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Porto-Novo cathedral, Benin

Heritage and sustainable development

Édito

Actions in old centres

The Venice Charter, which was drawn up in 1964, clearly shows the interest displayed by governments and international institutions in the preservation and enhancement of urban heritage. This interest is evolving as a result of several factors, in particular the deterioration and impoverishment of a number of old centres, the impact of armed conflicts, new concerns linked to sustainable development, and the fact that tourism frequently contributes to economic development.

This issue contains theoretical and practical articles which deal with most of the issues raised by actions in old centres.

Valéry Patin shows how the development of controlled tourism can help bring about sustainable economic and social development in historic neighbourhoods. He describes the principles that should underlie the enhancement of heritage for tourism purposes, reminding readers that such enhancement should be an integral part of urban rehabilitation projects from the design phase. Echoing this, Marylise Ortiz describes the work of *Sites et cités remarquables de France*, which helps local authorities abroad to carry through their urban heritage development projects.

After this, Françoise Ged, the head of the *Observatory of Contemporary Chinese Architecture*, presents the point of view of an enthusiast. Her involvement in China is longstanding and with her partners she has helped raise awareness of the heritage value

of historic centres, particularly in Shanghai, and participated in several projects that aimed to restore and enhance urban heritage.

Still in Asia, Stefania Abakerli and D. Ajay Suri describe the “*Inclusive Heritage-based city development in India*” project, that the World Bank and Cities Alliance started in 2011, at the request of the government which is fully aware of the social, cultural and economic benefits to be drawn from a major investment in urban heritage.

Nada El Hassan, from the considers the destruction of heritage that takes place during armed conflicts. Her analysis discusses this United Nations agency’s traditional approach to the topic and recent measures that have been taken to counter increasing destruction. Chantal Reliquet then describes a number of post-conflict projects that have been led by the World Bank.

What is viewed as heritage varies from one culture to another, so it is important before taking any action to consider attitudes towards the concept of culture and the objects in question. Christine Mengin’s analysis opens up debate in this vital area.

As in each issue, a selection of major books on this topic will help readers explore in greater depth some of the themes dealt with in this “heritage” issue of the Bulletin. Enjoy your read!

Matthieu Berton

Upgrading historic centres and sustainable tourism

Heritage experts have shown that enhancing the tourist value of a city centre is an intrinsic part of urban renewal. In this article Valéry Patin⁽¹⁾ surveys the specific policies associated with this tourism-centred approach.

While urban renewal primarily targets a district, tourism actions in a historic centre first of all facilitate travel. They are concerned with trips, parking, old housing that can be used as premises (accommodation, shops, restaurants, museums, cultural facilities and information centres) as well as civil and religious monuments, medical and banking services, directional or educational signage. All these elements form a whole and are perceived as such by the visitor.

To be sustainable, tourism needs to be controlled. It must take account of the reception capacity of locations and adapt supply to the volume of demand and variations in it whether due to visitors or operators (travel agencies, transport undertakings, hosts). For the stakeholders in these enhancement programmes, tourism is an excellent way of improving knowledge about heritage among both residents and visitors and provides essential support for economic and social development.

Opening up the urban heritage to sustainable tourism requires actions which are integrated within urban rehabilitation projects from the design phase. The principles of conservation and management applied aim to generate measures which are not only respectful of the heritage and the needs and customs of local populations, but also attractive to visitors. Such actions are an intrinsic part of a renewal project and can partially modify its goals, technical features and implementation deadlines.

From housing to tourism circuits

Revitalising historic centres requires sustained heritage conservation and restoration programs. In this area it is vital to meet visitors' expectations as well as possible, on condition that they do not conflict with local customs.

Conservation and restoration operations cannot always be performed with local know-how. It is possible to bring in specialised firms from other regions or countries. It is also possible to organise training in order to develop local skills, such as, for example, in the programme for the preservation of ancient cities in Mauritania. In this case, training was conducted in Ouadane (preservation of the dry-stone construction heritage)



Kairouan: a shop on a renovated circuit

and Oualata (painted door decoration). One of the top international centres of expertise in earthen architecture (CRAterre) contributed to efforts in Atar.

Enhancing the tourist value of a historic centre consists, first of all, of identifying one or more tourism circuits and renovating them. These circuits consist of secure routes that connect the well-known attractions and that run alongside restored or improved buildings, shops, restaurants and places of entertainment. Here, the idea is for the visit to resemble a stroll.

The operators' actions relate to the urban environment, in particular frontages, roads, networks and tourist venues. In the public space, works (for example restoring monuments, installing networks and repairing roads) may be conducted via either direct or delegated project management by specially appointed firms. Urban planning agencies and preservation associations play a vital role in this context. In the private domain (frontages, dwellings, shops, restaurants,

places of entertainment, art galleries), it is advisable to draw up an agreement with the owners and stimulate their interest in the renovations. Coping with health and safety issues for this heritage and the related tourist services makes regular checks necessary.

Two examples from Africa

In the Tunisian city of Kairouan, as part of a World Bank programme managed by Tunisian heritage experts, 1.5km of streets (frontages, roads, networks and shops) were restored in the medina. Local residents were frequently consulted. Shops and other services were set up along the renovated streets.

In the Island of Mozambique (a world heritage site), the tourist development programme drawn up by UNESCO and financed by Japanese bilateral cooperation, has identified potential developments and visitor itineraries in the ancient city, the fort which defended the island and part of the new city. These proposals took account of the

constraints at the site (features of the heritage, parking and travel conditions), the resources allocated by the development agency and tourism needs (reception, information). The large scale of Japanese activities in these locations is widely reported as being due to the fact that the first black foreign Samurai to fight in Japan at the end of the 16th century hailed from the Island of Mozambique.

Private residences

Restoring large residences can produce characterful accommodation. Transforming these high quality buildings certainly has its appeal, but their form is frequently not right for tourism and the extra restoration costs are substantial. In addition, the accommodation in question needs to be accessible to visitors and genuinely comfortable. This explains why these residences are often located in the outskirts of old cities and can usually only take a few guests.

On the contrary, transforming large monuments into hotels can be successful; on condition the builder is willing to take advantage of the advice of heritage experts. This has been done in a large number of countries – India in particular. Hotel chains such as Paradores in Spanish-speaking countries or “Châteaux Hôtels” in France have made transformations of this type their speciality.

Another alternative is home-stay accommodation. Developments in construction techniques mean it is now a viable proposition to transform a large proportion of historical houses in a way that meets accommodation standards without impairing their heritage character.

Digital communication

Visitors are provided with abundant information about the sites. Generally, this is accessible and regularly updated. It is primarily concerned with heritage (circuits, monuments and museums) but it also covers services (shops, residences, cultural facilities, banks, medical care and pharmacies) The proposed circuits must be clear, and on-line offers made easy to find by signs. An example of this is what the French Development Agency has put in place in Siem Reap near Angkor in Cambodia.

1- Valéry Patin is a tourism and heritage management expert working for UNESCO and the World Bank.

Sites & cités remarquables de France: international experiences



Ségou, Mali

Since it was set up in the year 2000, *Sites et cités remarquables de France* has set itself goals in the areas of exchanging experience and networking between local and regional government in order to further its policy of enhancing heritage, architecture, urban planning, designated areas and tourism. The association draws on the expertise of more than 220 French towns and areas that have received the “Towns and areas of art and history” label or which constitute a remarkable heritage site in order to foster the seamless stewardship of old districts and heritage.

Apart from monuments, the association seeks to enhance occupied areas as well as urban and landscape ensembles that reflect a regional identity. Unique cultural qualities come together in towns. They are centres for knowledge and fountains of growth and innovation. The equilibrium between economic development and the preservation of social cohesion is fragile. The desire for “modernity” and pressure on property pose a threat to these urban environments in the form of new buildings and standardised restoration work.

Local and regional authorities are confronted by the issues of sustainable development. Strengthening urban governance, integrated development, discussion platforms on the heritage and the changing living environment are essential. Likewise, heritage must be viewed as a creator of identity and a factor of integration is vital. The idea is to allow people to find their bearings again, to create social ties and a feeling of belonging by making residents aware of their living environment.

Sites et cités works with its partners at national and international level in the area of heritage as a driver of development. It helps the local and regional governments in the network put cooperation in place. It is engaged in strengthening expertise, carrying through pilot projects, such as the one in the city of Ségou in Mali on rehabilitating the built environment and the promotion of traditional buildings. It helps to develop a shared heritage culture, strategies, methods and tools for action and to create solidarity.

Saint Flour in Auvergne, which has the status of an “Area of art and history”, has developed heritage mediation tools for young people in Elbasan in Albania. Recreational circuits, in French and Albanian, have been created in the fortified town and supplemented by documents aimed at the general public. The action is continuing with the development of signing in the town to show how it has developed and encourage tourists to discover it.

The association is also assisting the creation of national networks of local and regional authorities, as has been done in the Republic of Macedonia, Bulgaria and Croatia.

Marylise Ortiz

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Heritage in China : an awakening

Cooperation between France and China in the area of heritage restoration conducted with the Institut Français d'Architecture (IFA) began in the 1980s and is now providing worthwhile results. Françoise Ged describes this path in which she played an active role.

Cooperation between France and China in the area of urban heritage began in the 1980s with the rehabilitation of the 10 hectare district of Qianjiatang in Shanghai, with the IFA. Ultimately, only an experimental project in one longtang was carried out by the French Ministry of infrastructure in the early 1990s. However, other projects that have been conducted since have enabled links to be developed and the initiative is deemed to have been a success. In 1997, discussions between France and China got under way again when the Ministry of culture set up the Observatory of Contemporary Chinese Architecture.

At this time, the famous architect Wang Jinghui was an advisor to the Chinese Deputy Minister for construction. During the Suzhou conference in 1998, which brought together the mayors of historical cities in China and the European Union, he proposed an observatory to cooperate with the new national research centre on historic Chinese cities at Tongji University in Shanghai. The impetus provided by the Chinese Ministry of Construction with the creation of the National "Historic and Cultural City" in 1982 was only minor, with little in the way of resources... "The role of local authorities, which implemented government directives, was fundamental, and our partners were very active in this region with a flourishing economy.

Project ethics

Our approach is based on experimentation. The small town of Tongli, in Jiangsu province, near Shanghai, allowed us to develop a methodology for enhancing and protecting old town centres. This takes account of the needs of the inhabitants at a time when the modernisation of urban areas encourages the massive destruction of districts. Apart from Tongli, we have also visited 6 towns in Jiangnan province which are making a joint bid for recognition as a World Heritage site. My understanding of the culture, history and geography of Shanghai needed the support



Tongli, a small city in Jiangsu province, a small street running beside a canal

of State architects and town planners in the areas of urban stewardship and heritage. Cooperation began at several levels, territorial, temporal and practical, with experts from Ecole de Chaillot, mayors, university teachers and their research students, local authorities and town planning departments. Alain Marinou, who was the Head of the Ecole de Chaillot at the time, opened the school's doors to doctoral students from China and individuals from urban heritage departments in France. Another aspect of the cooperation initiative was the training of educators, echoing the presidential programme implemented by the observatory with the French embassy in Beijing from 1998 to 2005.

Multidisciplinary organisation, and a discussion platform

Study visits are essential for urban planners and architects to enable them to understand policies, methods and evaluate outcomes. The support of the French embassy is of fundamental importance, building trust. The rapid pace of accompanied congress visits has provided satisfying outcomes for both residents and the local authorities. The Tongli projects have just been awarded China's 2nd national prize for architecture, a success which will allow the method to be applied in Shanghai.

A new phase began in 2003, when the town planned 12 protected sectors with a total area of 27km². In 2006, the *World Heritage Institute for Training and Research-Asia Pacific* was set up under the auspices of

UNESCO. Its most active branch is managed by our partners in Shanghai. Its influence extends to other regions and other heritages, generating indispensable multi-disciplinarity.

Historical and cultural landscape

Built, intangible and cultural heritage has now found a place in Chinese universities, which are responsible for a growing number of conferences and high quality journals. Globalisation nevertheless raises some issues: have historical towns and villages no choice but to serve mass tourism? The closure of industrial sites raises questions about planning decisions: what should we do and how? What should we destroy, re-use or transform? What human and cultural values do these sites embody?

The violence of previous destruction has goaded the local population to action. In addition, financialisation linked to heritage designation has been responsible for new threats, added to by the pressure from the number of visitors. Heritage sites are seen as resources. Are they to be protected for their many types of value, are they products to be developed with the expansion of domestic tourism? Sharing problems and know-how generates new expertise as this cooperation creates new avenues for thought and action.

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Inclusive Heritage-based City Development in India

With migration-led fast urbanization, there has been unplanned expansion of Indian cities and chaotic construction to house the growing population, with little concern for significance of historic areas and heritage assets for the city's character formation and evolution. Stefania Abakerli, senior development planner at the World Bank and D. Ajay Suri, regional adviser - Asie, Cities Alliance, present the programme that their institutions are developing to put heritage at the heart of urban public action.

The rich heritage legacy of Indian cities is being vastly undervalued and underutilized for contemporary social, ecological and economic development. Yet because Indian cities are in an early stage of urbanization, they have the rare opportunity to reverse this paradigm to the ultimate benefit of their residents. Cities in India are endowed with heritage structures, cultural landscapes, practices and expressions which, over centuries, have not only defined collective identities but also provided critical services, such as housing and water supply, and served as livable economic hubs

Inclusive development based on heritage enhancement

The World Bank – Cities Alliance, at the request of Government of India in 2011, is implementing a phased Inclusive Heritage-based City Development Programme (IHCDP) in India. This is to contribute to filling the knowledge and application gap for integrating cultural heritage management with city development. The endeavor is to promote an integrated rather than sectoral approach for provision of critical infrastructure and services in historic cores and integration of these areas and the heritage in the broader city-wide socioeconomic and physical development. The approach is also to contribute to reduction in urban poverty since historic areas in many cities have large concentration of the urban poor.

The IHCDP applies a people-centric, area-based approach to heritage conservation and city development (“inclusive urban renewal”), which places heritage valuation and conservation at the core of city-wide development. The aim is to unlock the assets of the local communities for improved living standards and socio-economic opportunities for poor residents while promoting a culturally dynamic growth pattern at the city level and stewarding its unique heritage.

The objective of the IHCDP is to provide national policy makers, state governments, urban local bodies and sector professionals in India with good practices, institutional arrangements, and financial and management incentives to enable them to revisit their development strategies and manage their unique heritage as a vital element of inclusive city development and investments.

An iterative approach method

The IHCDP approach is expected to have the following outcomes: Enable cities to better manage urbanization and distribute its benefits by valuing and leveraging their existing heritage asset; Enhance the character, living standards and development effectiveness of cities; Unlock billions in funds earmarked for “urban renewal” investments, but not fully utilized due to low capacities at city level, and a lack of adequate approaches and tools.

A phased approach has been adopted for implementation of the IHCDP. Phase 1, the pilot phase (2012-2014) aimed to test and refine an inclusive heritage-based approach to city development planning in India's varying urban contexts, with a focus on learning from cities. The pilot phase was implemented in partnership with the national line ministries⁽¹⁾ select state governments⁽²⁾ and pilot cities – Ajmer-Pushkar, Varanasi and Hyderabad – representing cities across urban hierarchy.

Towards an extension of the programme

Phase 1 of the Demonstration Programme was a rich and inspiring learning experience. An institutional set-up, at the city-level, was designed and implanted for multi-stakeholder engagement and integration of cultural heritage management with city development and local economic development. The Programme facilitated the mobilization of the communities in the pilot cities and they were engaged with other stakeholders in valuation and profiling of city heritage assets, preparation of city heritage management plan and an investment plan for demonstration projects for management of prioritized heritage assets and local economic development. The learnings from the pilot cities were used to formulate urban revitalization guidelines which were shared with the national government for adoption in the national Heritage Cities Development and Augmentation Scheme (HRIDAY).

Phase 2 (2016-18) aims to scale up the approach successfully tested in Phase I by supporting the 12 heritage cities covered under HRIDAY, and select state governments to develop state programmes for development of heritage cities. The focus of the support to the state governments is to develop state urban revitalization guidelines, evolve institutional set up at state and city level to promote IHCDP approach, and urban heritage driven local economic development.

1 - Ministries of Urban Development, Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Culture and Finance.

2 - Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh



La pression urbaine sur le patrimoine Abakerli

Historic centres and armed conflicts, the activities of UNESCO

In the context of the increasing number of armed conflicts which are responsible for much devastation, Nada Al Hassan, Director of the Arab States Unit, at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, analyses her institution's activities in the sphere of cultural heritage.

During recent conflicts, in particular in the Middle East, the intentional destruction of cultural heritage and the persecution and the annihilation of minorities have become a central part of warfare. This strategy has had dramatic consequences at the human level. It has been responsible for large-scale destruction in historic centres (Aleppo in Syria, Sana'a in Yemen in Iraq) and in sites such as Palmyra in Syria, Nimrud, Khorsabad and Hatra in Iraq, and the Mosque of the Prophet Shuayb near Sana'a in Yemen. It has also encouraged extensive illegal excavations at Apamea and Dura Europos in Syria and pillaging that has led to an increase in the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

In order to cope with these armed conflict situations, UNESCO has revised its response. In the past, UNESCO's work was based on its international conventions: the convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague, 1954), the Convention on the Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Property (1970) and the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972). Added to these is the "Strategy for the Reinforcement of UNESCO's Action for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of Armed Conflict" which UNESCO adopted during its 38th General Conference in 2015.

military personnel. Examples are the heritage passport used by soldiers in Mali, the #Unite4Heritage general heritage awareness raising campaign launched by Irina Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO in Bagdad in March 2015, training programmes in the area of emergency aid for the built and intangible cultural heritage, emergency consolidation, the training of customs officers and border police, the localisation and authentication of cultural objects, in cooperation with the specialised international agencies.

The humanitarian emergency and the need for planning

As far as built heritage is concerned, UNESCO recommends restricting activities to safeguarding sites, managing debris, consolidation and protection from climatic threats. UNESCO takes action to ensure that restoration, or even reconstruction, projects are undertaken during peace time, on a scientific basis, and using agreed methods. However, if heritage restoration can wait for peace time, this is not the case for the historic cities whose inhabitants need to satisfy their basic needs. Once the conflicts have died down, the inhabitants return to their demolished neighbourhoods, moving back into them under precarious conditions and compelling the local authorities to act rapidly to reconcile the humanitarian emergency and the demands of heritage.

This is one of the most important issues that heritage professionals have to deal with today simultaneously managing the emergency and integrated planning. The topic takes in political, social, economic, ideological, symbolic, aesthetic, financial and technical considerations. Such interventions raise a large number of issues, such as national and international coordination during rehabilitation, short decision-making times, the involvement of the private sector and development pressures, new archaeological finds, the lack of documentation to assist restoration and reconstruction decisions, the brain drain, and the displacement of skilled workers.

* The sole responsibility for this article lies with the author

Heritage, humanitarian action and security

The text links, for the first time, heritage protection with humanitarian and security issues. This new strategy has led UNESCO to work more closely with international and national stakeholders with expertise in these matters. This effort culminated in the passing of a historic resolution by the United Nations Security Council, resolution 2347. This highlighted the importance of heritage for peace and security and made heritage protection by UN member countries an obligation under international law, with concrete measures to combat the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

UNESCO relies on its recent experience of heritage protection and restoration in conflict and post-conflict situations in Afghanistan (revitalisation of the Bamiyan Buddha niches), in Ethiopia (return of the Aksum obelisk to its archeological site 80 years after Mussolini's troops had taken it to Italy), in Lebanon, and more recently in Mali. Also, in view of the fact that it is impossible to gain access to countries where there is armed conflict, UNESCO has devised measures which can be taken outside combat zones.

The first task is to monitor and evaluate the situation, then prepare for rehabilitation by using experts' inventories and documentary databases. The next stage is to build awareness among the general public and

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Consolidation work on the Great Buddha's niche in the valley of Bamiyan (Afghanistan)

The World Bank, heritage and armed conflicts

Based on a number of projects conducted by the World Bank, Chantal Reliquet, an expert in urban management and a one-time senior urban planner at this international organisation⁽¹⁾, shows how the restoration of heritage can provide not only an economic stimulus but also social cohesion within communities.

The World Bank has carried out a large number of lending or technical assistance operations which included elements of heritage rehabilitation or enhancement. These operations have frequently been conducted in collaboration with agencies, sometimes multilateral (UNESCO, the Aga Khan, regional development banks) and sometimes bilateral (AFD, Italian Development Agency, in particular). In the framework of the agreement between the World Bank and UNESCO, the two bodies are to jointly prepare a white paper entitled “Culture and Urban Reconstruction Post Disaster/Conflict” a draft version of which will be presented at the Kuala Lumpur World Urban Forum in February 2018”.

By far the majority of the heritage projects deal with historic districts. Their primary goal is to improve the living conditions of local populations and help to combat poverty, while at the same time fostering economic development. Heritage awareness raising initiatives and support programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises are conducted alongside infrastructure works that aim to conserve and improve old buildings. The projects also support institutional development and local capacity building for the management of urban and heritage operations. They rely very heavily on the local authorities.

The case of conflict zones

Their humanitarian dimension makes interventions in conflict or post-conflict zones more complex. A balance must be maintained between the need for reconstruction, socioeconomic development and the cultural dimension. Community participation is a vital component. Experience has shown that heritage is a factor for cohesion whose effects go far beyond the benefits that arise from physical restoration. This can be glimpsed from the examples given below:

Rebuilding of Mostar bridge (1999-2004)

This project, which was the outcome of a partnership between UNESCO, the Aga Khan, the World Bank, and bilateral agencies (France and Italy), funded the reconstruction of Mostar bridge (Bosnia – Herzegovina) and a number of buildings in the old town. The project was conceived and implemented



Lebanon: a restored khan

with the local population. The rehabilitation of this common heritage facilitated reconciliation between the different ethnic groups and faiths. After its completion, the number of tourists increased by a factor of 20, and about a hundred SMEs, shops, hotels and restaurants were set up.

Libya's cultural heritage (2012-2016)

The World Bank has acted to support the Libyan Department of Antiquities. In coordination with UNESCO, it has financed inventory management operations, training programmes and the preparation of a guide on the protection of built heritage. In spite of the difficulties, the operations continued until the programme was completed, thanks to remarkable assistance from archaeologists and experts from Libya and abroad.

Preparation of reconstruction in Syria

In Syria, the World Bank is conducting SIRI (Syria Information and Research Initiative). This involves the six cities that have been the most affected by the fighting (Aleppo, Homs, Hama, Idlib, Daraa and Latakia).



Lebanon: restored souks

Satellite imaging has been used to identify the destruction and estimate the cost of reconstruction.

The Cultural Heritage and Urban Development Project for Lebanon (2006-2016)

This project focused on the cities of Tripoli, Baalbek, Byblos, Sidon and Tyre, the last three of which are world heritage sites. Its total cost was over \$125 million, financed by the World Bank, AFD, and the French, Italian and Lebanese governments. Against a background of conflict and political uncertainty, the project has drawn strength from the cultural identity in order to bring local authorities together around shared goals and strengthen resilience, thus becoming a driver of local development.

The measures that were taken have helped to boost economic activity and tourism. In Byblos, for example, it has been estimated that each dollar invested by the public sector has generated seven dollars' worth of private investment. The initiative has also had a considerable impact in Tyre.

In Tripoli, the city which suffered most in the conflict, the project managed to rehabilitate a considerable proportion of the souks, set up a market in the very centre of the city and preserved to ancient khans in which 70 families had been living in deplorable sanitary conditions since the 1950s. The families in question have been rehoused in the immediate vicinity and now benefit from decent living conditions ⁽²⁾.

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1- The sole responsibility for this article lies with the author.

2- A video about the Lebanon project is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhVMWosIBKk>

Some reading

There are a number of books on heritage in the urban space. In *Allégorie du patrimoine*⁽¹⁾, Françoise Choay conducts a historical investigation asking “why has the historical, architectural and urban heritage won over a worldwide public today? Why have knowing about, conserving and restoring it become a concern for governments the world over?” Taking the case of “the remarkable architectural, urban, natural and intangible heritage of Porto-Novo” in Benin, the collective book, *Porto-Novo : patrimoine et développement*⁽²⁾ deals with the process of heritage designation.

In both developed and emerging countries “heritage has become, as a result of tourism, a driver of economic development” – a process explored by Valéry Patin in *Tourisme et Patrimoine*⁽³⁾.

The economic role of heritage and the changes in its financing mechanisms encourage the use of economic and financial tools. *Méthodologie d'évaluation économique du patrimoine urbain*⁽⁴⁾ proposes an approach for evaluating the economic

benefits arising from projects that enhance urban heritage.

Highly intertwined with urban, social and cultural policies, the preservation and enhancement of urban heritage raise issues for public decision-makers. *Gestion du patrimoine urbain : l'éclairage de l'expérience française*⁽⁵⁾ takes stock of the techniques that are available for preserving and enhancing urban heritage in France.

Éloïse Pelaud

1-Françoise CHOAY, L'Allégorie du patrimoine, Seuil, 1996, [available here](#).

2-Collectif sous la direction de Christine MENGIN et Alain GODOU, Porto-Novo: patrimoine et développement, Publications de la Sorbonne, 2013, selected extracts <http://www.publications-sorbonne.fr/fr/livre/?GCOI=28405100093510>

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4-Christine MENGIN, Jean-François NOEL, Jessy TSANG KING SANG, Laurent DALMAS, Michel VERNIERES, Valéry PATIN, Vincent GERONIMI, Méthodologies d'évaluation économique du patrimoine urbain : une approche par la soutenabilité, AFD, Collection : A Savoir n.13, 2012, [available online](#)

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This issue has been published with the support of the French Development Agency (Agence française de développement), CEREMA, Cities Alliance, the French Partnership for Cities and Regions (Partenariat français pour la ville et les territoires) and the French Ministry for Territorial Cohesion (Ministère de la Cohésion des Territoires).

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This bulletin is available on line on the website of

AdP-Villes en développement www.ville-developpement.org

Subscription : €0 per annum for 4 issues. - ISSN 1151 - 1672



Some basics

The concept of heritage

“World heritage” status tends to give credence to the idea that practices with regard to the preservation of cultural property are homogeneous and universally shared, whereas in fact the conceptions and objects involved vary from one culture to another.

Nothing is intrinsically part of heritage, and the definition of what should be preserved in order to be passed on to future generations is a social construction produced by communities of various types, from nation states to local associations. Potentially, any object or practice can be transformed into heritage. While the meaning of the word heritage has traditionally favoured the European approach that focuses on monuments and aesthetics, coupled with a Western view of nature, a more recent anthropological view also takes account of intangible heritage. Here are some examples of different things that can constitute heritage in different places.

Africa, where stories and songs are dominant, is underrepresented among designated sites. When this status is awarded, on the initiative of international experts, it does not always correspond to the practices of the inhabitants. In Djenné, the international conception of authenticity is in contradiction with the creativity that governs the population's annual restoration of the mosque. In San (Mali), which is proud to own a comparable mosque, it is in contrast symbolic locations such as wells, trees and ponds which are valued by the inhabitants.

A famous example of this disparity is the Ise Grand Shinto Shrine in Japan, which has been rebuilt every 20 years since the seventh century. It is the regularly transmitted expertise of the craftsmen which protects this venerable temple from physical deterioration. Its authenticity lies in the actions which had been codified since the tenth century and not in the construction material.

Heritage is charged with changing meanings. The labelling of penal colonies provides an example of the profound changes in the attitude of Australian society to the prisoners who helped establish the colony. Instead of feeling shame, people now value their links with convicts, whom they can trace via genealogical databases.

This relativism that applies to heritage awakens us to the potential impact of this catch-all concept. Its malleability allows the peoples of the world to assert what they feel lies at the root of their identity, in the framework of a global competition which is not always conflict-free...

Christine Mengin,
lecturer on the history of architecture