Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Historic Districts and Preservation of Architectural Heritage After Armed Conflicts

Research Input

09:00 – 09:45 The Dilemma of the Post-War Architecture: Experiences from Central Europe
Dr. Mounir Affaki - Postdoctoral Researcher at Fakulta architektury ČVUT v Praze

Abstract: The faith of architectures produced during the post-war period, especially late 60s and 80s, has been debated in recent decades for a spectrum of reasons, be them stylistic language, urban position, political representation, function suitability, physical status, unsustainability, among others. This phenomenon has stormed Prague's historic centre with a wave of demolitions and extreme alterations of said architecture, putting this component at risk. This presentation will communicate the aspects of this debate and go through causes and consequences. It extends to speculate similar potential future discussions in Syrian cities with regards to the faith of modern and politically contested architectures.
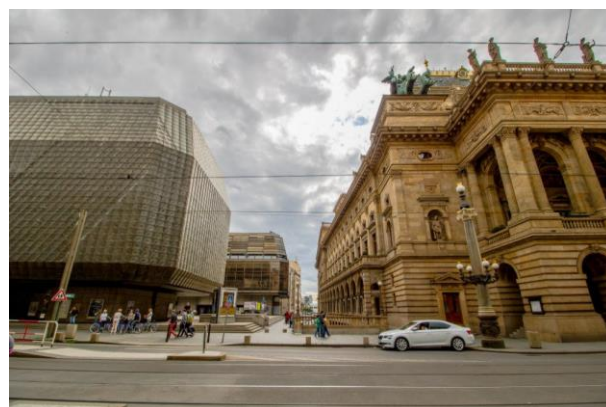

The New Stage of the National Theater in Prague

10:00 – 10:45 3DHeritage as a Catalyst for Social Participation in Safeguarding Post-Conflict Cities
Sonia Ibrahim - Architect at Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums – Damascus

Abstract: Cultural heritage is in danger in Syria, as in all the world heritage cities. Historical buildings have been radically destroyed by conflict and communities have been displaced. Many factors have contributed to this situation such as the inadequate preservation strategies before the war and the lack of local communities' awareness about the importance of their heritage. The local communities' inability to contribute to the protection of cultural sites rises from a lack of resources and knowledge in addition to their perspective of heritage as obstruction of development and an economic burden rather than a source of pride and identity. Therefore, this paper seeks to investigate the notion of heritage as a cumulative process of community cultural production over time and a key element of identity. Cultural heritage reinforces the interrelation between communities and the land by re-establishing connections that are often a part of peacebuilding. This paper investigates through qualitative surveys and statistics the problematic gap between cultural heritage and local communities in Syria. Additionally, "3D visualization" is discussed as a potential catalyst for conducting successful participation of the local community through its youth in safeguarding their cultural heritage. 3D visualization has a significant role in distributing knowledge (nationally and internationally) about Syrian heritage through the process of its creation, participation, and 3D product. In addition, academic institutions have a significant role in distributing knowledge about Syrian heritage through heritage education programs.
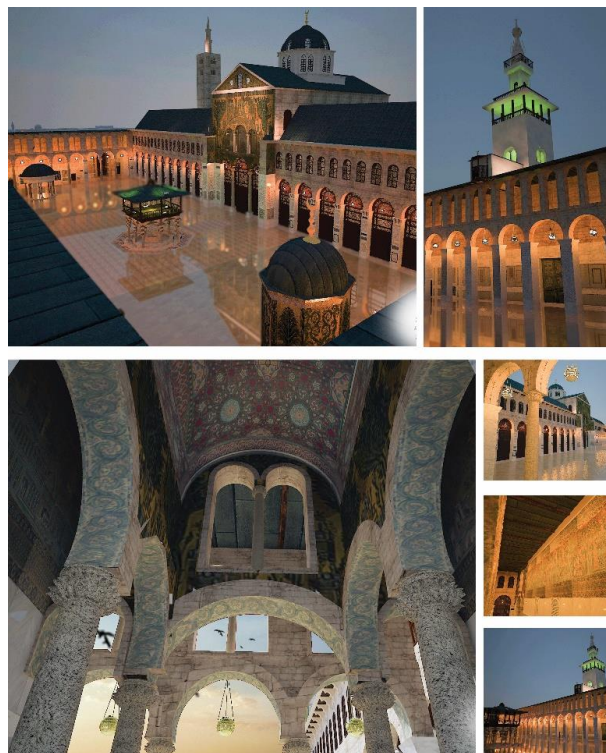
3D Visualization of the Ummayyad Mosque in Damascus

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