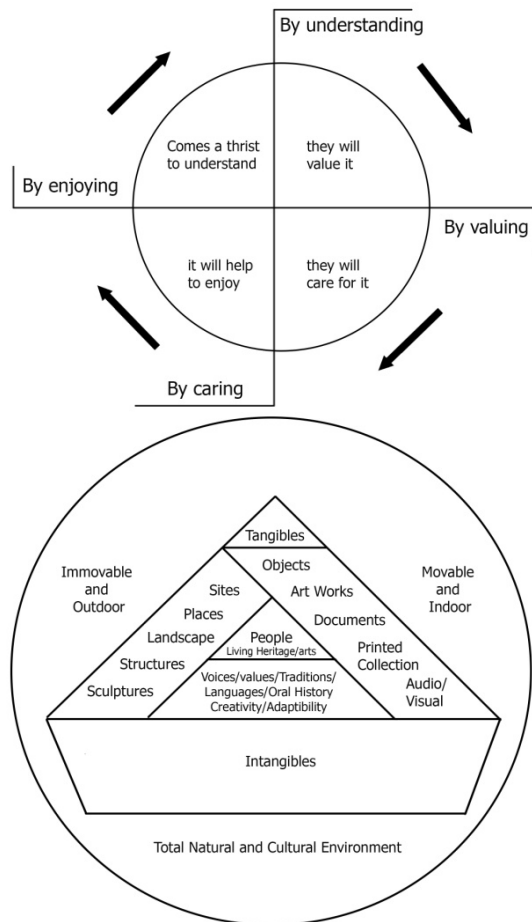


Figure 1 Holistic Representation of Cultural and Heritage Resources (source: Vol.03 2008 International Journal of Intangible Heritage pg-17)

- By understanding (cultural heritage) **people value it**
- By valuing it : **people want to care for it**
- By caring for it : **will help people enjoy it**
- From enjoying it : **comes a thirst to understand**
- By understanding it etc.

## 2. Indian perspective for heritage conservation

Indian cities are going through a vibrant phase of urban renaissance. Today, In India there are 475 urban agglomerations and over 31.16% of total population are living in 7935 towns out of one billion plus population (Source: Census of India, 2011).

By 2030, 40.76% of India's population is looking forward to inhabit in urban areas, according to the UN State of the World Population 2007 report. Eagerness for the taste of development, the Indian cities are losing their architectural and historical assets. Conservation and revitalization of old Indian cities and its historic values have so far given low priority in urban development policies. A mélange in Indian historic cities is because of the way in which development took place in correspondence to its natural and traditional neighborhood, local artisans, local crafts, traditions, its streets, water bodies, public spaces etc. along with all the outstanding monuments. There are 35 (27 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed) World Heritage Sites in India that are recognized by the UNESCO as of July 2016. In India, heritage conservation practice is categorized under five sections:

1. Development of Institutional Infrastructure for Urban Heritage;
2. Integration of Heritage in Urban Planning Framework;
3. **Revitalization of Urban Heritage through Urban Renewal;**
4. Community /Stakeholder Participation Approach; and
5. Generating Awareness of Heritage.

Despite of formulating rules and regulations for heritage conservation along with urban development, the historic sites are subjected to swift sink due to pressure of current urban scenario and various other components come up because of absence of relevant policies, legal framework, awareness, inadequate funding and technical skills as a result of which Indian heritage are in abysmal state. Thus, revitalization and conservation have to come in action to celebrate reputable past of our historic areas and to upgrade its way towards life. This can be achieved by addressing urban problem resulting from congestion, natural decay, space extension and disappearance of heritage etc., and assessing its history, custom, traditions, socioeconomic attribute and other characteristics involved in refurbishment and compatible use of recorded heritage.

Urban tissues of heritage sites can be intangibly revived with the concept of cultural heritage entrepreneurship so that the residing community can connect to their culture and pass on to their decedents.

### 3. Study Area

Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan, Indian, lies on the geographical coordinates of 26°55' N and 75°49', and is situated at an average elevation of 431 m. According to Master plan 2025, Jaipur city has occupied an area of 11,151 sq. km. Maharaja Swai Jai Singh II, has planned city as walled city in 1727. Maharaja Swai Jai Singh along with chief architect and planner, Vidhyadhar Bhattacharya, has laid foundations of city on very strong scientific principles. Since then this walled city, continues to act as central business district and holds congregation and trade and is responsible for originating 60% of city's commercial activity. Jaipur, being a section of Golden Triangle with Agra and Delhi attracts tourists both national and International. The city has a record of serving about 4900 tourists per day in 2015, including stay of 3- 4 days and also has marked 11.70% growth rate of foreign tourists in comparison to 20.27% of growth rate domestic tourist.

### 4. History

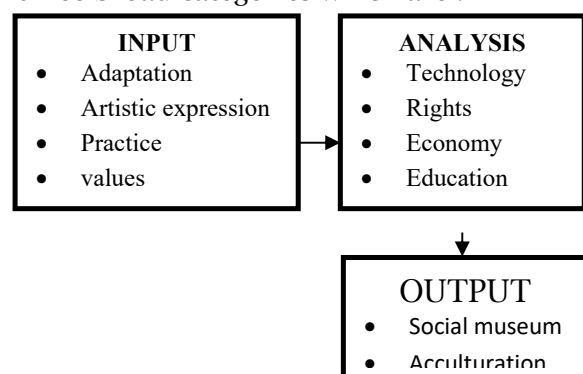
The design of old city has complex detailing with careful planning and clarity with combination of contemporary Mughal architecture and local architectural style to maintain high standard of habitat and living style. During 1941 to 1946, Mirza Ismail the Prime Minister of the Kingdom has preserved the character and nature of the city and during this time major expansion was started outside the walled city. In 1821, during British rule many infrastructural work took place and many monumental buildings were constructed outside walled city and also attention was given to service layout in city which results in good network and planning of waterworks, gaslights and road network etc. After 19<sup>th</sup> century, urban transformations took place in the city which is influenced from British people and outcome of

modern outlook of Sawai Ram Singh. Many attractive additions start taking place within the walled city, with buildings build on Indo- Saracenic Style, such as the Naya Mahal or Vidhan Sabha in edge with earlier Hawa Mahal.

Jaipur is known as the Pink City because of use of pink and its complementary colour scheme together with the use of red sand stone on building facades. Traditional features of Jaipur which includes domestic products like chuda, mojri, turban, ethnic dresses, local food, rajai etc. play a vital role in supporting the economical wealth of a number of families as it is the only source of income of considerable number of families. The ancient mahals, baulis, forts constructed thousands of years ago had a very scientific way of construction such as jharokhas for controlling the scorching heat of sun, bauli for various purposes such as self defence during enemy attacks, water supply etc., jalis for cross ventilation etc. all these structures are very beautiful example of how to adapt in local environmental conditions.

### 5. Methodology

Historical resources represent history embodying culture and tradition through architectural form, hence; need to be appraising as an asset on the contrary to liabilities. Qualities of cities such as historic, aesthetic, religious, social, ecological and traditional have to get acknowledgement and have to be utilized successfully in urban setup. The methodology adopted for documentation involved primary and secondary data collection and the approach is divided into three broad categories which are :



The strategy for planning should therefore follow a middle path, maintaining the harmony of deeply implanted culture while, at the same time, taking account of future-oriented urban development. Planning through the approach of social museum will help in healing the lost “dharodhara” of the city by embracing the mode of conduct that holds everything together to gain the wholeness by acculturation to interrelate matter, life and mind. Heritage involves both natural and cultural environment and is being used in a wide range, including ideas, beliefs, and ways of life, and above all the intimate link between human psyche and mystical nature.

	Adaptati on	Artistic expressio n	Practice	Values
<b>Technolo gy</b>		√	√	
<b>Rights</b>	√			√
<b>Economic</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Education</b>	√	√		√

Research is based on continuous and organic approach of revitalization by amalgamating community and policy development followed by analysis of physical and spiritual attributes of the city. Physical attributes includes **TREE (Technology, Rights, Economy, Education)** which are fundamental factors of development and spiritual attributes such as Adaptation, Artistic Expression, Practice and Values, these are the basic characteristics of heritage conservation. The connection between all these attributes are discussed in the above matrix and our study concentrates on how these spiritual attributes are subsets of physical attributes. Intangible heritage includes values, voice, traditions, oral histories, adaptation, artistic expressions, practice etc., since Jaipur has emerged out under the leadership of various rulers so it has amalgamation of various cultures, expressions and values, therefore focusing

on four major and most vital aspects has been our main motto. These four aspects have been described with their importance in the developmental goals, as the physical attributes are incomplete without considering these factors as their subsets.

With respect to social museum and acculturation:

**TECHNOLOGY:** Adaptive technological advancement is an important part for conserving the societal values so that the liveliness of heritage sites can be restored. Artistic expressions and technology helps in changing and speeding up the cultural development. Practicing and mingling old with new i.e. vernacular with modernism.

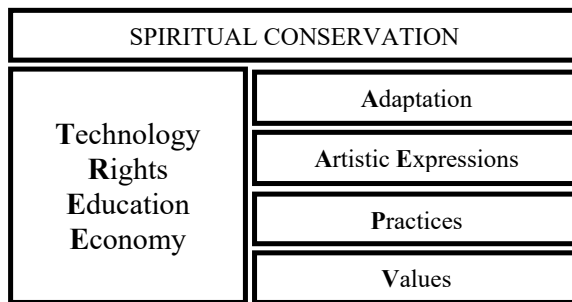
**RIGHTS:** To maintain the intangible values the adaptiveness should come up with reduction of thought pollution which is more hazardous than the more commonly accepted forms of environmental pollution which claim world attention. Values threatened by human activities which lack a commitment to spiritual identity of the city.

**ECONOMIC:** In response to market opportunities there is a need of adaptation which is of more flexible and dynamic in nature with respect to cultural heritage enterprises. Since Jaipur is famous for its traditional handicrafts such as gems, jewellerys, textiles, wooden furniture’s etc. which has a major contribution to countries GDP, labour force market development.

**EDUCATION:** Understanding the importance of our heritage will lead to development of community participation. Globalization of historical learning techniques, and merging old traditional techniques with the new one and marketing it globally will help in retaining the identity of the city at a larger level. Also the global market will help in encouraging the local artisans so that they may use their skills and try to restore the value of their culture. Values can be preserved by passing on our artistic talents to descendants; for this there is need to make them realize that this society and heritage is their own legacy and acculturation.

## 6. Result

Heritage is the mirror of human growth and development, and in this context it must be preserved. This ideology should be taken as an environmental ethic which has scarcity and deep attachment at its core. The paper draws attention towards the concept of social museum and acculturation which brings together spiritual and physical attributes of Jaipur. It is an initiative to restore the city heritage so that the society may itself behave as social museum, where museum refers to an institution where convivial values can be restored, and acculturation refers change in cultural values that can be accepted by community.



## 7. Conclusion

Our study concluded with the TREE analysis of Jaipur. This analysis focused on the regaining of spiritual identity of acculturation. Possible solutions are proposed under TREE aspects to develop social museum which should be emphasized and incorporated with values, creativity, language and adaptability. Heritage sites are continuously deteriorated due to natural and time factors and without correct revitalization strategy to sustain these qualities are very difficult. In order to be true to the existing local conditions in urban setup, a proper technique for museum is in need. Unidirectional aspects will only lead to conserving the tangible heritage but the time has come when there is need to conserve and revive the lost aura of Indian cities for which they have been known.

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