

HISTORICAL MONUMENTS OF INDIA

Dr.K.Kalai Selvi

M.A., M.Ed., M.Phil., Ph.D, Assistant Professor, Department of History, A.P.C.Mahalaxmi College, for Women Thoothukudi, Email id : kalaiselviapcm@gmail.com
(Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.)

Abstract

We propose two novel approaches to classify Indian monuments according to their distinct architectural styles. While the historical significance of most Indian monuments is well documented, the details of their architectural styles are not as well recorded. Different Indian architectural styles often show certain similar features which makes classification a difficult task. Previous work has focused on European architecture and standard datasets are available for the same, but no standard dataset exists for Indian architecture. Therefore, we have curated a dataset of Indian monuments. In this paper, we propose two approaches to classify monuments according to their styles: Radon Barcodes and Convolutional Neural Networks. The first approach is fast and consumes less memory, but the second approach gives an accuracy of 82%, which is better than the 76% accuracy of the first method.

Charminar

The charm of the Charminar is unparalleled that will never fade. The sheer artistic brilliance embodied in the monument is one of Hyderabad's claims to fame. The marvelous structure, standing on four pillars, in Hyderabad is an architectural marvel of the past, which combines art with religious themes.

Charminar is one of the seven wonders of Hyderabad and is one of the most famous tourist attractions and is visited by international as well as national tourists. It is a glorious representation of the history of Hyderabad and stands erect till date, narrating the story of the illustrious past of this historical city, once the seat of the Nizam. This marvelous piece of architecture is made of granite, mortar, limestone and powdered marble which has enabled it to stand strong through the years. Hyderabad is almost synonymous to Charminar.

The Story Behind the Construction of Charminar

This architectural brilliance was erected during the reign of Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah in 1591. He had shifted his capital from Golconda to Hyderabad and this monument was built to commemorate this decision and the eradication of plague from the city. The structure came to be known as Charminar since it is supported by the four minarets on the four sides. There is also a mosque at the last storey of the monument.

Monument measurements

Qutub Minar

Qutub Minar was constructed in 1192 by Qutab-ud-din Aibak, by the founder of Slave Dynasty and later completed by his son-in-law and successor Iltutmish. The Qutub Minar is the tallest brick minaret in the world. Built exclusively in red brick and sandstone this minaret in Delhi is an exquisite example of Indo-Islamic Afghan architecture.

Today, Qutub Minar is an eminent member of the World Heritage Site community and has

managed to stand firm despite the ravages of time. Qutub Minar of Delhi is surrounded by a lush green manicured garden, which is a much favored leisure spot for Delhi locals. You can see tourists and locals loitering around the whole winter afternoons here and there inside the tower. Qutub Minar at Delhi is a 5 storied tower. Each tower of the famous Qutub Minar has unique designs. It was hit by lightening twice. Due to this hazard, there was major damage in the structure. But during the reign of Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq, the king repaired the ensuing damage. Again during the reign of Emperor Feroze Shah Tughlaq, when the top most storey of the Qutub Minar was destroyed, the king repaired the floor and elevated the Qutub Minar to another level.

Victoria Memorial

The Victoria Memorial, situated near Jawaharlal Nehru road in Kolkata, West Bengal, is one of the prime tourist destinations for people from India and overseas. The memorial was built to serve a dual purpose - to mark the great success of the British Empire in India, and as a memorial to Queen Victoria. These days, the Victoria Memorial Hall has been turned into a museum which is maintained by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The museum showcases sketches, miniatures, paintings, books, statues, as well as arms providing insight into that crucial period of Indian history.

History

The Victoria Memorial was built between 1906 and 1921 in the honour of Queen Victoria. The idea to construct a memorial in the honour of Queen Victoria was suggested in January 1901 by Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India. The foundation stone of the memorial was laid on 4 January 1906 by the Prince of Wales (King George V). After being under construction for 15 years, the memorial was ready to be visited by public in 1921.

Paintings at the gallery:

- Bipin Behari Dutta by R. B. Dutta
- Michael Madhusudan Dutt
- Ram Mohan Roy
- Pontoon bridge between Calcutta and Howrah (popular as Howrah Bridge)
- Card Players by Bhabani Charan Laha
- Devendranath Tagore
- Pykar or peddlers by Mrs. Belnos
- Goddess Kali by Beni Madhab Bhattacharjee

Gardens

Spread over an area of 64 acres, the gardens surrounding the memorial have been designed by David Prain and Redesdale. The garden contains many other statues, including that of Cornwallis, Hastings, Clive, Dalhousie, Bentinck, Wellesley, Ripon, Andrew H. L. Fraser and Rajendranath Mookerjee.

Gate way of India

The Gateway of India is one of the architectural marvel of our country. Located on the southern part of Mumbai on the shores of Arabian Sea, the Gateway of India is an important landmark of

the city. It is virtually the starting point for any tourist who wants to get acquainted with the exuberant and exciting life of Mumbai. The huge monuments speak at length about the history of our country. The beautifully engraved designs and the well built pillars remind us of the colonial rule and the sacrifices of our fellow country men.

History

The Gateway of India was built in 1924 to celebrate the arrival of King George V and Queen Mary. The design and the plan was given by George Wittet which was approved by the then Governor General of Mumbai, Sir George Sydenham Clarke. The construction began in 1911 and took thirteen years for the entire project to be completed. The Gateway of India was inaugurated by the Viceroy, the Earl of Reading on 4th December, 1924. The Gateway of India became all the more symbolic when the last British Force left our country on 28th February 1948.

Architecture

The Gateway of India is a combination of the "Indo-Sarcenic" architecture. Built in yellow basalt stone, this marvelous monument is an architectural wonder of Mumbai.

Tourist Attraction

The Gateway of India attracts many tourists all through the year. The boating facilities add to the excitement of the place. The Gateway of India stands on the shores of the Arabian Sea and welcomes every tourist who comes to the Mumbai city.

The Taj Mahal is more than just a mausoleum - it has been described by the poet Rabindranath Tagore as a "teardrop on the cheek of eternity". As an expression of the height of the Mughal dynasty's architectural genius in the Indian subcontinent, as the symbol of a bereaved emperor's love for his empress, and as an inspiration to countless photographers and artists who have tried to capture its many subtle nuances of light and shade, the Taj Mahal continues to captivate people worldwide with its history, its design, and its symbolism of eternal love.

About the Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal is an integrated complex of structures that include a white marble mausoleum containing the tombs of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (1592 - 1666) and his third wife Mumtaz Mahal (1593-1631). The Mughal dynasty built many mausoleums in the Indian subcontinent but the Taj Mahal is undoubtedly the finest. The mausoleum is built entirely of white marble, set on a high base or plinth which includes four tall minarets, one on each corner. On either side of the tomb are a mosque and a guest house, while the tomb faces a garden laid out in the "charbagh" style, with a central walkway with fountains and viewing platforms with green spaces and trees on either side. The entrance to the complex is through a grand ornamental gateway, inscribed with Quranic inscriptions and the calligraphed line "O Soul, thou art at rest. Return to the Lord at peace with Him, and He at peace with you."

Location of the Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal is located in Agra, in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. It is located on the banks of the River Yamuna and is easily accessible by road.

How to Reach the Taj Mahal

Agra is about 200 km from Delhi (165 if you use the Yamuna Expressway) and is easily accessible by flights, roadways and train services. The travel time from Delhi to Agra by road is around 3 hours. In order to minimize the effects of pollution, vehicles are not allowed in the immediate vicinity of the Taj Mahal. Cars and buses have to park in parking lots a short distance away from the mausoleum complex and tourists can board non-polluting electric buses to reach the Taj Mahal. You can travel from Delhi to Agra, see the Taj Mahal, and return in one day. However, if you wish to see more of the sights of Agra and shop in the city's markets, then it is a good idea to stay overnight.

Best Time To Visit the Taj Mahal

The best time to visit the Taj Mahal is in the autumn, winter and spring months from October to February. The peak summer months of May to July are best avoided because of the hot weather. The months of October and November, after the monsoon, offer the sight of the Taj at its mesmerising best, as the gardens are lush with greenery and the Yamuna river flows proudly past the Taj Mahal, swollen with post-monsoon rain. Both these factors enhance the overall experience of viewing the Taj Mahal.

Taj Mahal Timings

The Taj Mahal complex is open to visitors from sunrise to sunset (6 a.m. to 7 p.m.) on all weekdays, with the exception of Friday. On Fridays, the mosque in the Taj Mahal complex is open for prayers from 12 noon to 2 p.m. At this time, tourists are not permitted to enter the complex. On full-moon nights, and one night before and after a full-moon, the Taj Mahal complex is open for visitors who wish to view the Taj by moonlight - a truly spectacular sight. The moonlight viewing sessions are not permitted during the month of Ramadan and on Fridays. Now, the Archeological Survey of India has given its nod to open the east and west gates of the spectacular monument half an hour before sunrise and will be shut half an hour before sunset. It is for the convenience of tourists who want to view the Taj Mahal during sunrise. The ticket booking counters will be opened an hour before sunrise and will be shut 45 minutes before sunset. The timings of the south gate will be same. It will open at 8 am and will close at 5 pm. While travelling to the Taj Mahal complex, do note that security restrictions apply at the complex and the only items a tourist may carry into the grounds are the following: mobile phones, still cameras, small video cameras, small purses carried by ladies, and water in transparent bottles.

Mysore Palace

In the center of the city of Mysore at Mirza Road stands in the former residence of the royal family of Mysore. The Mysore Palace is one of the chief Mysore tourists attractions and is a living exponent of the Indo Saracenic style of architecture. The palace was constructed in the year 1912 for the twenty fourth king of the Wodeyar dynasty. Designed by the British architect, Henry Irwin, the palace of Mysore is one of the biggest palaces of the country.

The palatial building is also reputed as the Amba Vilas. It was built after the former wooden palace was destroyed by fire in the year 1897. The three storied building of the palace stretches across a length of 245 feet and 156 feet in breadth. The avenue standing in front of the palace is covered with a dome that rises to a height of 145 feet and is decorated in gold. The main entrance

of the palace is the royal elephant gate that is decorated with motifs and bears the royal symbol of the double headed eagle. A stroll down the Kalyana Mantapa or the pavilion for the royal marriages will reveal the stained glasses, chandeliers, glazed tiles and the iron pillars gathered from different parts of the world. The tourists may visit the Diwan-e-Aam and the Diwan-e Khas. A number of temples surround the palace complex.

The palace has now been converted into a museum that is a repository of the art and architecture of the Wodeyar dynasty. The museum is supervised by the Department of Archeology and Museums. The best time to visit the Mysore Palace is on the national holidays and the festive days when the palace is illuminated with lights in the evening. The palace remains open to the visitors from 6 A.M to 9 A.M in the morning and 3.30 P.M to 6.30 P.M in the evening.

Sanchi Stupa

Sanchi doesn't need any introduction for being already tagged as one of the most significant places in India. The place is all about Buddhism and is a small village that is located at a distance of about fifty-two kilometers from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Sanchi is a famous sightseeing destination that has innumerable Buddhist structures, pillars and monasteries. The majority of these monuments date back to the era between the 3rd and 12th century and Sanchi is now listed under the world heritage sites by UNESCO.

The History

Ashoka the Mauryan emperor was the initiator of all the "Stupas" at Sanchi. These Stupas are a tribute to Lord Buddha. Of all the stupas, the Sanchi Stupa is the most important and impressive Stupa carved out of a semi-circular rock. This great monument has been built to enshrine the relics of Lord Buddha. Sanchi is one of the famed places that are not only recognized in India but across the world. Today, this place has become a legendary hub of Buddhism.

Architectural Viewpoint

The Sanchi Stupa is a huge semi-circular, dome shaped chamber in which the relics of Lord Buddha are kept in serene calmness. It is a brick construction that dates back to the third century A.D. This chamber is about 16.5 meters tall and 36 meters in diameter.

Sanchi Stupa is said to be one of the most organized structures with the best architectural designs that hail from the medieval period. The framework and designs depict the love and the nature of the historical period during the development of the stupa. The gateway has an eye-catching architecture, with male and female tree murals carved on it. It is believed that these two spirits portray the human feelings and mental state. Buddhists believe that they are welcoming figurines and hence a "good omen" to have at the front. Sanchi Stupa carries a rich heritage of architectural dignity. It is the most stunning Stupa that has been exuding a divine charm over the centuries. It is a sacred place enriched with harmony and peace.

Sanchi Stupa- An Important Buddhist Hub

Sanchi Stupa is an ancient monument that shows the records of the origins of Buddhist architecture and culture. Covering the entire range of Buddhism in India, it reflects a wonderful evidence of varied artistic works of Buddhist monks. The place was destined to become one of the significant centers of Buddhism which is not only loved and worshipped by Indian people but

also by individuals across the globe. The foundation of this place was laid by Emperor Ashoka and it has gone on to become an important historic monument for India.

How to Reach

Sanchi Stupa is located near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh which is very well connected with the other cities of the country whether by rail, road or air transportation. With the increasing demand of people wanting to enjoy the beauty of the place, there has been an increase in the availability of private transportation. Depending on your requirements and budget you can choose any mode of transportation to reach Bhopal.

Best Time to Visit

Bhopal's climate remains moderately hot throughout the year, however, avoid making a trip during the hot summer months. The best time to visit Sanchi Stupa is during November to March. Moreover, this is the time when majority of the festivals take place.

Places to Stay

The city has innumerable hotels and guest houses to stay. Ranging from five-star accommodations to humble bed and breakfast setups, you will find all options to suit your budget. There is never a scarcity of accommodation in the city, but if you are planning to visit during the peak tourist season then it is recommended to book your accommodation well in advance.

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