



UNESCO's Culture of Peace Programme

The Culture of Peace Programme launched by UNESCO in 1994, opens up opportunities to learn from the past and chart the course for a new future that would ensure peace and non-violence an integral place in every country's, and every person's, collective and daily life. The time has come to make a new start, to make the necessary transition from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace. For, without the sense of peace in everyday life, nothing can be built or sustained.

International Year for the Culture of Peace 2000

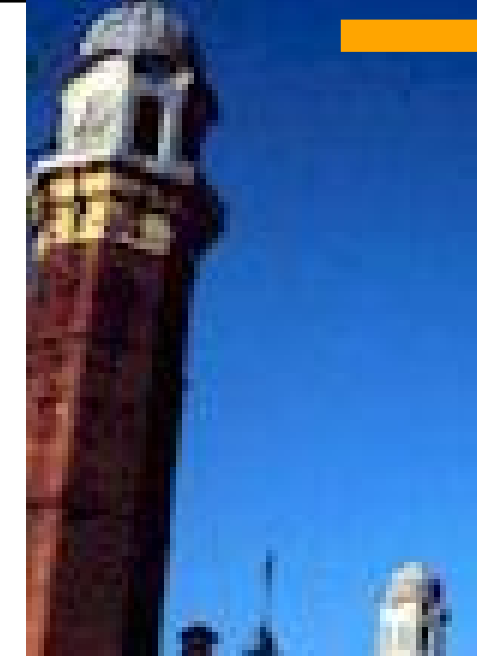
CULTURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION INITIATIVE C R C I



CRCI believes that: *"the identity of a place or people is determined by its cultural and social vitality, and by the awareness and appreciation of its past traditions".*

CRCI was founded in 1996, by a team of conservation architects, to undertake projects related to the preservation and promotion of India's cultural heritage. They started work by documenting and conserving historic sites and monuments which are part of the volatile legacy and complex fabric of Punjab. Since their objective is to involve the local people in their heritage and in the efforts to conserve it – they endeavour to inspire the people to recognise their historic legacy and realise that these sites are the very anchors of their society.

Thus CRCI works *with* and not just for the people who live among their legacy. The professionals and the local people pool their skills and resources, their task is not just to restore the monuments but also to conserve and ensure them a permanent place in the hearts and history of the region.



CRCI's Mission

Time has a healing quality and monuments express its vitality of time. To draw out and sustain this quality, the sense of the passage of time as it unfolds in history needs to stay alive and vibrant. Only then can it become integrated into the present in a meaningful way. Monuments induce an image of a time gone past; and each is proof of a great endeavour where labour, technology and the organizational skills of a long ago generation were brought together in a creative way.

The task of restoration is to recover their place of eminence in the every day life of the neighborhood and of the society at large.

How can monuments address the discontinuities introduced by time and history? How can they fill up social vacuums, heal wounds and evoke a sense of community linked to common spaces?

A step towards this was taken when the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2000 as the International Year for the Culture of Peace. All over the world, those organizations and individuals working for peace, tolerance and non-violence, are taking part in this International year of peace. The year 2000 is the beginning of a new millennium and through these programs it becomes a symbol for efforts to make this world peaceful.

...restoration of monuments is an act of faith...for, as residues of the past they embody a cultural heritage, which lies hidden, wanting to come out into the open social space in the present. This heritage can emerge from the collective unconscious to become meaningful for the future. For this to happen there is a need to continuously create common spaces – for without them conflict and violence is inevitable.

Historically, kings have constructed monuments and gone. But it is the village folk of the area who continue to live with them, sometimes over generations. Thus, it becomes important to find out how people think about these monuments. How social, cultural and political habits touch it - either to prolong or reduce its longevity? And how it links the past, the present and the future in their minds.

For this it is essential to reach out to the community, draw them out through their participation in the restoration process. Involve them in discovering its importance in the past so as to assert its role in their present and future. And finally, make it available to them so it becomes relevant to their lives.

To achieve this, the most important condition is a partnership between the experts, the community and the State. As the people living around the monument become an integral part of the restoration process, they become ready and willing to care for it once its physical restoration is complete.

The restoration of a monument is not complete without developing a live and meaningful relationship between the monument and the people living around it.

The restoration program is premised on the principle of community participation. This is a multi-dimensional movement and it needs the support and continuous participation of a strong network of individuals and organizations committed to peace and conciliation within their own countries and across the world.

CRCI's Peace Project

CRCI's commitment to work towards understanding the culture of peace is articulated by means of a special project in Punjab designed to find ways of overcoming uncertainties introduced by violence, war and ethnic strife over the past several hundred years. This project is now a part of the program for the 'International Year for the Culture of Peace - 2000' which has been launched by UN. UNDP and UNESCO are supporting the CRCI peace project in Punjab, under their respective mandates of: 'sustainable human development and promoting a culture of peace'.

Punjab's past lies fractured by incessant invasions and acts of violence. For a people denied stability time and again by force of circumstance, the symbols of their heritage can provide the much needed foundations for a restful and secure future.

The social and cultural fabric of Punjab is constituted on the one hand by numerous historic monuments of the Bhakti movement that embody traditions of dialogue across religious and on the other by the prosperity and uncertainties introduced by the Green Revolution. For instance, 1500 such monuments have been documented in 7 of the 9 districts. Most of them are religious and secular building in the midst of village communities. The cultural heritage embedded in these monuments can be harnessed to generate symbolic cultural reserves and equip people to cope and overcome these uncertainties.

Projects Undertaken by CRCI

- 1996: Conservation of Jamali Kamali, Mehrauli, New Delhi.
- 1997: Listing Historic Buildings, Hoshiarpur District, Punjab.
- 1997: Listing Historic Buildings, Gurdaspur District, Punjab.
- 1998: Establishment of 'Lime Centre' and a "Society for Documentation Research, Laboratory and Promotion of Lime" as a building material.
- 1998: Conservation Plan for Kapur thala Region, Punjab.
- 1998: Memorial to Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev.
- 1998: Inventory of Historical Building/Sites, Anandpur Sahib, Ropar, and Punjab.
- 1999: Cultural Heritage and Promotion of Understanding in Punjab - a joint project between UNESCO, UNDP AND CRCI.

