

CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE: ON THE CONTEXT OF DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE VISION

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Abstract- Cultural landscape consists of dialectic between the natural physical setting, the human modifications to that setting, and the meanings of the resultant landscape to insiders and outsiders. Continuous interaction takes place between these three elements over time. The concept of cultural landscape therefore embodies a dynamic understanding of history, in which past, present and future is seamlessly connected. It is combinations of history and nature and also that in the course of time it change or sometimes ruin; therefore, the conservation of cultural landscapes should give them a new lease of life. Historic urban landscape is a mindset, an understanding of the city, or parts of the city, as an outcome of natural, cultural and socio-economic processes that construct it spatially, temporally, and experientially. In terms of 'historic urban landscapes', the key to marrying old and new is to reinforce and enhance the equilibrium between development and conservation, to sustain the urban landscape. In new paradigm for conservation of historic urban landscape, every historic area and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the buildings, the spatial organization and the surroundings.

Keywords: Cultural Landscape, Historic Urban Landscape, Conservation, Nature, Human Activities.

I. INTRODUCTION

A landscape comprises the visible features of an area including its physical elements, living elements and human elements such as human activity and the built-up environment. Since a landscape is shaped by human activity, we may use the expression "cultural landscape". Then, according to article 1 of the World Heritage Convention, a cultural landscape is defined as a combined work of man and nature. It may either be a garden or a park, a relict landscape or a continuing landscape marked by history or an "associative cultural landscape", i.e. a landscape in which natural elements are associated with religious, artistic or cultural factors. Human life is intimately bound to external environmental conditions

and no clear lines divide us from the environment we inhabit. Landscapes too bear the mark of their inhabitants, for the things we make "make" us. Physical environments such as landscapes have been marked by human activity for a very long time [4].

A landscape comprises the visible features of an area including its physical elements, living elements and human elements such as human activity and the built up environment. The landscape which is shaped by human interventions is more appropriately expressed as "cultural landscape" and the rest over the earth as natural landscape.

Traditionally, landscape is considered as an expanse of natural scenery that people come to see and enjoy, but also landscape comprises the visible features of the natural environment which includes its physical and human elements in a human settlement. Hence, a "cultural landscape" should not be considered as an antithesis of a "natural landscape" but a landscape, which needs to be protected because of the values it embodies. An environment contains some of the characteristics of the territory where it is located, but a landscape is identified as being something more precise that incorporates all the features that are considered interesting [2, 4].

Cultural endowments such as traditional architecture, unique streetscapes, and historic sites are increasingly recognized as important economic resources in both developed and developing countries. Cities are often an important focal point for development based on these resources because they provide concentrations of heritage assets, infrastructure services, private sector activity and human resources. Improving the conservation and management of urban heritage is not only important for preserving its historic significance, but also for its potential to increase income-earning opportunities, city livability, and competitiveness.

Today's rapidly-urbanizing cities, with uncontrolled growth and informal expansion, pose a significant risk for irreplaceable cultural and natural resources. In these kinds of cities, developers exert pressure to demolish low-rise traditional buildings and eliminate parks in favor of high-density developments, and municipalities install needed infrastructure in a manner that has unnecessarily

negative impacts on traditional cityscapes [3, 5]. Considering the fact that cultural landscapes are combinations of history and nature and also that in the course of time they change or sometimes ruin; therefore, the conservation of cultural landscapes should give them a new lease of life. Human's interaction in the bed of environment, has formed human settlements into biological complexes. These settlements have often created the cities. Some of these important settlements have undergone many natural incidents such as earthquakes, floods, etc. or human-caused events like wars [2].

Finally the cultural landscape is the constantly evolving, humanized, landscape. It consists of dialectic between the natural physical setting, the human modifications to that setting, and the meanings of the resultant landscape to insiders and outsiders. Continuous interaction takes place between these three elements over time. The concept of cultural landscape therefore embodies a dynamic understanding of history, in which past, present and future is seamlessly connected. Cultural landscapes are defined in terms broader and less tangible than physical boundaries and artifacts; they also encompass "the feelings of the community towards its environment [and] the social networks developed by the community". Cultural landscapes are produced by constant interaction between physical and narrative landscape patterns. In other words, the story of a particular place is as important as its physical characteristics [1, 9].

II. THE HISTORIC URBAN LANDSCAPE

The historic urban landscape, building on the 1976 "UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas", refers to ensembles of any group of buildings, structures and open spaces, in their natural and ecological context, including archaeological and paleontological sites, constituting human settlements in an urban environment over a relevant period of time, the cohesion and value of which are recognized from the archaeological, architectural, prehistoric, historic, scientific, aesthetic, socio-cultural or ecological point of view. This landscape has shaped modern society and has great value for our understanding of how we live today. The historic urban landscape is embedded with current and past social expressions and developments that are place-based. It is composed of character-defining elements that include land uses and patterns, spatial organization, visual relationships, topography and soils, vegetation, and all elements of the technical infrastructure, including small scale objects and details of construction (curbs, paving, drain gutters, lights, etc.) [7].

Historic urban landscape is a mindset, an understanding of the city, or parts of the city, as an outcome of natural, cultural and socio-economic processes that construct it spatially, temporally, and experientially. It is as much about buildings and spaces, as about rituals and values that people bring into the city. This concept encompasses layers of symbolic

significance, intangible heritage, perception of values, and interconnections between the composite elements of the historic urban landscape, as well as local knowledge including building practices and management of natural resources. Its usefulness resides in the notion that it incorporates a capacity for change.

While this definition is more encompassing and highly inclusive, the key that makes all the difference may be found at the end: the acceptance of change as an inherent part of the urban condition. And this has perhaps been the biggest hurdle on the path to progress in the urban conservation discipline over the last decade, as the conservation community in particular found this difficult to accept vis-a-vis its core ideology to preserve monuments and sites as unchanged as possible, or otherwise was not able to reach a consensus on how much change would be permissible. As the papers collected here show, almost all contributors refer to this key aspect in the process and some provide for very practical answers [8].

The expanding notion of urban historic landscape (cultural heritage) in particular over the last decade, which includes a broader interpretation leading to recognition of human coexistence with the land and human beings in society, requires new approaches to and methodologies for urban conservation and development in a territorial context. Historic urban landscape goes beyond the notions of historic centers, ensembles, surroundings to include the broader territorial and landscape context, composed of character defining elements: land use and patterns, spatial organization, visual relationships, topography and soils, vegetation and all elements of technical infrastructure [10].

The historic urban landscape acquires its exceptional and universal significance from a gradual evolutionary, as well as planned territorial development over a relevant period of time through processes of urbanization, incorporating environmental and topographic conditions and expressing economic and socio-cultural values pertaining to societies. Discussion of heritage 'integrity' and 'vulnerability' is problematic, because cultural landscapes are dynamic - i.e. subject to constant change according to cultural forces including political and economic imperatives and changing value systems.

The theoretical implication of this is that cultural landscapes are inherently vulnerable to change. The practical implication is, therefore, that planning is a central aspect of cultural landscape making. The exercise of power through planning decisions is central to managing 'vulnerability' of cultural landscapes [16, 17].

Continuous changes in functional use, social structure, political context and economic development that manifest themselves in the form of structural interventions in the inherited historic urban landscape may be acknowledged as part of the city's tradition, and require a vision on the city as a whole with forward-looking action on the part of decision-makers, and a dialogue with the other actors and stakeholders involved. As far as historic urban landscape are concerned, there are both a positive and a negative demand for their

protection: some actors such as ecological movements demand more conservation; others such as urban developers or promoters are less concerned about conservation [15]. There is little question that exponential evolution and growth and uncontrolled changes put the integrity and authenticity of historical urban landscape and urban settlements - and values that are embedded in them - at risk.

At a time of rapid urbanization and globalization, the conservation of historical urban landscape is one of the most urgent and difficult challenges facing the field of heritage conservation. The task extends beyond the preservation of the architecture and landscape, and requires the careful management of change through adaptation of historic buildings and urban fabric to new forms of living, evolving land uses, and consideration of intangible heritage that contributes to the city's cultural significance.

Continuous change acknowledged as part of city's tradition: response to development dynamics should facilitate changes and growth while respecting inherited townscape and its landscape as well as Historic city's authenticity and integrity. In historic urban landscape, enhancing quality of life and production efficiency helping to strengthen identity and social cohesion

Premises that serve as a conservation agenda for the urban historic landscapes of heritage cities are:

- The urban landscape has heritage values, comparable to urban architecture.
- Urban historic landscapes are worthy of conservation as expressions of spirit of place.
- Unique landscape identity and character of place expresses heritage and spirit.
- Shaped through time, the spirit of the historic urban landscape is the combined work of humanity and nature.
- Processes of continuity and change are present in the historic urban landscape, as they are in urban architecture.
- Multiple tangible and intangible values are imbedded in historic urban landscapes.
- Recognition, documentation and analysis of the complexity of the urban cultural landscape is a doorway to retention of values and spirit of place [6].

III. MARRING HERITAGE AND NEW: BALANCING DEVELOPMENT AND CONSERVATION

The main question in the historic cities is: how do we deal with change, and more specifically, how do we marry old and new? In terms of 'historic urban landscapes', the key to marrying old and new is to reinforce and enhance the equilibrium between development and conservation, to sustain the urban landscape. The first step is to map the heritage landscapes that exist, and to remember that many heritage landscapes may be layered on top of one another. Part of this step is identifying both the tangible and intangible patterns at work. The next step is to have the communities of interest, for each heritage landscape, assign value and suggest boundaries.

The final step is to develop management guidelines, including the design of contemporary interventions – recognizing that these interventions may be as often new rituals as new development. The advantage of an urban landscape approach is that it addresses the ecology of the city, and accepts the dynamic quality of relationships, rather than simply addressing the physicality of a historic district, and assuming the static quality of its constituent objects.

Hence every historic area and its surroundings should be considered in their totality as a coherent whole whose balance and specific nature depend on the fusion of the parts of which it is composed and which include human activities as much as the buildings, the spatial organization and the surroundings. All valid elements, including human activities, however modest, thus have significance in relation to the whole which must not be disregarded [12, 14].

The first ICOMOS Brazilian Seminar about the Preservation and Revitalization of Historic Centers declared these principles:

1. Urban historical sites may be considered as those spaces where manifold evidences of the city's cultural production concentrate. They are to be circumscribed rather in terms of their operational value as 'critical crisis' than in opposition to the city's non-historical places, since the city in its totality is a historical entity.
2. Urban historical sites are part of a wider totality, comprising the natural and the built environment and the everyday living experience of their dwellers as well. Within this wider space, enriched with values of remote or recent origin and permanently undergoing a dynamic process of successive transformations, new urban spaces may be considered as environmental evidences in their formative stages.
3. As a socially produced cultural expression the city adds rather than subtracts. Built space, thus, is the physical result of a social productive process. Its replacement is not justified unless its socio-cultural potentialities are proven exhausted. Evaluation standards for replacement convenience should take into account the socio-cultural costs of the new environment [12].

In this approach, continuous changes in functional use, social structure, political context and new development that manifest themselves in the form of structural interventions in the historic urban landscape may be acknowledged as part of the city's tradition, and require a vision of the city as a whole with forward-looking action on the part of decision-makers, and a dialogue with the other actors and stakeholders involved.

The central challenge of contemporary architecture in the historic urban landscape is to respond to development dynamics in order to facilitate socio-economic changes and growth on the one hand, while simultaneously respecting the inherited townscape and its landscape setting on the other. Living historic cities, especially World Heritage cities, require a policy of city planning and management that takes conservation as a key point of departure.

In this process, the historic city's authenticity and integrity, which are determined by various factors, must not be compromised. A central concern of physical and functional interventions is to enhance quality of life and production efficiency by improving living, working and recreational conditions and adapting uses without compromising existing values derived from the character and significance of historic urban fabric and form [13].

This means not only improving technical standards, but also a rehabilitation and contemporary development of the historic environment based upon a proper inventory and assessment of its values, as well as the addition of high-quality cultural expressions.

As a result, Basic objectives for the general plan of cultural heritage sustainability of a city are:

- to conserve historical cultural and natural values in an area before or during the process of preparation of urban plans, land use plan or regulation plan,
- to keep the context and the continuity among natural, landscape and urban elements in a territory,
- to propose extensive rules which would allow to accomplish a historical part of town as an ensemble exceptional in its unity and coherence and to develop a town in its totality,
- to constitute an urban landscape planning document which would become a compulsory part of the statutory town urban plans,
- to identify and to inventory elements of cultural heritage value and ecological structure, above all those which are not object of legal protection.

Although Discussion of heritage 'integrity' and 'vulnerability' is problematic, because cultural landscapes are dynamic - i.e. subject to constant change according to cultural forces including political and economic imperatives and changing value systems.

The theoretical implication of this is that cultural landscapes are inherently vulnerable to change. The practical implication is, therefore, that planning is a central aspect of cultural landscape making. The exercise of power through planning decisions is central to managing the 'vulnerability' of cultural landscapes.

The concept of historic urban landscape needs to be integrated into the practices of heritage conservation and urban landscape planning more generally. The development of theory and practice in historic urban landscape offers potential for a broader understanding of heritage and its relationship to contemporary urban life. Historic urban landscape cannot be managed by the discrete mechanisms of heritage conservation legislation alone.

Historic urban landscapes are diverse, contested and continuously being made and remade as circumstances and values change. In addition to every land management decision is a cultural landscape making decision, and so cultural landscape planning requires engagement in the full range of 'everyday' urban management legislation and practice.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The future of our historic urban landscape calls for mutual understanding between policy makers, urban planners, city developers, architects, conservationists, property owners, investors and concerned citizens, working together to preserve the urban heritage while considering the modernization and development of society in a culturally and historic sensitive manner, strengthening identity and social cohesion.

Previously handled by 'zoning', the emphasis today is on continuity - of relationships, values and management. The adoption of a holistic approach in heritage conservation has meant an increase in the complexity of processes to identify significance and protect values - in addition to artifacts - the proper understanding of which is only starting to emerge. But already it has become clear that the traditional notion of groups of buildings, historic ensembles or inner cities, identifying them as separate entities within a larger whole, is no longer sufficient to protect their characteristics and qualities against fragmentation, degeneration and, eventually, loss of significance [11]. A landscape approach, where all is layered and interrelated - and thus integrity becomes a key consideration - seems more appropriate to deal with the management of change in complex historic urban environments.

As a result, the following guidelines propose to conserve the historic urban landscape:

1. Continuous changes in functional use, social structure, political context and economic development that manifest themselves in the form of structural interventions in the historic urban landscape may be acknowledged as part of the city's tradition, and require a vision of the city as a whole with forward-looking action on the part of decision-makers, and a dialogue with the other actors and stakeholders involved.
2. The central challenge of contemporary architecture in the historic urban landscape is to respond to developmental dynamics in order to facilitate socio-economic changes and growth on the one hand, while simultaneously respecting the inherited townscape and its landscape setting on the other. Living historic cities, especially World Heritage cities, require a policy of city planning and management that takes conservation as a key point of departure. In this process, the historic city's authenticity and integrity, which are determined by various factors, must not be compromised.
3. A central concern of physical and functional interventions is to enhance quality of life and production efficiency by improving living, working and recreational conditions and adapting uses without compromising existing values derived from the character and significance of the historic urban fabric and form. This means not only improving technical standards, but also a rehabilitation and contemporary development of the historic environment based upon a proper inventory and assessment of its values, as well as the addition of high-quality cultural expressions.

As a result, to link the past to present and future doesn't mean to copy the old urban design principles and elements and create new environments without understanding the values hid in these design principles.

One shouldn't learn just to imitate it which it won't have any value. One should touch each principle, understand it, and learn how it is possible to adjust it in modern urban planning system. Within the historic town are the attitudes and activities that connect people and their environment in a world of changing values, economies and social distinction not just the form and physical structure. The conservation of such heritage areas need to be based on an erudite and philosophical understanding of the relevant human interests within the specific geographical and social context and not merely on maintaining the fabric.

Decision-making for interventions in a historic urban landscape, demand is careful consideration a culturally and historic sensitive approach, stakeholder consultations and expert know-how. Such a process allows for adequate and proper action for individual cases, examining the spatial context between old and new, while respecting the authenticity, integrity of historic fabric & building stock.

An essential factor in the planning process is a timely recognition and formulation of opportunities and risks, in order to guarantee a well-balanced development and design process. The basis for all structural interventions is a comprehensive survey and analysis of the historic urban landscape as a way of expressing values and significance. Investigating the long-term effects and sustainability of the planned interventions is an integral part of the planning process and aims at protecting the historic fabric, building stock and context.

Finally, the development and implementation of a Management Plan for historic urban landscapes requires the participation of an interdisciplinary team of experts and professionals, as well as timely initiation of comprehensive public consultation.

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