

ICOMOS THEOPHILOS ISC CONFERENCE

“PUBLIC SPACES IN HISTORIC CITIES – CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES AND GOOD PRACTICES”

PALAZZO COPPINI, FLORENCE (ITALY), MARCH 9-10 2023

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

Thursday, 9 March 2023. Day 1

10.30-11.30: Session I

Karl Kupka / The Netherlands

Practices of Conservation in Historic Cities: Redeveloping and Innovating Public Spaces

In my research on Redevelopment by Tradition (Urban Renewal in World Heritage Cities, Cluva/Venezia.2012) I documented and analysed various interventions that have restored or radically changed (parts of) urban districts. The research document reveals either building complexes and public spaces, valued as good (or some bad) practices.

Risks of "Redevelopment" are defined by UNESCO: "Increasingly, developments pose threats to the authenticity and integrity of historic cities and their inherited urban landscapes, as expressed by local communities and specialised conservation groups" R. van Oers (2010).

(UNESCO) "felt that the existing guidelines, while based on recognised conservation principles, were not sufficient to guide the evaluation of the new situations created by the increasing development pressures, the growing tension between contemporary intervention and the historic fabric, the expansion of tourism in historic cities and the changing importance of environmental factors in city management, as well as the growing appreciation of the intangible values of urban areas." (F. Bandarin, introduction to the book).

My research reveals ca. 24 cities and 96 (UNESCO) sites of which 44 respond to the concept of Historic Urban Landscape. In the following summary five types of (generally 'good') practices are documented. Some interventions concern heritage buildings and surrounding (public) spaces, other examples are new constructions (in some cases substituting derelict ones). On all sites the original function and type of property has been changed and the publicly accessible is substantially enlarged.

Calogero Bellanca / Italy & Susana Mora / Spain **Some Reflections across Historic Urban Context**

In the Declaration of Amsterdam (21-25 October 1975, Amsterdam), we can read:

“The significance of the architectural heritage and justification for conserving it are now more clearly perceived. It is known that historical continuity must be preserved in the environment if we are to maintain or create surroundings which enable individuals to find their identity and feel secure despite abrupt social changes. A new type of town-planning is seeking to recover the enclosed spaces, the human dimensions, the inter-penetration of functions and the social and cultural diversity that characterized the urban fabric of old towns “ (1)

So it will be important to consider

- Access: if its separate the old town; Topography
- Walks/paths: outside walls (Avila), Up to the walls (Lugo, Zamosc)
- The circulation at the interior of the historic town (cars, others, people)
- Streets/ boulevards... (via Liberta Palermo); in the water (Amsterdam)
- Squares (designed) (Piazza del Popolo); (as result of demolition) (Coronari,Roma)
- Archeological Ruins/Gardens

So it is necessary to include them in the urban planification. Are important the designs, materials, green, water....

In this work we will like to show some examples and the result along the time, as in other ICOMOS documents, and from others institutions to improve the solutions for the future..

(1) Conservation Officer's Handbook. ICOMOS Polish National Committee of International Council on Monuments and Sites. Warsaw 2015. Pag.54

Uģis Bratuškis & Sandra Treija / Latvia

Urban Experiments To Maintain Liveability In Historic City Centres: Diversity And Inclusivity For Public Open Spaces

The loss of liveability in city centres is mentioned as the most common reason for the formation of historical residential brownfields. Unoccupied, protected historical estates in physically bad condition, usually with a low ratio of building rights, is the modern reality. How to maintain or how to re-create the attractiveness of historic centres is one of the most important challenges in many cities. Urban experiments have developed in recent decades as a widely used approach to studying and testing solutions to many urban issues.

Riga, the capital city of Latvia, recognised for its architecture, cultural environment, preserved cultural landscape, and creative people, will continue increasing its place on the international cultural map. To face the creation of a more convenient and pleasant urban environment, Riga City Council has highlighted the following topicalities:

- to create an accessible urban environment that is user-friendly for every inhabitant and city guest, providing easy access to open spaces for people with different disabilities;
- to make Riga a walkable city – by developing a unified structure of public open spaces and creating space for pedestrians.

To test the impact of transforming city centre streets and vacant areas into user-friendly urban spaces on the city's liveability, Riga municipality has implemented several urban experiments recently, such as pedestrian streets, urban gardens and others. It was done by converting the spaces for pedestrian and cyclist use, street sales and various social events and activities. The main result was an opportunity to collect data on habits of usage of urban spaces and use them in the following stages of the discussion among various stakeholders on urban liveability in historic city centres.

12.30-14.00: Session II

Elif Sarihan / Hungary (on-line)

Typo-morphology and Visual Perception: Exploring Concept of Depth for the Conservation of the Public Spaces in Historic Cities

The relationship between the form of the built environment (typo-morphology) and how it is perceived visually (visual perception) plays a crucial role in understanding the patterns and structures that shape the physical, functional and visual characteristics of a city. This is also relevant for the conservation of public spaces in historic cities, where preserving inherited urban forms is critical for sustaining the cultural and historical integrity of the places. One key concept in typo-morphology is the idea of depth, which refers to the different levels/hierarchy and resolutions that make up the built environment, such as the street network, plot patterns, building types and public spaces. This concept plays a significant role for the conservation of historic places, as it allows us to understand how the different elements built environment interact with one another, and how they contribute to the overall character and identity of the place. The paper begins by defining typo-morphology and its importance in understanding the evolution and function of urban space. The concept of depth in typo-morphology is then introduced as a key factor in the perception of built environment. Through the combination of different urban morphological approaches, the paper examines the concept of depth in creating a visual hierarchy and the impact of this hierarchy on the overall aesthetic and functionality of a city. Using case studies of historic cities, the paper then examines the use of depth in the conservation of these places. The study aims to contribute to the wider understanding of the conservation approach by highlighting the importance preserving and protecting public spaces in historic cities, as they are essential for the character of the historic cities and fostering a sense of social connection.

Michal Firestone / Israel

Beware of Intervening in the Urban Public Realm

The urban history of Acre may be traced back to the 7th century. Since then, the city gained fame twice: in the 12th and 13th centuries as the main port of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, and in 18th and 19th century as a thriving Ottoman port city. The British conquered Palestine in 1917. They viewed themselves as the new Crusaders, and declared the Old City of Acre an antiquities site because of its role in the Crusader Kingdom. Today, it is a World Heritage site under criteria ii, iii and v. The nomination documents describe the Old City as "...an important example of an Ottoman walled town, with typical urban components such as the citadel, mosques, khans, and baths... partly built on top of the underlying Crusader structures [and urban layout]." The city consists of two entities: a Crusader town below ground, and an Ottoman town above ground. A museum and an archaeological dig lie below the surface, and above it, a living town, which is home to some 3,000 residents. In recent years, the municipality of Acre and various governmental agencies have been investing heavily in the development of the Old City as a tourist destination, with physical interventions being focused on its urban infrastructure and public spaces. This presentation will first describe some of these initiatives – in

particular those that introduced plants and art into the streets of Acre -and then use them to discuss questions such as: should interventions in the public realm fit with local culture? Should they conform to the physical characteristics of the town? And, is the standardization of the public realm an issue? This, in order to underline, some of the principles that should guide us in the conservation of historic towns.

Vadym Abyzov / Ukraine (on-line)

Methodological Aspects of the Development and Regeneration of Public Spaces in Historical Cities

In the terms of UNESCO there is the concept of "living cities". Along with protection and preservation of cultural heritage, historical areas and urban centres should live and develop in time. History and modernity not only can, but also should coexist.

The purpose of this research is an attempt to identify and analyse the modern trends and directions of the development and regeneration of public spaces in historical cities and to define some methodological principles of its typology and design at the different hierarchical levels.

Methods: The study is based on system-structural and environmental approaches that allows to consider the architectural environment of public spaces as a hierarchically subordinated integrity. Methods of comparative and typological analysis were also used.

Results: Research identifies key areas of the development and regeneration of the architectural environment in historical cities, which can be divided into several directions. Each of these areas is considered and the most promising ones are highlighted. At the same time, the development of the architectural environment and new construction in historical areas should be considered in accordance with the following hierarchical levels: at the city level as a whole; at the level of development of individual urban structures; at the level of individual buildings; at the level of territorial-spatial fragments, surrounding the buildings, and small architectural forms; at the level of interiors. This should consider the diverse local conditions and factors, such as: social-economical, natural-geographic, urban, ergonomics, ecological, typological, technics, and aesthetics. The features, conditions, and directions of such implementations on various examples are examined in this study.

Nóra Géczy & Daniel Osorio Arboleda / Hungary

The Value of Nostalgia for Historical Sites

Nostalgia is addressed from its commercialization in postmodernity by the use of the memory and ruins by the mass media with the apparent intention of instilling fear of oblivion and amnesia. The method that seems to be implemented for such purposes is the promotion of a strong feeling of melancholy for a modern past whose idea-they promised a better future; bringing in the end as a more probable consequence a present with an uncertain future and strong conflicts with the memory, the temporality and the value of authenticity.

This article will develop as main theme the melancholic feeling for the past time typical of modernity and that has been inherited in postmodernity, which in many cases is accompanied by the conception that all past times were better, and has acquired a great relevance in the conception of Collective Memory in today's society and its impact in our relationship with the ruins.

As the basis for the whole essay, first will be analyzed some stances regarding building heritage and therefore regarding ruin from the perspective of Viollet-le-Duc Ruskin, Camilo Boito, The Athens Charter, The Venice Charter and The Nara Charter and the concept of Permanence of Aldo Rossi to later analyze some of Huyssen's positions regarding memory, nostalgia and ruins, " The architectural ruin is an example of the indissoluble combination of spatial and temporal desires that trigger nostalgia. In the body of the ruin the past is both present in its residues and yet no longer accessible, making the ruin an especially powerful trigger for nostalgia. " (Huyssen, *The Nostalgia for Ruins*, 2006). The intention is to be able to develop each of these topics in order to finally contrast them with the current situation of architecture and how it determines the urban spaces and urban landscapes of our cities.

15.00-16.00: Session III

Nigel Walter / UK

Figure and Ground – an English view of the Conservation of Historic Public Spaces

This paper looks at the official guidance in England and how it relates (or not) to international thinking, particularly the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. The paper begins by outlining a selection of the relevant guidance and research articles published by Historic England to build a picture of the way in which public spaces are dealt with by official heritage bodies in England.

Historic England's core guidance document – *Conservation Principles*, 2008 – is largely silent on public space. There is much talk of 'characterisation' – as a means to facilitate rapid analysis of large areas, whether urban or

rural (HE 2008 p. 36) – but the focus is typically on external space as providing the setting for historic buildings, rather than public spaces being entities worthy of conservation in their own right. HE's *Streets for All* suite of documents deals explicitly with public space – and does stress the importance of protecting the distinctiveness of the public realm – but the focus is mostly on practical issues such as choice of ground surfaces, street furniture and traffic management, with minimal discussion of the theoretical basis for action.

Within the published documents it is difficult to find any attempt to relate official guidance to international thinking on the HUL approach – instead, the public realm is treated as a local or national issue. To treat the historic city as a landscape is powerful and significant, implying an acknowledgment of the layeredness of built heritage, and an acceptance of change. Neither of these is incompatible with HE's *Conservation Principles*, which draws heavily on international texts such as the *Burra Charter* and the *Nara Document*. The paper concludes by sketching some implications for conservation as a whole of the HUL approaches's ability to read the city as a spatial and temporal continuum.

Paola Martire / Italy

Public spaces in the city of London: the garden of St Dunstan in the East and St Alphage

Architectural transformation is an unavoidable process. It can be perceived through out progressive changes of historic cities, including their buildings and their public spaces. However, cities do not always benefit from changes, especially when these are due to a complex historical context characterized by armed conflicts and sudden destruction.

The catastrophic damages caused by the Second World War were the main factors contributing the the great change of the City of London, its public spaces and its green areas. The cases covered by this proposal (article?) constitute significant examples of its transformation: the garden of St Dustan in the East and St Alphage, whose simplicity hides a huge amount of history.

The gardens of St. Dustan in the East was built on the churchyard site of St Dunstan's , which was severely damaged during an air raid in 1941. In 1967, the City of London Corporation suggested to incorporate within the church ruins a garden with flowers, vines and hanging foliage as hanging walls with gutted windows. The plants donated a picturesque appearance and an intensive evocative atmosphere to the ruins, which constantly maintained and preserved as monument through the years reflect the idea of war memorial ever since.

The birth of St Alphage's Garden follows the re-development process of London Wall Place. The gardens and ruins of the church are now revealed right next to the busy London Wall Street, but have glorious serenity.

The above mentioned case studies have been extensively analyzed during a research conducted onsite in London, and based on documented evidence retrieved from the UK National Archives.

Łukasz Sadowski & Aleksandra Sumorok / Poland

Contemporary revitalization of public spaces in Lodz: The role of squares, streets and courtyards in creating the genius loci based on the historical heritage

The city of Lodz (Łódź), despite its medieval origins (1423), is a young city. It was established as an important industrial center in the 19th century. In the 20th century it was the second largest city in Poland. The unusual and unique in Poland, "American" plan of the city (one main street and districts developing around the factories) resulted in a lack of city squares and a small amount of public space. Since the beginning of the 20th century, Lodz has been trying to create common spaces. Unfortunately, after the systemic transformation of 1989 and in connection with the economic crisis of the 1990s, they underwent far-reaching degradation.

Nowadays they are undergoing a revitalization process. There are many competitions and projects concerning both the rehabilitation of existing city squares and the creation of new ones. However, the term "city square" has largely lost its original, traditional meaning and the name "square" now covers a variety of open spaces pedestrian streets, courtyards.

We propose to pay attention to a few selected, diverse examples of municipal and private investments (squares, streets, courtyards):

- creation of the Manufaktura market (which de facto replaced, displaced the Old Town Square)
- The Old Town Square – revitalization plans
- transformation of the New Town Square (Plac Wolności)
- transformation of the vicinity of the railway station, creation of the "New Center of Łódź"
- transformation of the theater square (Dąbrowskiego Square)
- woonerfs
- Piotrkowska 217 courtyard

Despite the positive reception of the changes made and the "renewal" of the city the process is criticized by many specialists and considered controversial. The presentation is an attempt to analyze these solutions in terms of urban planning, city landscape and ecology. And also whether such solutions can be considered modern and adequate to the requirements of planning in the 21st century.

16.30-17.30: Session IV

Shirley Cefai / Malta

Valletta: Gardens, Squares, and Roofscapes

1. The aim of my presentation is to present the scenario of Valletta that has limited open spaces and nowadays we have a scenario where open spaces are provided on roof tops of public buildings.
2. The Lower and Upper Barrakka Gardens were originally a place of recreation for the Knights of St John in the middle of the 17th century. They were open to the public in the 19th century and are still open today.
3. During World War II, Valletta was heavily bombarded due to its proximity to the Grand Harbour. This left Valletta devastated but also gave the opportunity to create open spaces which previously did not exist.
4. Original squares in Valletta were St George's square in front of the GrandMaster's Palace and Queen Victoria's square (now known as Republic square). These were retained after the war
5. Freedom square near the main gate of Valletta, as well as St John's square are the result of bombardment during WWII.
6. In the 1970s the main road of Valletta was pedestrianized The concept of pedestrianization has gained ground over the past decade and now the main centre of Valletta is pedestrianized.
7. In the past decade, roof gardens in public buildings have been created which are open to the public either on a daily or for events
8. The scenario of Valletta is interesting as rooftops are seen as a substitute for squares since the layout of the city does not have a substantial amount of open spaces for the public.

Gaia Redaelli / Italy (on-line)

The Patiocity: Courtyards as an Ecosocial Network of the Mediterranean Urban Heritage

Cordoba is four times a UNESCO World Heritage Site, including its Patios for both their tangible and intangible value. An exemplary case of Mediterranean urban planning, the Axerquía district is marked by a networked structure of patio houses, where different homes are designed around an multifamiliar inner courtyard. Over the past years, the historic centre has been deserted by its inhabitants because of the real estate bubble that has pushed residents away and rising cost of housing, mainly driven by the touristic boom.

PAX Patios de la Axerquia is a private initiative aiming to stimulate urban renewal with social innovation processes to maintain residential use in areas with a high heritage value facing gentrification. It seeks to rehabilitate the traditional patio houses that dot the city center and constitute "social-green cells" that bring social and ecological values to the city. Indeed, recovering the traditional use of unfired earth and local plants ensures that temperatures can be reduced facing climate change.

PAX works at economic, technical, environmental and socio-cultural levels to achieve the rehabilitation of patio houses as tangible and intangible heritage – with the community and to update the way of living around the patios in a contemporary way.

Its ecosystem is a network of social and neighbourhood association, citizens' group, academical entities and public institution and contributes to build a Heritage Community. That's way it is member of the Faro Convention Network of the Council of Europe since 2018, European Heritage Award/Europa Nostra Awards 2022, good practise by the Eurocities network in 2023 and collaborates with the World Monument Fund since 2020. Since 2022 PAX is partner of the Horizon2020 project InHabit that studies the Patios as an ecosocial cells analysing the benefits that it brings to health and inclusion within vegetation and community in the Mediterranean City.

Dimitrios Zygomalas / Greece

A code of action for the responsible conservation of squares in historic cities through the experience of northern Greece

Background: Currently subdivided into the regions of Macedonia and Thrace, the northern part of Greece encompasses a considerable number of cities whose history spans well over a century. Among them,

Thessaloniki, stands out, by far, as the oldest, having been founded in the early 4th century BC, while others, such as Veria, Xanthi, and Kastoria, date to Hellenistic, Late Roman, and Early Byzantine times, respectively. Remarkably, even in cases of such a long presence, it was only recently that the urban layout came to include open areas for the convergence of streets, and for public encounter and interaction, namely squares. For the historic cities of northern Greece, the latter prove very much a novelty of the late 19th and early 20th century, which nowadays, however, plays a vital role in the shaping of their historical profile. In this context, planning actions and conservation works have been repeatedly initiated, with the aim of enhancing both their special character and the wider historic setting. These initiatives allow for an appraisal, which in turn can produce a set of guidelines for optimum future action.

Objectives: The proposed paper aims to conduct this appraisal, and in its wake, draw a code of action for the responsible conservation of squares in historic cities, applicable primarily at national and secondly international level.

Scope and method: To achieve this goal, a systematic review, analysis, and evaluation of the planning and conservation actions that have been undertaken so far in a characteristic selection of seven squares in the aforementioned five historic cities will be pursued, highlighting both procedural and technical issues, as well as their impact on the special character of the squares and the wider setting. The material for this task will be provided through archival research and on-site examination, coupled with my personal experience as deputy director of the respective supervising Service of the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports.

Main findings and implications: The proposed review and appraisal will allow for an original and complete set of guidelines to be drawn, in the form of a code action for the responsible future conservation of squares in historic cities, at national, and moreover, international level.

Friday, 10 March 2023. Day 2

10.00-11.00: Session V

Diane Archibald / Canada (on-line)

The Historic City of Florence and its Public Spaces

The concept of Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) is foremost a mindset, a way of looking at and understanding the city, or parts of the city, as an outcome of natural, cultural and socioeconomic processes that construct it spatially, temporally, and experientially. Ron Van Oers, 2012

The Historic Urban Landscape of Florence is a palimpsest of over two thousand years of urban history. Layered into the urban environment of Florence are the foundations of the ancient Roman city, with its late Medieval structures of churches, synagogues, house towers, city squares, and winding streets living in harmony with Renaissance ideologies of urban form and its interrelationships between palaces, loggia, and courtyards.

In 1982, the historic city of Florence was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site based on the criteria that “the urban complex of Florence is in itself a unique artistic realization, an absolute chef d’oeuvre, the fruit of continuous creation over more than six centuries.” The UNESCO designation was not only for the magnificence of its structures but also for the urban fabric, the public spaces, that is the streets, squares, piazzas, and bridges that bind the Medieval and Renaissance city together.

In 2015, UNESCO expanded on the 1982 World Heritage designation by including a buffer zone of the immediate surrounding hills to protect the “point of vistas”; a “network of visual relationships” that identified with the notion of Florence as a historic urban landscape. That is a landscape viewed from within and without. (Francini, Capitano). This marked a significant change in the conservation management policy for the historic city of Florence from a conservation approach that protected the more typological, centrally located historical groups of monuments to a more inclusive conservation approach of neighbourhoods and public spaces, and the urban fabric that binds the historic city together.

In this paper, I will focus on the significance of the shift in the conservation management plan for the city of Florence and the ways in which its public spaces are integral to the historic city, as a living city, as opposed to the city as an artefact. Recent case studies in the reclaiming, revitalising, and repurposing of public spaces in the historic city will be discussed. The case studies will include urban projects, which represent both positive and negative outcomes as a point of discussion for developing conservation approaches for public spaces in historic urban environments.

Rosa Anna Genovese / Italy

Principles of Conservation of Public Spaces in the Historic Centres of Naples and Rome

There are processes of Governance, enhancement of 'cultural tourism' and of environmental and urban redevelopment in the main Italian historic centres, that are taking place through the definition of principles for both the conservation of cultural properties and the regulation of use of public spaces. The text will examine the relative projects carried out for some of the most beautiful historic Italian squares: Piazza di Spagna and Piazza Mignanelli in Rome and Piazza del Plebiscito in Naples.

The restoration of Piazza di Spagna and Piazza Mignanelli, directed by Enzo Medardo Costantini, lasting almost three years, invested over nine thousand square metres of plastered surfaces of historic buildings, two thousand metres of stony materials and over one thousand six hundred square metres of frescoed and decorated walls, dating from the late 1500s to 1934. An extraordinary effort leading to the imposing restoration of severely deteriorated Cultural Heritage, under constraint by the 'Archaeological, Fine Arts and Landscape' Superintendence of Rome, documented throughout all its phases, from the diagnostic approach to the executive phase, under the aegis of a shared path of knowledge for the enhancement of 'common good'.

The redevelopment of Piazza del Plebiscito, a symbolic place for the city of Naples, involved the areas of the colonnade and the hypogeal space under the Basil of San Francesco di Paola. It is what is included in the agreement undersigned by: Mayer, Prefect, central Director of Fec Administration (Ministry of Interns), and the regional Director of the Public Property Agency, with which the parties sanctioned their willingness to continue in the effort for the redevelopment of the Piazza. The project features the concession of the hypogeal spaces, free of charge, by the Public Property Agency, to the City Council of Naples, with the purpose of making them a venue for interactive museum exhibitions, conferences, meetings, seminars, art festivals, expositions and cultural events. The project of redevelopment of Piazza del Plebiscito and its hypogeal spaces was approved by a technical Commission formed by: City Council, Curia, Superintendence of Public Works, 'Archaeological, Fine Arts and Landscape' Superintendence of Naples, Public Property Agency and Fec. The objective of the agreement is the implementation of a common project, through an integrated and participative approach regulating the terms of reciprocal commitments among all the Public Bodies involved. The City Council of Naples has therefore undertaken the institutional, technical and administrative task of scheduling, planning, carrying out and managing the finance of a project of redevelopment of Cultural Properties, belonging to other Public Bodies, of the highest cultural, artistic, and social value to Neapolitan citizens.

The text will, furthermore, describe the 'Guidelines' for the sustainable project of the dehors in the Historic Centre of Naples (Site inscribed onto the UNESCO World Heritage List), formulated by the technical Commission formed following the collaboration Agreement, stipulated in 2017, between: City Council of Naples (Department of Balance, Work and Economic Activities), Department of Architecture of the University 'Federico II' of Naples, the IAA Chamber of Commerce of Naples and the 'Archaeological, Fine Arts and Landscape' Superintendence of Naples. The work of such Commission was aimed at the regulation of the use of spaces and equipment of dehors based on a shared model, responding to local specificities and capable of considering, in an integrated way, the system of demands of local economies, Associations and Unions, Cultural Heritage and memory, food services.

Rita Gagliardi / Italy

Role changes of public spaces in the ancient centre of Naples and the case study of the churchyard of Santa Chiara

The identity of the ancient city centre of Naples has been historically founded on the coexistence of a compact urban fabric with squares and several cloisters, courtyards and gardens turned into public spaces. The permanence of these spaces contributes to make Naples an authentic and stratified city that matches the concept of Historic-UrbanLandscape, twenty-eight years later being listed as World Heritage. By the way, the preservation of these values has to challenge with the role changes that some public spaces suffered over the time due to physical, economic and social pressure involving not only narrow streets, often converted into folkloristic show-making and street-food paths, but also squares, churchyards and gardens.

A cyclical process still in progress particularly affects the area of Piazza del Gesù Nuovo, one of the most densely stratified spaces in the ancient centre of Naples. Its particular configuration is broadly connected to the relation between the two churches of Gesù Nuovo and Santa Chiara and the current arrangement is the result of an intense process of urban transformation and a long debate about the churchyard of Santa Chiara, so that this space went from being the entrance to the city to a parking lot until it became one of the most crowded meeting places for tourists.

The paper aims to reflect about the prospects of this area, dwelling on the role played by the churchyard of Santa Chiara and the alterations suffered by its garden, which is now used as dog-park. These remarks may be

the chance to propose a more general reflection about other significant spaces such as churchyards and gardens turned into public areas, shaping cities and citizens' habits, where a balance between the reasons of development and the conservation of heritage and authenticity is a necessary approach to be defined.

11.3012.30: Session VI

Ruth Liberty-Shalev / Israel

Green Blocks in the White City: Rediscovering the Block Gardens of Patrick Geddes's plan for Tel-Aviv

The paper will focus on the recent 'rediscovery' of the block gardens in the 'White City' of Tel Aviv, an area designed by Patrick Geddes and inscribed as a UNESCO world Heritage Site in 2003.

As elaborated by Geddes himself in his 1925 report, these gardens were to play a central role in Tel Aviv's proposed urban grid of city blocks. Each 'block garden' was to be carefully positioned giving more space, beauty and recreated value to the interior of each block". Through these" gardens Geddes aspired to create a dense urban fabric which offers quality of life: fresh air flow, proximity to nature and accessibility to open areas. Perhaps more than any of the plan's components, these gardens reflect Geddes's unique vision for the relationship between society and nature in the 'Garden City'. The 30 gardens which were executed and remain today, still retain the qualities of introverted 'retreats to nature' in 'homely seclusion' as intended by Geddes. More importantly, nowadays they provide a secret network of alleys, lanes and Greenfields which crisscross the contemporary city and offer a much-needed green skeleton.

One hundred years after it was conceived, and in the face of climate change and the depletion of natural resources, this infrastructure has been made the subject of research (commissioned by the Tel Aviv Municipality), and the focus of a variety of urban actions, among them an exhibition (on display at the city's Liebling House until 15 April 2023). The presentation will introduce both the findings of the research (conducted by our practice between 2018-2020), and the subsequent actions it has yielded thus far. It will demonstrate how professional scholarly work which explores the historic components of the city can, through public exposure rather than regulatory mechanisms, awaken and re-connect, and endow the city once again with a relevant, sustainable, and essential relationship between society, nature and the city.

Hossam Mahdy / UK (on-line)

The Heritage of Shade and Light in Cairo: The missing principle for conservation in Islamic historic cities

Conservation principles and practices were introduced to Islamic historic cities by European orientalist in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. While they played an important role in the conservation of the historic built heritage, they paid little or no attention to some intangible aspects of that heritage. The place of shade and light in the city is one of these missed aspects in conservation principles and practices of conservation in Islamic historic cities up to the present. Perhaps this was caused by the difference in symbolic meanings and significance of shade and light between Western and Islamic worldviews.

The paper suggests introducing a principle addressing shade and light in public spaces in Islamic historic cities by using examples from Islamic Cairo. The rationale for addressing the subject is as follows:

- Shade has a positive symbolic meaning in the Qur'an and for Muslims;
- Light has different articulate symbolic meanings in the Qur'an and for Muslims;
- The balance of shade and light used to be a characteristic of historic architecture and organization of public spaces in Islamic historic cities;
- The balance of shade and light is essential for human comfort in hot climate zones, where the majority of Islamic historic cities are located.

The proposed principle should address the following aspects of shade and light:

- The movement of natural light and shade throughout the day and night;
- The differences in the need for shade and light in different seasons of the year;
- The symbolic meaning and significance of shade and light within Islamic worldviews; and
- The balance of aesthetic and functional aspects of shade and light in public spaces.

The paper concludes by suggesting initial recommendations for a principle pertaining to shade and light that is specific to conservation practices in Islamic historic cities.

Samir Abdulac / France

Restoring Souks in the Ancient City of Aleppo

Souks are a traditional fascinating atmosphere. In Syria, many of them unfortunately suffered from war, directly or indirectly. Present recovery works vary between reconstruction and restoration. Thanks to monitoring and recent field visits, some regeneration endeavours in the Historic towns of Damascus, Homs and Aleppo were documented. To give a priority to souks was probably a wise approach.

The Ancient City of Aleppo was included in the World Heritage List in 1986. It measures 364 ha. Its Souks are located between the Citadel and the Antakya Gate, just south of the Omayyad Mosque and its large courtyard, at the very heart of the city. After major fires, Ottoman authorities covered the souks with stone vaults and domes since the 16th century. With its long and narrow alleys Aleppo Souks are probably the largest covered historic market in the world, with an approximate length of 12 kilometres of alleys, and around 16 hectares.

The recent fighting from 2012 to 2016 was extremely damaging. As it remained on the battle front line, the historic town has suffered major destructions of its physical assets, and a severe disruption of its social and economic life. The souks were burned, bombed and looted. The conflict situation prompted the World Heritage Committee in 2013 to inscribe the Old City (as well as all the other Syrian sites) as a World Heritage site in Danger.

The restoration of the Souk al-Saqatiya was undertaken by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, in association with Syrian authorities, as a prototype for other restorations in the Souk area. It contains about 80 shops. The project involved a complete restoration of the damaged domes and structures, the construction of new and modern technical facilities (water, sewage, electricity, etc.) and the design of appropriate functional and decorative elements (portals for the shops, lighting, etc.) were in harmony with the historic character of the site.

Aleppo municipality also began undertaking area rehabilitation projects. It mainly worked on al Khabia souk and has views on al Sawabtia as well as commercial areas in nearby Souk al Harir and Souk al Hebal. In Souk al Khabia the pitched metal roof was completely reconstructed and the occupancy rate of stores was about 30%. Works on the Omayyad Mosque adjacent Caravanserail have also started.

14.00–15.30: Session VII

Louise Noelle Gras / Mexico

The conservation of the main public spaces of the World Heritage Mexican Cities

World Heritage Mexican Cities – A dozen Mexican cities included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, share a series of urban characteristics from the viceregal era. The Mesoamerican territory that was colonised by the Spaniards in the 16th century shows a unity in urban layout, derived from the Royal Ordinances. Subsequently, these foundations were regulated by the “Ordinances for the Discovery, New Population and Pacification of the Indies”, promulgated by Philip II in 1573. The concept guiding these urban organizations derived from Renaissance ideas of clarity and order, present in the treatises of the time. The most important towns considered are Campeche, Guanajuato, Mexico, Morelia, Oaxaca, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, San Miguel Allende y Zacatecas.

Main Plazas – These cities were designed in following a checkerboard pattern evolving from a main square. In most cases, the Spaniards imposed their urban establishments taking advantage of indigenous structures and materials. Therefore, the background and proportions of these plazas rest not only on a European lineage, but from Mesoamerican pre-existences.

Two contrasting examples, Mexico City and Oaxaca – The first and one of the most notable examples of urban planning can be found in what was once the capital of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, established over Tenochtitlán, taking into account some of the structures of the Templo Mayor and the various communication channels, with a design of Alonso García Bravo. A few years later, Oaxaca was founded, also sharing the urban ideals of the Spanish crown. Both cities were organised around a Plaza de Armas, where the ecclesiastical and civil powers were established. However, after almost five centuries, these main plazas have undergone changes, particularly in Mexico City. The presentation will seek to explain the modifications suffered over time, as well as to put forward proposals for their recovery.

Poupak Poubahador & Azadeh Arjomand Kermani / The Netherlands (on-line)

Learning from Conservation-led regeneration experiences in Iranian historic cities: Case study of Shiraz and Isfahan

Rapid growth, physical decay and the movement of middle and upper-income households to modern areas have resulted in social, cultural and economic changes in Iranian historic city centres and have increased their vulnerability. At the same time, large-scale redevelopment projects by the central government or local powers

imposed a new force of change on the historical core. Conservation-led regeneration can be a trigger to preserve the tangible and intangible values and socio-economic development of historic areas. In this paper, two different examples of conservation-led regeneration projects in Iran have been studied.

These two case studies, Atiq square in Isfahan and Sang-e Siag area in Shiraz, have been chosen due to their significant historic fabric and the working-class population they house. Atiq square was the heart of the commercial and social life of Isfahan until the 16th century AD. With the construction of new roads and its disconnection from the main bazaar in the 19th century, the economic function and historic identity of the square have been disturbed significantly. With the aim of rehabilitating the area to meet the needs of residents while maintaining historical continuity, the regeneration of Atiq square started in 2011. Contrary to the purpose of the project, the role and scale of the square in the city have not been considered properly and created a sense of alienation among locals. Sang-e Siah project on the other hand represents a distinctive approach due to its local participation in all phases from decision-making to design and implementation. The framework plan introduced strategic proposals to promote the gradual rehabilitation of the existing residential units.

This paper has been supported by data from project reports in addition to secondary sources as well as social media and newspaper articles on the subject. Evaluating regeneration measures in these two case studies indicates that integrated heritage management in the process of design, implementation and operation with a deep consideration of the communal values and significance of the place is needed to create a pleasant space which meets the needs of people and safeguards historical values.

Elizabeth Howard Moore / UK & Moesat Wathan / Myanmar (on-line)
Challenges of Public Spaces in Amarapura, 18th century capital of Myanmar

The Amarapura capital played a vital role in Myanmar's historical timeline. Established in (1784 CE) it is south of Mandalay, the last kingdom of Myanmar, and north of the earlier Innwa city. The public spaces of the 18th century city of Amarapura are in urgent need of conservation, a cultural landscape of Amarapura that can be divided into civil and religious areas. The study will discuss the challenges of public spaces like pavements, platforms, roads and courtyards with two case studies for each civil and religious areas. For religious public space, the focus is on challenges to the pavement of Kyauk Taw Gyi pagoda, where the mural paintings are renowned. It further details the misuse of heritage areas around the courtyard of the corner stupas of the ancient royal city. For civil public areas, the focus is on the use and management of roads along the way to U Bein Bridge which provides public passage across the seasonal lake or in-gyi, a natural feature. Finally, it will encourage conservation of the Neolithic iron age site, Taungthaman that is endangered by overlap with squatters houses and annual flooding. The study will contribute practical advice for conservation and good practice to ensure their sustainable conservation. The aim is to apply the conclusions within the academic sector to implement a long-term conservation or heritage management plan for Amarapura together with ICOMOS.

Swapna Kothari & Shivangi Thakur / India (on-line)
The 'heart' of public interventions in historic cities reflections on the HRIDAY scheme

The paper intends to discuss implemented examples from the Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana also commonly known as the HRIDAY scheme in India and how they addressed public spaces in historical cities. HRIDAY (2014-2019) was formulated to provide holistic development and improve infrastructure mainly at pilgrim towns under the Ministry of Urban Affairs, now the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). The scheme taking into consideration the complexity of dealing with entire historic cities especially for the urban local bodies, focused on only taking into account primarily the historic core of a city, i.e. its old town centre. Its purview was to revitalise the city's unique character by 'encouraging the development of an aesthetically appealing, accessible, informative and secured environment'.

However, as the scheme ended, there remain many historic towns and cities across the country that could benefit from reflections and understanding from its executed projects. To undertake any further development strategies from the scheme, it is imperative to measure its success and failures in the public space typology.

HRIDAY primarily addressed the needs of retaining a cultural identity via improvement of public infrastructure and promoting tourism. The paper will address how public chowks (squares) and market streets have fared from secondary sources in selected cities, which benefitted from the scheme.

Additions of sanitation or public conveniences, or development of cultural event spaces, in existing public realms and interventions like interpretation centres and improvement of paths will all be considered and guidelines generated and theories extrapolated. These would be to guide future heritage sensitive urban development in cities and towns across India.