UNESCO’s Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Approach

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Items of Presentation

• Introduction: Historic Cities and the World Heritage Convention
• Urban Conservation Challenges
• Current Issues in the Debate
• The Historic Urban Landscape approach

Stone Town, Zanzibar
Introduction

• The 1972 *World Heritage Convention*: 39 years of Global Conservation Doctrine
• 187 States Parties: near-Universal Adherence (193 UNESCO Member States)
• Periodic Reporting and Monitoring System
• Annual World Heritage Committee meeting: International Platform for Engagement & Cooperation
• Increase of Politics in Heritage and Emergence of Global Phenomena
260 World Heritage Cities
350 World Heritage sites in urban areas
936 World Heritage Sites (2011)
Vienna (Austria)
World Heritage, 2001
“Wien-Mitte” Project Site, 2002
New Project 2005: Henke & Schreieck Arch.
Taj Mahal, India
Taj Mahal (2003)
Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet
Traditional neighborhood, Lhasa
Traditional Architecture of Mali
London Plan: 14 tall buildings under construction and 94 applications under review
Urban backdrop of the Tower of London
Remaining unimpaired iconic view of Tower
The Current Context

Since early **1970s** Market Liberalisation, Decentralisation & Privatisation have created:

**New Challenges to Established Urban Conservation Approaches:**

1. Evolution of Role of Heritage in Society
2. Appropriation of Heritage by Local Communities
3. Growing Acceptance of Heritage as Public Commodity with Economic Value for Profit Making
Current Issues in the Debate

- **SETTING:** old & new urban pressures
- **CONTEXT:** loss of tradition & continuity
- Developments happen OUTSIDE Conservation Areas
- **INSIDE:** Limits of Acceptable Change?
- Discipline has NO TOOLS for Objective & Scientific Assessment – INCONSISTENCY
- **VALUES-Based Conservation Management**
The Concept of Value

• In the cultural context, value is defined as the **social-cultural association of qualities** to things or places.

• Values can be seen as **constructs** and results of **learning processes**.

• Values **evolve** over time.
• **OUV** characterizing cultural heritage should be interpreted as an outstanding response to issues of universal nature common to or addressed by all human cultures (Amsterdam, 1998)

• In relation to culture this is reflected in human creativity and resulting in cultural diversity (UNESCO, 2005)

• Definition and application of **OUV** are made by people and will be subject to evolution over time (changing values) (Kazan, 2007)
Meaning of a Place

- **Why** was this place developed originally?
- **What** spiritual/cultural meanings/perceptions were associated with the place over time?
- **What** is the principal story and how is this expressed in the property?

Bamiyan Valley
Historic Urban Landscape: A Management Approach

- Recognition of **dynamic nature** of living cities (vs. static “groups of buildings”): entry **Management of CHANGE**
- Landscape approach: **layering of significances & values**
- Broadened perception: **toolkit** expansion
- Broadening of **OUV** and **Context (genius loci)** as guiding principles
- Follow **morphologies & typologies**
- Visual & Social **Impact Studies**
Adoption on 10 November 2011

- 41 Member States intervened (1.5 hours)

- “An important tool that is timely, well-elaborated, taking into account need for socio-economic development, planning, cultural diversity, intangible heritage, as well as the role of local communities”

- Awareness, Training & Capacity Building

- Associated Action Plan part of Resolution
UNESCO’s Follow-up 1

- **Testing** Workshops: Baku - Lamu - Ilha - Stonetown Zanzibar - SaintLouis - Naples
UNESCO’s Follow-up 2

- Under Development: Hangzhou - Brasilia – Indian Heritage Cities with World Bank
UNESCO’s Follow-up 3

- **Case-law:** Liverpool - Kathmandu
  Reactive Monitoring Missions
HUL Action Plan

- Surveys and mapping of city’s natural, cultural and human resources (assets)
- Reach consensus (participatory planning, stakeholder consultations) what values to protect + attributes that carry values
- Assess vulnerability to socio-economic stresses and impacts of climate change
- Develop a vision on city development
- Prioritize policies & actions for conservation and development
- Partnerships + management frameworks