



Status of Historical Monuments: A Case Study of Pulwama District of Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT: The state of Jammu and Kashmir is a land of Mosques, Temples and Gurdawar's and most of them have been listed in Archeological Survey of India. The present study makes an attempt to study the historical monuments located at Pulwama District. The study also studied art and architecture of these buildings along with current status. The study found that these historical monuments are not currently in good state and needs immediate attention from the concerned Department.

Keywords: Historical buildings, temples, ASI, Pulwama

I. INTRODUCTION

Historical monuments play a very important role in the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage. They make aware people about the historical aspects and creates a sense of respect for those who lived in different times in different societies. These types of monuments help us to understand the art and architecture of people who lived before us and give us a clue about their intelligence, religion, caste, culture. Historical monuments are also studied by architecture to compare different designs and their importance to the modern world [1].

The historical monuments are also preserved for the economic purposes as they attract a number of tourists and is viewed as important buildings to restore the cultural heritage of previous dynasties. This has direct and indirect impact on the economy of the state as local people assist tourist to these places and generate income. A number of people sell the local and imported products to these tourists as well. These buildings thus become important attractions for the student community for education and awareness purposes. Restoring historical structures generates workplaces for both local people and international experts that sometimes require more skills and knowledge than simple building and thus result in higher salaries and also contribute to boosting the economy. Finally, most of these historical buildings are environmentally safe as compared to today's buildings that are fitted with modern gadgets and electronic devices. Hence, it is argued that preservation and restoration of old cultural buildings is not environmentally sound, but is also viewed as economically effective as well [2].

The district Pulwama also known as "Anand of Kashmir" or "Dudha-Kul of Kashmir" is also famous for various tourist places that also include few historical monuments that are visited very often by the local and national tourist [3]. The Archeological Survey of India is taking care of these historical monuments in the district [4]. However, over the years these historical monuments have been damaged to a greater extent and have been neglected due to various political, social, religious reasons. An attempt has been made to study the current status of these historical buildings in the district Pulwama and to suggest the measures for their restoration and preservation.

II. METHODOLOGY

The field study was conducted from 2016-2017 from frequent visits were made at all the historical buildings of pulwama district. Photographs were taken by the researcher and were compared with earlier photographs that were available with department of tourism or on the different data base at different websites. Personal interactions with the employs or care takers were also conducted during the study period.

III. OBSERVATIONS

The field visits revealed that most of the monuments are in dilapidated condition and presently they have not been limited in ASI. These monuments have not been renovated over the years and as such these buildings seen like abandoned sites and are the habitats for different types of pet animals. During the field visits no official or employee were present at the monuments other than gatekeepers. Further, the main regional office is situated at Gandhi Nagar Jammu and most of the employs are Kashmiri pundits who never visited to look after these monuments after they migrated from valley in 990s. This has called great damage to these historical monuments not in Pulwama only, but of whole monuments in Jammu & Kashmir. The art and architecture has been damaged severely as shown in figures.

The buildings have also suffered due to recent earth quakes and floods that occurred in Jammu & Kashmir. Further the lack of man power is considered a major issue in managing these buildings.

A. Avantisvara Temple Avantipura



Fig. 1. Front view of avantisvara temple.

The Avantisvara temple located close to the town of Avantipora is well known to every person in Kashmir valley as they are situated on the right hand side of national highway 1, when one moves from Jammu-Kashmir. These structures were founded by Avantivarman who ruled Kashmir from A.D 855 to 883. The larger temple of S'iva-Avantisvara, is made of massive walls rise in forlorn grandeur. This temple is situated in a courtyard enclosed by a massive stone wall and the western face of which is adorned externally with a row of fluted columns, but without any recesses behind. The gateway of the structure is in the middle of this wall, and is divided into two chambers by a cross wall and the walls are not decorated with beautiful sculpture as the niches and the panels are plain. The base on which the shrine in the centre of the court-yard stands is 57 feet 4 inches square and 10 feet high. A platform about 16' square, which must originally have supported a small subsidiary shrine lies at each of its corner. The art seems to be similar to the temples of pandrethan as this temple has stairs on each of its four sides with width of 28.5 feet supported by flank walls of 17.5 feet along with reduced sanctum [5].

The platforms seem to have originally been attached to the plinth of the temple at one point only, but afterwards they were completely joined with it by means of a connecting wall built of architectural fragments which had fallen from the temple. The sole exterior decoration at the base, the only part of the building that exists, is a series of projecting

facets, the larger of which were originally surmounted by plain rectangular capitals. In the two extreme corners of the courtyard are two subsidiary shrines. There is an assortment of architectural fragments strewn in the courtyard with the spandrel of an arch in front of the southern stair, the flower-and-vase capital of a dodecagonal pilaster, the spandrel of another arch by its side, and the base of a pilaster decorated with two seated rams and a dancing girl who plays upon a damaru (small hand-drum) standing on a throne ornamented with two lions at the sides and an elephant, facing, in the middle [6].

B. Avantisvami Temple



Fig. 2. A view of Avantisvami Temple.

A much oriented and beautiful and well preserved Vishnu temple made by Avantivarman before he came to the throne is located a mile away from the first temple [6]. This has been reclaimed by the removal of an huge mass of silt and debris were removed that was accumulated to a height of about 15 feet and buried the whole structure except the upper part of the walls of the gateway and a shapeless heap of stones in the centre. The edifice comprises of the temple a colonnaded peristyle enclosing a paved courtyard 174 feet by 148 feet 8 inches. The centre of temple has the main shrine, that is built on a double base with four smaller shrines at the four corners. The peristyle is comparatively plain externally except on the west side, which has a row of fluted columns. The only decoration on the other three sides is a rectangular string-course and pilasters enclosing rectangular spaces, corresponding respectively with the cyma recta cornice of the plinth and the cells inside. The entrance, which is in the middle of the west wall, is divided by a cross-wall into two chambers, and is approached by a flight of steps bounded on either side by a plain rail and a side-wall. The front pilasters of the side-walls bear figures of Vishnu and of his consorts carved in relief. On either though in a precarious condition [7].

The profusely engraved sculptured reliefs with female figures on the right and left hand walls of the outer chamber represent the goddesses Ganga and Yamuna, easily recognised by their respective vehicles, the crocodile (makara) and the tortoise make this temple highly attractive.

The scenes in the rectangular panel on the right-hand pilaster of the wall represent probably a king and his two queens seated in "sportive fashion" on a simhasana (lion throne). On the two external sides of this pilaster the scenes

are the same with slight variations. The lions in front are replaced by two standing females. The king has his right hand in the Abhayamudra (attitude of granting immunity from fear) in the southern panel and the lady on his right is admiring her own charms, reflected in a round pocket-mirror which she holds in her right hand. The figures are seated on separate cushions on the other side with single long cushion. The three rectangular panels are carved on the huge block forms the lowest course of the left wall of the gateway a middle longest panel. A male and two female chauri-bearers are the three figures that are highly caparisoned elephants, fighting with horned birds of monstrous size [8].

The row of kirtimukhas head is surmounted by a line of rosettes with another row of circular panels, a little higher. The rectangular panel in the left cross-wall contains a male and two female figures seated on a cushioned sofa in a grove of trees reflecting in a joyous mood. The man offering a cup of wine to females with pedimental niche contains a smaller representation of the goddess Ganga with narrow facets on either side of this niches a vertical row of standing pairs of male and female figures. The walls of the temple are decorated with numerous groups of figures, but unfortunately most of them are now too mutilated to be distinguished, much less identified.

The scene of the courtyard at inner chamber of the gateway is quite attractive. The eye feasts on all sides on the picturesque ruins of a beautiful range of cells from bald monotony of the peristyle with a noble row of fluted columns with stone proved courtyard, plain strain, sculptures plasters, erotic scenes, images of Garhaadhvaja are the main attractions of the temple [6].

The only decoration of central shrine is a torus molding and a cyma recta cornice with intact base and disappeared sanctum. The deity worshipped in the temple and seated in an easy affixture between his two consorts, Lakshmi and Bhumi distinguished by the cornucopia that was retained as the special emblem of the goddess. The Vishnu in the northern relief has six arms, two of which, in impartial affection, encircle the bodies of his two consorts, while the remaining four hold his distinctive emblems, the bow, the mace, and the lotus, etc. The throne below is represented by two pairs of parrots, and the same bird crowns the capitals of the square pilasters from which springs the cusped arch which canopies. The panel is surmounted by a dentil course consisting of conventional lions' heads (kirtimukhas) alternating with geese and flowers with border of square rosettes [9].

Both the god and the goddesses are elaborately ornamented in opposite pilaster with hair brushed neatly back and arranged in braids which are tied in knots on the top. The two roses inserted in the braids just above the ears with the necklace and armlets is a reflection of exhaustive one. An enormous circular ornamental disc adorns his right ear, while a smaller jewelled pendant is suspended from his left ear. The goddesses, whose exaggerated breasts and attenuated waists are even more profusely ornamented. Their ear-lobes are unusually elongated by the weight of their heavy circular ear ornaments at relief on the inner surface of the southern pilaster are also represents ten figures. The male wears an ornamental band across his breast in dhotis seems to breathe a spirit of profound devotion to some undefined object. The principal figures are those of a bearded and crowned male, probably representing the donor, and a lady, perhaps the princess, who wears a scarf over her head which kanga low down her shoulders, a fashion that seems the reflections from the culture of Kashmir [10].

The five shrines in the courtyard, arranged in a quincunx, is an indication that the group belong to the pancharatna (five jewels) class. The shrine in the north-east corner seems to have been dedicated to the river goddess Ganga, as the spout of the pedestal of the image which it contained has been carved in the shape of a makara, or crocodile, which is the vehicle of that goddess. The cellar colonnade comprised of sixty nine cells, the sacred washing of the deity inside the sanctum was holed in side of the main shrine. But the chief beauty of the temple lies in its cellular colonnade. It comprises sixty-nine cells, each of which measures on the average 3 feet 8 inches by 4 feet 10 inches, the cell in the centre on each side being larger than the rest and advanced slightly forwards is a real beauty of this temple [2].

C. Shiva Temple Payar

The Shiva temple located at the fort of karawa table land is a jewel in stone three kilometers from Pulwama district in a small village payer. The temple is made up of ten stones that are well preserved with great architectural and sculptural glory [5]. Although the shrine is open on all along the four sides and consists of a double pyramidal roof with triangular pediments on all the four sides enclosing a trefoil arch. The eastern trefoil niche is engraved with image of Lakulisa which is seated Cross legged on a wicker seat.



Fig. 3. A glimpse of Shiva temple.

The Shiva is dancing in western trefoil niche, Six armed Shiva carries trident and Khatanga and dances to the tune of male drummer and female flute player. The trefoil niche on the northern side contains an image of three headed Shiva and the central image of Shiva is having Aghora on its right and Uma on its left side. The southern trefoil niche depicts Shiva as Gajasamhara. Shiva in the form of Bhairava kills the elephant demon Nila. The ceiling of the temple carved out of single stone block, is dome shaped. The other sculpted reliefs on the exterior include, geese, bulls and decorative bands. The Shiv Linga is present in the interior of the temple [11].

D. Narastan Temple



Source: <http://hdkashmirwallpapers.blogspot.in/2015/06/ancient-pandavas-temple-in-narastan.html>

Fig. 4. Narastan Temple.

The village Narastan is 6 miles away from Arpal and 20 miles mile from Avantipur that can be reached by a rough bridle path all along the barren hills. The Narastan temple is well preserved and possessed with several features. The temple is built of grayish limestone and was originally covered with a thick coat of lime plaster, traces of which still exist. It is built on a single base which consists of only four instead of five courses of stones. The cornice is a plain, straight lined, filleted course, of which only the topmost fillet is rounded off into a cyma recta moulding with source base. The corner pilasters project very slightly from the temple walls and middle of each wall is a trefoil recess surmounted by a high pitched double pediment. This in turn is enclosed by a very shallow closed trefoil arch, surmounted by a two-storied pediment. The capitals from which the pediments spring are crowned by human-headed birds, facing each other. The apex of the pediments is decorated with a squat human figure, which may represent Garuda [10].

The trefoil arches on the exterior of the shrine walls; the lower trefoil arch is usually shallow or closed, but the upper trefoil is deeply recessed is novelty of this temple. At Narastan the process has been reversed; the lower trefoil encloses a deeply recessed niche whereas, the upper arch is so shallow that it projects only 2 inches from the plain wall surface. The absence of a circumambulatory path on the top is another remarkable feature of this temple. The pilasters of the side-walls of the staircase are adorned with shallow trefoil arches from the apex of which hang two swags of beaded garlands.

The portico projects about 4 feet from the temple wall. Its outer surface is plain except for two pairs of human-headed birds which adorn the capitals. The beautiful inner walls of the pilasters have two pediment niches, with six-armed figure of a goddess. The upper two hands hold a pitcher and a full-blown lotus and the middle two are crossed over the breast; and the lower two hang downwards. The objects engraved are not identified as they have been mutilated. There are miniature fluted columns, standing on bases on each side of the niche and three similar niches containing atlantes are placed at the bottom. Internally the temple cell is 8 feet 6 inches square, that faces south and contained a Siva-linga. Mostly the walls are quite plain at a height of 7 feet 6 inches from the floor, that are similar to the cornice of the plinth outside further, small double-pedimented niche on the east wall and the upper pediment of which is decorated with the carved figure of a kneeling human being is also part of the temple. The left pilaster of the niche is again an indication of the ancient sculpture that are carved in large stone blocks. The walls rise perpendicularly without ceilings and each course is made to project slightly spanned by one square stone [7].

The courtyard of the temple is 70 feet square. It is surrounded by a wall is unornamented at about 2 feet from the ground with pediment trefoil niche in the west wall, and a recess 3 feet square. The temple is roofed over by a coping of sloping stones that rest on a cornice similar to the string-course below. The temple stairs along the south eastern square tank about 8' square and over 2 feet deep with stone conduit poured water into it. The spout of the conduit is carved in front with a full-blown Lotus through the centre of which the water flows; its sides are decorated with grinning makara heads engraved in it. The stone platform of 12 feet by 6 feet 3 inches, which probably served as a bathing place by devotees known as siesta. The water has an outlet from south eastern side towards the temple yard. This chamber is entered through a narrow doorway and has a small trefoil pedimented window pierced in the wall at a height of 3 feet 1 inches above the ground. The measurement indicates that it may be used as the bathroom of female worshippers. Only a few feet to the north of this chamber is a small shrine 2 feet 10 inches square internally. Exactly, opposite the sanctum in the middle of the south wall is the gateway. Each of the chambers was faced by a pair of half-engaged round columns. The lintel of the doorway was, on the outside, carved with a row of crenellations alternating with squares surmounted by lozenges [9].

E. Kakapora Rani Temple

One of the less studied and unexplored temple is preserved in Kakapora village of Pulwama district. The temple was used Kashmiri pundits for worship who migrated to Jammu during early 80's. However ASI has beautified the temple and has created fencing all along the temple (ASI 2004). Some of the craved images of Hindus gods are not visible due to mutilation and this temple is currently not in good condition as most of the temple stones are damaged to great extent. The temple was severely damaged by recent floods and subsequent devastation. This temple needs attention of the ASI and concerned department, otherwise, it will become a thing of past in near future. The temple has only remaining sanctums with some ruins. Many standing remains including stone carved images of a female character who locals call "Rani" and a bathtub has been found [12].



Fig. 5. A overview of Kakapora temple.

F. Loduv Temple

The Loduv temple is situated at a distance of 3 miles from Pampore town. These temples are main tourist attraction as they fall near to NH1. The larger one of the two stands in the middle of a shallow tank of water which is fed by a spring in its north-east corner. Although, simple in construction. It differs from other temple of Kashmir both in plan and in art and architecture [2].



Fig. 6.

Externally, the walls have no decoration, their bareness being only partially relieved by a cornice which consists of three courses of stone adorned with projecting fillets with Fig. 6. Temple in the water torus course at the base and the corner pilasters are quite plain, and project only very slightly from the walls. The entrance, which is on the south-west side, is headed by a semicircular, almost horseshoe-shaped, arch surmounted by a single-storied pediment of very slight projection. The temple is circular with a diameter of 17' 6". The holes and mortises in the walls of temple have been intended for scaffolding while the temple was under construction [8]. This is regarded as the oldest temple of Kashmiri mediaeval architecture and the prototype of the elaborate style which culminated at Martand and Avantipur. The presence of green fish in the water is not only source of attraction for the tourists but has deep faith and stories with devotees. The other temple located is a smaller which externally presents has the same appearance as the larger temple. The difference is being the projecting pediment which enclosed the round-headed doorway that has developed into a well-defined portico with a trefoil niche. This arrangement is a single easy step to the full trefoil-headed recess or entrance enclosed in a steep pediment similar to mediaeval religious edifices of Kashmir. Internally, the temple is only 6 feet square and ceiling consists of three courses of overlapping stones with a base for the image in the centre. The corner pilasters project not more than 2 inches and are surmounted by rectangular capitals, which seem to have originally borne in relief depicting the figures of some animals, probably lions, standing back to back. The capitals of the pilasters of the doorway are carved with floral scrolls is a reminder of art and architecture.

IV. CONCLUSION

The temples of the Pulwama city are a true representation of the historical monuments as they have preserved the art and architecture over the years. There is unique in every temple and most of them have images of Hindu gods and goddesses engraved beautifully all around. However, these temples have lost the existing beauty as concerned authorities have perhaps forgotten to restore these structures over the years. The works has been started many times but were stopped without any reasons unknown. Urgent attention is needed by ASI to preserve and restore these historical monuments, otherwise, they will disappear soon.

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