



Universal Approaches in Local Circumstances

A Series of Discussions on Policy-Practice Gaps in Urban Conservation

November/December 2021 on zoom

Abstracts

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Introduction

This series of events is cooperatively organised by the Chair Urban Management and the DFG Training Group 1913 "Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings" in the framework of the DFG project "Assembling Iran's Urban Heritage Conservation Policy and Practice: Problematised in Tehran".

Each session is a discussion between two or three experts (professionals, local authorities or academics) who have been scholarly or practically active in influential roles in the concerned cities and organisations. Young scholars who are familiar with the specific field of activities in the discussed cases moderate the discussions according to the central theme of the series.

Contribution

Today, urban conservation scholarship calls for case studies that problematise universal conservation principles in local planning circumstances, particularly in countries from which modern conservation has not originated.¹ This discussion series contributes to the body of scholarly debates on the functionality of mainstream conservation approaches in local contexts.

Urban conservation takes place within diverse planning environments,² shaped by legal tools, administrative structures, political, ideological, and environmental circumstances. Discussing the function of conservation concepts and approaches in various planning environments can reveal the different and sometimes paradoxical capacities of these concepts and approaches.

The discussed cases are areas in cities with non-western cultural backgrounds that are geographically and culturally interconnected. By discussing urban conservation issues in Ankara, Baghdad, Tehran, Shiraz, Yazd, Chabahar, Herat, and Mumbai, we aim to reflect on the functionality of mainstream conservation approaches in local conditions.

¹ Paolo Ceccarelli, 'Past Is Not a Frozen Concept: Considerations about Heritage Conservation in a Fast Changing World', *Built Heritage* 1 (2017): 1–12; Sharon Macdonald, 'Transforming the Ethnographic', in *Across Anthropology*, ed. Margareta von Oswald and Jonas Tinius, Troubling Colonial Legacies, Museums, and the Curatorial (Leuven University Press, 2020), 49–64, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv125jqxp.7>; Helaine Silverman, 'Heritage and Authenticity', in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* (London: Springer, 2015), 69–88; Zongjie Wu and Song Hou, 'Heritage and Discourse', in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research* (London: Palgrave, 2015), 37–51; Solmaz Yadollahi, 'Reflections on the Past and Future of Urban Conservation in Iran', *Built Heritage* 4, no. 1 (2020): 1–13.

² John Friedmann, 'Planning Cultures in Transition', in *Comparative Planning Cultures* (Routledge, 2005), 53–68; Bishwapriya Sanyal, *Comparative Planning Cultures* (Routledge New York, 2005).

By narrowing the ideological, cultural and geographical variables down to some extent, the aim is to focus on variables such as historically established planning cultures, economic and political stability, and the degree to which a city faces immediate climate change risks. The main goal is to discuss the influence of such local conditions on the functionality of conservation principles.

In brief, the participants seek to address the following key questions;

- To what extent is 'preservation for the sake of preservation' feasible in the current climate, political, and economic circumstances in the discussed cities?
- To what extent do the culture and philosophical backgrounds of local societies play a role in defining tendencies of urban conservation policy and practice? How far do they counteract?
- What are the alternative approaches that tend to formally or informally substitute conservation principles? What are the goals behind these approaches (gentrification, tourism development, or identity-building)?
- In the course of which informal or formal processes can conservation and regeneration plans end up with unexpected outcomes?

Abstracts and Contributors

From Policy to Practice: Layers of Engaging with Cultural Heritage in Complex Situations

Friday, November 19, 2021, 11:00–12:30

Moderator

Dr Marvin Ravan works at the Institute of Spatial and Regional Planning, University of Stuttgart. His research focuses on Disaster risk management for cultural heritage.

Speaker

Dr F. Farnaz Arefian is an interdisciplinary expert in disaster management and reconstruction, urban design and development planning. She is the director of Silk Cities initiative and affiliated with the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU) at University College London (UCL). Her professional life combines practice-based consultancy with research and education, knowledge exchange and public engagement in the UK, Europe, Middle East, and Southeast Asia. She is the lead editor of books *Historic Cities in the Face of Disasters* (2021), *Urban Heritage Along the Silk Roads* (2019), and *Urban Change in Iran* (2016).

Abstract

The evolution of global vision on urban heritage represented by international agencies and stakeholders has progressed to give special prominence to communities living in historic towns and urban fabrics. Sudden destructive incidents, whether to be as a result of natural incidents or human-induced conflicts, often entail questions about the future of urban heritage, especially the built heritage. Urban heritage does not end at monuments, and dealing with historic urban contexts present a highly complex scenario for decision-makers and stakeholders.

The lecture identifies layers and levels of dealing with the built heritage, which takes place, especially in traumatic situations when urgent needs of locals, destruction of the built heritage and competing forces present high-level of complexities. They represent different operational complexities and organisational behaviour from a managerial perspective that must be dealt with accordingly. The lecture/workshop will draw on a number of international examples related to those layers in order to shed light on common decision-making dilemmas and key questions in dealing with the built heritage and a variety of approaches that set policy directions and their implications in practice. International examples range from historic cases of post-World War II to those contemporary cases of post-disaster and post-conflict from different countries and cities, such as L'Aquila, Coventry, Bam and Beirut.

Protection Issues of Modernist Heritage - From Landscape to Buildings: The Case Study - Atatürk Forest Farm, Ankara

Friday, November 19, 2021, 17:30–19:00

Moderator

Nilgün Rengin Sazak, PhD candidate at Heritage Studies and DFG Research Training Group 1913 "Cultural and Technological Significance of Historic Buildings".

Speakers

Tezcan Karakuş Candan is an architect and is the Chairwoman of the Chamber of Architects of Turkey – Ankara Branch. She got her bachelor's degree from Gazi University - Faculty of Architecture in 1989 and her master's degree from Ankara University – Latin American Studies. She worked in Çankaya Municipality as a manager and cooperated in several projects for the urban development of the region of Çankaya, Ankara. She wrote many articles and managed various projects about local governments, urbanisation, public spaces, civic - social movements, local government campaigns. She is also a writer of the book called Kaçak Saray (Illegal Palace) with Ali Hakkan ve Gökçe Bolat, which discusses the deterioration process of the Atatürk Forest Farm and the construction of the Presidential Palace. As a Chairwoman of the Chamber of Architects, she is one of the prominent actors of protection campaigns of the Atatürk Forest Farm.

Prof. Dr Tomris Elvan Altan Altuğ is an architect and professor at Middle East Technical University (METU) in the Faculty of Architecture. She got both her bachelor's and master's degrees in METU, in the Faculty of Architecture. She did her PhD at the State University of New York at Binghamton with her research, "Making and National Architecture", in 1999. She wrote many articles about the modernist heritage in Ankara and its protection, the modernist architecture in Turkey, the Early Republican architecture, and German-speaking architects in Turkey during the 1930s. She wrote an article with Berin Fatma Gür called "Government's Vanity Place the: Presidential Complex (İktidarın Gösteri(ş) Mekanı: Cumhurbaşkanlığı Kompleksi)" in 2015 in which she discusses the construction of the Presidential Palace on the lands of Atatürk Forest Farm, both in architectural and political aspects. She has been a member of the executive committee of DOCOMOMO Turkey since 2002 and one of the most noteworthy scholars about the protection issues of modernist architecture in Turkey.

Abstract

Atatürk Orman Çiftliği (Atatürk Forest Farm), which was designed by Hermann Jansen and Ernst Egli in 1925, is both a landscape and architectural heritage and is a particular example of modernist heritage from Ankara. The lands and the buildings of the Farm are demolished, starting from the 1930s due to the urban transformation strategies and privatisation policies. This extraordinary case and its demolition process throughout the time reveals the issues about protection of modernist heritage and vulnerability of modernist heritage. In this session, we discuss the changes of the landscapes and the buildings over time and the reasons for these changes. We also analyse the protection issues of modernist heritage on the local scale in the context of international protection regulations and the contributions of NGOs to protection issues.

Conservation in the City of Baghdad

Monday, November 22, 2021, 9:00–10:30

Moderator

Fawzia Asadi, PhD, is a lecturer at the Department of Architecture, University of Baghdad.

Speakers

Dr Ghada Alslik is Professor at the Department of Architecture, College of Engineering, University of Baghdad and the founding member DOCOMOMO-Iraq, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Al Nahrain Center for Strategic Studies, and a founding member of the Makyia Foundation for the Development of Baghdad.

Dr Mohammed Abdul Rahman Albadri is a lecturer at the Al-Esraa University College, a former General Director of Almansour Municipality, the mayor's office of Baghdad. He has conducted scientific research on legal issues in the city of Baghdad.

Abstract

In Iraq, there have been several activities for architectural and Urban conservation/ renewal, and also, there has been a good deal of interest in the subject from both the academic and professional sides. Since the establishment of the Department of Architecture, College of Engineering, University of Baghdad 1959, heritage conservation has been a priority and an aim in the output education of the Iraqi architect. Interests and efforts to enhance the academic activities and research in the subject accelerated in the 70s and 80s with the establishment of postgraduate studies and the research done in the field.

Governmental and political interest in the subject started to have a significant role in the 80s and 90s. The 80s witnessed certain urban renewal and architectural rehabilitation projects done by the government in Baghdad. At the same time, there were a lot of conferences and workshops that supported the professional projects with more profound insights. But we could see that a gap has grown between the academic views and thoughts and the work in the field due to many challenges. Yet, the small initiatives, which started in the 80s, ended in the 90s due to sanctions and war difficulties in Iraq which increased the threats to heritage buildings and traditional urban fabrics.

The situation was not better after 2003 with all the devastating circumstances and the threads of terrorists. Iraqi scholars and professionals had to face all the challenges and continue to work as much as possible with some help from international organisations like UNESCO. We were also supported by the active members of the civil society trying to have protection and preservation of architectural and cultural heritage. Heritage buildings are situated in the centre of the city and the two holy cities of Adhamyia and Kadhumyia. All these areas have gone through the change of land use. New commercial uses appeared in previous residential traditional fabric and buildings. The land cost in these areas got higher, yet most buildings in them were listed buildings, which prevented the owners from selling and changing them. The lack of supporting procedures to maintain their buildings and encourage investment in them pushed the owners to neglect them until they fall or burn down (sometimes intentionally) to be able to sell the land. Although there is a good low of preservation in Iraq, it is not activated, unfortunately, to ensure good preservation of historic areas.

Adaptive Reuse in the Historic Tehran; The Grand Bazaar as Urban Heritage or the Unstoppable Pac-Man of The Historic City ?

Monday, November 22, 2021, 11:00–12:30

Moderator

Solmaz Yadollahi, PhD, is a conservation architect and Postdoctoral fellow at the Chair of Urban Management and the DFG Training Group 1913, BTU.

Speakers

Reza Feizi, PhD is a lecturer and researcher in the field of conservation of historic buildings and urban fabrics, a senior advisor of urban conservation projects at the Municipality of Tehran, and a former member of the steering committee of architectural and urban conservation at the Beautification Organisation of the Municipality of Tehran

Leyla Salimi, M.Sc., is an urban and regional planner, senior urban management and urban economy advisor. Ms Salimi was involved in the preparation of Tehran's master and detailed plans for more than two decades.

Abstract

On the policy-making level, decisions for the historic Tehran have been dangling between conservation principles and stark urban renovation motives for several decades. Recently, the detailed plan for the historic zone of Tehran is being revised with the hope of bringing the two competing forces to a balance. In practice, however, informal economic and social dynamics can strongly influence the results of the official plans. One of the areas of the historic Tehran that creates such unstoppable dynamics is the Grand Bazaar, the most influential national-regional commercial centre of Iran. A large part of the current socio-spatial fabric of Tehran's central zone has been shaped under the enormous economic pressure of the Grand Bazaar.

The main concerns of our discussion are the policy-making and practical challenges of adaptive reuse in the urban fabric surrounding the Grand Bazaar, where most of its historic buildings are used as supplementary spaces of the Bazaar. Based on their empirical experiences, the invited experts will reflect on the legal, administrative, and economic factors that have influenced the official policies regarding the reuse of historic buildings in this area. They will also discuss the factors that tend to make conservation and renovation plans in Tehran less effective.

Preserving the Historic Centre of Shiraz; Difficulties of Organisational Synergy Within a Context-Based Approach

Wednesday, December 1, 2021, 15:30–17:00

Moderators

Farnaz Mohseni, M.Sc., is a PhD student of Heritage Studies at BTU Cottbus-Senftenberg, with a background in Historic Urban Landscape conservation.

Azadeh Arjomand Kermani, PhD, is a lecturer at the Department of Cultural Geography, University of Wageningen.

Speakers

Mr Siamak Basiri (Arch.) is the chief officer at ICHHTM-Fars Province, with many years of administrative experience in the field of cultural heritage preservation.

Associate Prof. Sahand Lotfi holds the chair of Urbanism at Shiraz University. His scientific background is mainly in the field of urban conservation and urban regeneration.

Assistant Prof. Mahsa Sholeh works at the Urbanism Department, Shiraz University. Her expertise is in scientific investigations on historic cities, particularly Shiraz's historic centre.

Abstract

The historic centre of Shiraz in South-Iran, known as an outstanding old urban fabric at the national level, encompasses a wide range of cultural properties such as a citadel, water reservoirs, mosques, traditional schools, bazaars, historic tombs, old houses, and traditional neighbourhoods. The historic core of Shiraz has long been a matter of dispute, transformation, and threat. The conflicts and challenges in the old Shiraz cover broad topics, including different urban development plans at various scales as well as contradicting arguments among many decision-makers. As for one of the most recent disputes in the context of the historic centre of Shiraz, the struggle to reach a balance between urban development urges and heritage protection has set the stage for various and even counter approaches in the field of urban conservation. The conflict over the visual buffer zone of cultural properties between the municipality and ICHHTM-Fars in the case of massive urban projects could be an example of different approaches among actors. Another case of dispute is regeneration proposals for the Detailed Plan Revision of the Historic-cultural Fabric of Shiraz with parking design and street widening recommendations rejected by ICHHTM-Fars. The nowadays contradicting trends of urban conservation in Shiraz raise the main question to be addressed in the current session; to what extent are the proposed actions and conservation plans in accordance with Shiraz' cultural, historical, environmental, and economic context?

In this session, scholars and actors from fields of urban planning and urban conservation focus on the efficiency and outcomes of current urban plans in Shiraz' historic centre concerning the binary of local-international constraints.

Reflecting on Four Decades of Urban Renovation and Regeneration Policy and Practice in Iranian Historic Cities

Thursday, December 2, 2021, 11:00–12:30

Moderator

Solmaz Yadollahi, PhD is a conservation architect and researcher in the field of urban heritage planning and conservation.

Speakers

Ali Madanipour, PhD, professor of urban design and planning at Newcastle University, UK and the author of "*Tehran: the making of a metropolis*", a classic on the urban development of Tehran and several other works on urban planning, urban design, and public space, translated to Farsi and other languages. He has influenced the Iranian academic and official areas of urban conservation through his publications and academic supervision of influential figures such as Mohammad Saied Izadi.

Mohammad Saeid Izadi, MArch-PhD, is an assistant professor of urban regeneration and conservation at Bu-Ali Sina University, Iran. He wrote his doctoral dissertation on "A Study on City Centre Regeneration: A comparative analysis of two different approaches to the revitalisation of historic city centres in Iran" at New Castel University. Among his key positions, Dr Izadi was appointed as the deputy minister of urban regeneration between 2013-2017 and the deputy minister of architecture and urban planning between 2017-2019 at the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development.

Mahshid Sehzadeh, MArch-PhD, is an assistant professor of urban design at Bu-Ali Sina University, Iran. She wrote her PhD dissertation at Newcastle University about "City Transformation: An interpretive analysis of change in a historic city centre: The case of Hamadan in Iran." Her research expertise includes urban regeneration, revitalisation of historic cities and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

Abstract

In the mid- 2010s, the Iranian Ministry of Roads and Urban Development cooperated with several state organisations to launch an initiative for facilitating public-private participation in urban regeneration projects. In our session, the speakers reflect on the historical background of the legal, administrative, and social structures of urban regeneration policy-making in Iran in the course of the last 40 years and discuss the influence of the above-mentioned initiative on Iranian historic cities.

The speakers discuss the inter-organisational complexities that have played a role in creating a gap between the theoretical understanding of urban regeneration and its practice in Iran. Another issue is the economic and social circumstances that have influenced the outcome of official neighbourhood regeneration plans and the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in cities like Tehran. In brief, the session addresses questions such as; how and when was urban regeneration introduced to the Iranian planning system and conservation policy-making?; how has urban regeneration (as a policy-making approach) worked within Iran's legal, administrative, and socioeconomic circumstances?; and how has the institutional and disciplinary interplay of the two fields of conservation and urban planning unfolded in the Iranian policy-making and practice experiences?

Paradoxes of Policy Implementation in the Conservation of Historic Buildings and Urban Fabrics in Iran, the Case of Gholam Rasoul Tomb in Chabahar

Thursday, December 9, 2021, 10:00–11:30

Moderator

Hadi Naderi, MA, is an architect and PhD candidate at the School of Architecture, University of Tehran.

Speakers

Mr Adel Farhangi is an Architect and senior heritage specialist at ICOMOS International.

Dr Kambiz Moshtagh-Gohari is an Asst. Professor at the University of Sistan & Baluchestan, the former Director-General of the Office of Urban Plans and Civil Development of the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development, and the General Director of Cultural Heritage and Tourism of Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

Abstract

This discussion concerns the challenges between policies, approaches and conflicts of opinion between decision-makers and stakeholders in conservation and development in the historic urban areas. Although Iran's heritage and planning regulations are based on maximum preservation, one can see enormous destructions in historic areas in cities like Shiraz, Mashhad, Ardekan, and Kerman. At the same time, many projects that try to conserve historic complexes by doing new interventions are usually rejected by the heritage authorities due to a lack of attention to the laws and the authenticity of the historic complex or urban fabric. The question is, while the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft is focused on this problem and many laws exist to protect the architectural and urban heritage, why the historic core of most Iranian cities are being abandoned?

Chabahar, the ancient port of Tiss in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, is a city and region with a long history in the southeast of Iran. The Gholam Rasoul Tomb is a listed monument in a tomb complex located in the centre of the modern Chabahar. The tomb is the only historical monument in Chabahar that dates back to the Timurid period, the 13th century AD. Recently, the conflict of interest between the Endowment and Charity Organization and Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft is threatening the tomb complex seriously. A conservation plan was prepared by the provincial office of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, which was considered a final solution for the complex, according to the office. But, the proposition was not accepted by the authorities in the same ministry. As a result, the project was stopped.

In this workshop, we look at the paradoxes and challenges that responsible organisations and involved experts have faced in the Gholam Rasoul Tomb project, which dealt with organisational complexities in a living city. The invited speakers who are officially involved in the project reflect on the causes of these paradoxes, challenges and threats to Chabahr's architectural and urban heritage. We investigate the roots of the problem and ask if it comes from shortages in heritage protection law, insufficient or problematic coordination between government agencies, or the lack of consideration of private owners' rights in Iranian law? The discussion concentrates on the role of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage in this issue while considering other related institutions. The speakers point out the most impactful factors causing the destruction of the historical building in active urban fabrics.

The Complexity of Heritage Conservation in the Historical City of Herat-Afghanistan

Thursday, December 9, 2021, 13:00–14:30

Moderator

Reza Sharifi, MA, is a PhD Candidate of heritage studies at the BTU Cottbus. His work focuses on heritage risk management in armed conflict areas (Afghanistan). He is the former Director, Department for Preservation of Historic Cities at the Ministry of Urban Development and Land (MUDL).

Speakers

Mr Nasir Yawar, Arch, has been working in the field of heritage conservation throughout Afghanistan. He has cooperated with the UNESCO Kabul Office and the Ministry of Urban Development and Lands, completing several heritage conservation projects in the old city of Herat. He is the founder of Architecture and Restoration Services(YARS), which is active in Herat. He has been working with Aga Khan Trust for Culture and, since 2019, joined in the Master program of Conservation and Restoration at Mimar Sinan Fine Art University in Istanbul.

Mr Arash Boostani has obtained a BSc in Civil Engineering, an MSc in Architectural conservation and a PhD in Structures and Conservation of Architecture and Cultural Heritage. Since 2010, ICOMOS-ISCARSAH expert member and jury member of the UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Award, since 2004, he has worked with Aga Khan Trust for Culture as a senior structural consultant and project manager in Balkh, Kabul, and Herat. He is the author of "Flooring of Historic building" his research expertise includes structural consolidation of historic monuments and traditional construction techniques. He was honoured with the Award of Excellence in 2008 for the Herat projects from UNESCO Asia Pacific Heritage Award.

Abstract

In 2017, the former president of Afghanistan, Mr Ashraf Ghani, issued a decree to establish a new structure within the Ministry of Urban Development and Lands, dedicated to conserving historic urban fabrics and cities in Afghanistan (Presidential Decree 2017). It was among the first attempts from the Afghan government to respond to preserving historic urban areas with the perspective of regeneration. Herat was chosen as a model and later expanded to other historic cities like Balkh, Kandahar, and Ghazni. In Herat, the purpose of the mentioned decree was to integrate the old Timurid urban fabric into the modern city of Herat. This decree was among the last attempts to respond to the recommendation of UNESCO for enlisting the old city of Herat as a world heritage site before the government took over by the Taliban in August 2021.

In our session, the invitees will talk about their heritage conservation experience in Herat, a historical city on the tentative list of UNESCO since 2004, before the Taliban, and discuss the challenges of heritage protection in the context of Afghanistan from 2001 till August 2021. The speakers will deeply discuss national and international organisations' role in Afghan heritage preservation, such as ACKTC, UNESCO, and the different Afghan Governments, namely the Ministry of Information and Culture and the Ministry of Urban Development and Land. They share with us their ideas about the future perspective of heritage conservation in Afghanistan under the Taliban.

Conservation of the Sheikhdad Historic Neighborhood in Yazd by Local Community's Participation

Friday, December 10, 2021, 12:00–13:30

Moderators

Farnaz Faraji is an ESR in the Heriland program based at Newcastle University. Farnaz is also a PhD student at the University of Tehran in Conservation and Revitalization of Historic Sites and Buildings.

Bahareh Azhdari co-moderates the session with Farnaz Faraji. She is a PhD candidate at the Art University of Tehran, working on the public participation of society in the conservation and revitalisation of urban heritage.

Speakers

Dr Mohsen Abbasi Herafteh is an assistant professor of conservation at the faculty of architecture, Yazd University and the head of Yazd World Heritage Base. He has been a member of Yazd's city council for four years.

Zoha Sharif Yazdi is a sociologist and the social facilitator of the Sheikhdad program in the historic Yazd.

Mahdiyeh Nokhodizadeh is a conservation practitioner. She is currently working as a heritage education facilitator in the Sheikhdad Program.

Abstract

In this session of the "Universal Approaches in Local Circumstances," implementation of concepts such as "public participation," "public engagement," and youth collaboration in urban heritage conservation in the local context Yazd are discussed. The speakers and moderators discuss their experience in conveying international and Western-Europe experiences of urban heritage conservation on the local scale as the city of Yazd and in Iran's context, where those notions are not acknowledged in the same way as they might appear in an academic context or international guidelines. The central case discussed in this session is a socio-cultural campaign, "Tuesdays with Sheikhdad", and the challenges and possibilities of implementing international principles in a local setting. We address the following key questions:

- Which conservation and participation concepts have been applied in the course of conservation projects in Yazd?
- To what extent are residents of the historic Yazd familiar with their rights and the fact that they can ask for change?
- How relevant are the participatory conservation approaches for different socio-political contexts? In other words, are bottom-up approaches in heritage conservation applicable to every place?
- What can be done to achieve a long-term collaboration with the residents? Or, which criteria are essential to consider a project as a success in the long term?

Heritage Conservation in Mumbai: Rethinking Global Practices in a Local Context

Friday, December 10, 2021, 14:00–15:30

Speakers

Ms. Kimaya Keluskar, M.Sc., Environmental Design & Engineering; Founder member of Water Environs, a social enterprise for water environment conservation; Energy Analyst, EdEn - Educated Environs Mumbai, India

Ar. Sanaeya Vandrewala, Conservation Architect, Assistant Professor for Heritage Conservation and Urban Studies, Kamala Raheja Vidyaniidhi Institute of Architecture and Environment Studies, Mumbai, India

Moderator

Ms. Shraddha Bhatawadekar, Archaeologist, is a research Assistant and PhD Researcher at Brandenburg University of Technology, Cottbus-Senftenberg, Germany.

Abstract

Mumbai, erstwhile Bombay, is a city with diverse heritage, with sites ranging from ancient caves, forts to colonial architecture. The city's heritage is uniquely placed with the confluence of nature with culture. With its three World Heritage Sites within its jurisdiction- i.e. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (previously Victoria Terminus) and Victorian and Art Deco Ensemble in its Fort area and Elephanta Caves in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Mumbai is also nestled close to the Western Ghats mountain chain, a World Heritage Site with an exceptionally high level of biodiversity.

Mumbai became a pioneer city in India in drafting regulations for urban heritage conservation in 1991 (formally approved in 1995). It has been 30 years since then and the heritage movement has picked up pace. Various governmental institutions at national, state and local level, i.e. Archaeological Survey of India, Maharashtra State Government, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation have been involved in policy making and restoration efforts.

What success has this conservation movement achieved so far? What are the challenges faced in using global heritage concepts in the local context? Which adaptations have been made? How have communities responded to conservation efforts and what role do they play in the process? What challenges lie ahead for the heritage movement in Mumbai especially within the context of climate change? This panel discusses the evolving story of heritage conservation in Mumbai, evaluating its challenges and opportunities with a special focus on the nature-culture linkages.