

This paper is for the first Theme :

Architectural Conservation within the System of Modernity

A. Policies of Architectural conservation and the ideology of persistent growth.

Problems of Architectural conservation in contemporary environments and its association with the concepts of endurance.

Title of the paper

**Problems in the Conservation of the Ancient Architectural Heritage within the
Contemporary Environment**

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Abstract

Problems in the Conservation of the Ancient Architectural Heritage within the Contemporary Environment

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All the countries worldwide are driving now more efforts toward the conservation of the historical centers and the revival of their role within the modern urban development from the fact that it contributes in the economical development and its socioeconomic benefits as a part of the community's identity and their importance in the inspiration of new ideas for shaping the bases of the new city as well as its historical character.

The international movement toward preserving the architectural heritage is now more urgent since the burst of modern needs combined with the erection of huge landmarks and structures within the cities has put the historical heritage in a shadowlike marginalized role which may cause them later to be dissolved within its contemporary surrounding environment, especially the vertical growth of this development, which destruct the visual context of the historical centers and put them in a situation to be considered as an obstacle for the development of the modern city.

One of the main reasons of the disturbance of the historical centers is the lack of the legislations for the protection of the architectural heritage as well as the weakness in the conducted comprehensive urban plans to successfully implement the conservation demands.

In this paper we are dealing with the historical centers recovery and protection within the contemporary environmental changes in some cities and highlighting some cases from Jordan and Italy to draw new methods in dealing with the disturbed and endangered historical centers by introducing new innovative scientific methodologies to revive the architectural heritage, simultaneously finding common characters between the old city and the new installations.

In Jordan, we have several cases regarding this issue such as Amman, Jerash, Irbid and Umm Qais as well as Matera in Italy. What is common about these cities that the architectural heritage faced genuine threats from the urban development. Therefore we tried to make a comparative analysis among these cases to find the best procedures that could be taken to save the threatened sites not only in those two countries but also for general international cases. In other words trying to rehabilitate these sites and reviving there characters within the new image of the modern cities.

1. Introduction

In all over the world, the advent of new transformational aspects in urban development was highly observed during the last decades of the 20th and 21st centuries due to the demographic growth and development in all of the socioeconomic aspects.

Cities are now growing more rapidly, and the urban sprawl attacks more agricultural and historic landscapes. Intensive modifications in land-use and in urban development was the alert for the preservation of the architectural heritage, which is now more urgent since the burst of modern needs combined with the erection of huge landmarks and structures within the cities has put the historical areas in a shadowlike role which may cause them later to be dissolved within its contemporary surrounding environment, especially the verticality expansion of cities, which destruct the visual context of the historical centers and put them in a situation to be considered as an obstacle for the development of the modern city.

Historic areas and buildings need to be re-engaged within the daily life of the local community, in which, many studies now is trying to create new standards of urban development in historical towns by respecting the architectural styles, character, and external aspects to create harmony between the old and the new. Therefore, we are trying to cover in this research some of the important aspects and issues for saving and improving the image of historic areas and buildings in this dynamic environment, in addition to presenting some cases from Jordan and Italy.

2. Historic towns

It is defined as a places of cultural significance represented as “groups of urban buildings as falling into three main categories - the towns which are no longer inhabited but which provide unchanged archaeological evidence of the past, historic towns which are still

inhabited (inhabited historic towns) and new towns of the twentieth century”(UNESCO February 1996: 8)¹.

In the other hand, the historic areas are the current setting for the existing cultural heritage which is formed originally within this setting and it is particularly a work of art or a building but also a site, may be defined on the basis of specific concepts related to its distinctive style, design, aesthetics and the whole setting. The combination of a cultural heritage components create the basis of a historic area yet define its main features and components as well as specify its significance in the past and strengthen its role and presentation within the current environment. However, regardless of the potentiality of this heritage it is not yet fully exploited as a part of the people's life, therefore the historic areas as a whole are badly presented today by several issues that have immerged since the advent of new technologies and the rapid urban sprawl within those areas.

In terms of the contemporary environment and its diverse effects in human life Jordan stands as a critical case of such topic since the various contemporary political, economical, social issues have a deep effect and a dangerous one in shaping the present and future of the historic areas.

3. Contemporary environment and the historic towns in Jordan

Over time, the historic areas in Jordan have been used in the past as attractive regions for the new comers and the emerging cultural groups who intentionally modified or even destroyed some parts of the historic areas, causing its potential unity to be diminished or lost, those effects of the first destructive changes have been increasing since those times until now. However the historic areas were, at different periods of time, become part of a

¹ Information Document Glossary of World Heritage Terms (June, 1996), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, World Heritage Committee Twentieth session, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico (2-7 December 1996).

new whole, but unfortunately each time the changes brought to those areas and the new environments, which have changed its image, were a destructive one.

Historic areas and their surroundings require particularly careful study and consideration since individual monuments and historic buildings are only part of the larger ensemble of the heritage resource. The UNESCO Recommendation concerning Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas, formulated in Nairobi in 1976², provides the following guideline:

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.

4. Assessment & Analysis of the Current Situation of Historic Towns

After examining the general issues and aspects affecting the historic towns, now we have to analyze them in terms of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats. Whereby, we could understand the current situation of historic areas and thus drawing the basis of effective solutions to hold the destruction and establishing the sustainability for them. However, this is not applicable without a sounding conservation plan.

4.1 Strengths

4.1.1 Inspiration of new ideas

² UNESCO Recommendation concerning Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas, formulated in Nairobi in 1976 (General Principles, 11, 2).

As has often been stated, architecture is an art and a language describing a particular culture. Culture, at the same time, is at the heart of the creative process, with cultural heritage as material witness to aspirations and achievements of past generations. The fields of such inspiration could be as follow:

- New adaptive styles
- New architectural elements
- Saving the cultural values
- Unifying the character of the city
- Integrity in the townscape

4.1.2 Socio-economic

The socioeconomic strength of historical towns is there deep roots in the past and there high respect among the people by which they think it is a part of their life and a part of their survival and the shape of their future. Historic sites has tremendous intangible set of values represented as cultural, spiritual, religious, aesthetic, etc values.

4.1.3 Cultural Identity

The formation of the cultural identity of any place is a process of the accumulation of relationships, interaction, emotional, spiritual...etc values, which create that sense of belongingness inside the human nature, thus form a cultural identity for the group of people who acquired this sense. However, during the span of time the cultural identity could suffer from several factors that cause it to be lost, one of which is the urban development and the socio-cultural changes in human life.

We should understand that maintaining the original memory and values of a specific place will enrich the cultural identity of its inhabitants. Urban culture is an outstanding creation passed down from generation to generation and provides important spiritual strength to

enhance the people's self-identity and cohesion. Therefore, maintaining the features of the city can well preserve its "soul". Conservation of historic areas is of high significance for preserving their spirit and character, as these are ultimately an expression of their collective memory as well as of cultural and social, material and immaterial values.

4.2 Opportunities

4.2.1 Economical development

Historic areas can play an active role in the economical development process of the country. However, it should be enrolled within this process in a sustainable development strategy parallel with a strong conservation plan for the city. Therefore, this requires new approaches to and methodologies for urban conservation and development in a territorial context for making use of the existing historic areas while preserving their cultural values. Sustainable development with the conservation process integrates heritage protection into policies and comprehensive planning programs at a national level. In order to facilitate this, a clear set of principles and guidelines is needed to provide urban planners, city managers, conservation professionals, investors, developers and inhabitants with directions and tools to preserve the historic areas, while meeting the needs of the economic and urban development.

4.2.2 Socioeconomic benefits

Conservation of the historic areas must become a leading principle of urban planning and development. Values must be clearly defined. A balanced improvement of living conditions in harmony with the conservation of the historic urban landscape should be aimed at. The exploitation of the cultural heritage products presented in the hand-made craftsmanship is also important for enhancing the socioeconomic benefits for the local community by creating a tourism product like the pottery, textiles, etc. Those products

are essential for preserving the soul of historic areas and maintain a cultural sense for them.

4.2.3 The new image of the modern cities

One of the most important values in historic areas is that it may hold a potential opportunity in shaping the image of the modern city by exploiting the historic areas as distinctive entities within urban centers. Moreover, this will increase the account of the protection of the cultural heritage and at the same time to advance urban development. The restructuring of urban functionalities is to ease the pressure on the old-city districts and to simultaneously upgrade the peripheral regions. Protection of the old part of the cities centers shall be integrated into urban construction planning.

4.3 Weaknesses

4.3.1 Legislation and regulations

The problem of legislation is a perennial issue, it is one of the main factors, which affect the preservation of the historic towns but unless if it was set in a proper way and applied effectively it will be harmful. Cities all over the world have lost large number of historical buildings and large parts of historic towns were dissolved as a result of legal issues, and the misunderstanding of legislation application on the field. Historic towns and buildings suffer from the absence of a mature legislation for the preservation of the cultural heritage in general.

Cultural heritage misconception "Obstacle for the development of the modern city"

There is a basic controversy between protection and development; the two sides of the contradiction interact within one space. In theoretical and practical explorations, issues like cultural heritage protection, urban economic development and life improvement for citizens are interwoven and conflicting, and a common understanding is yet to be

developed. In the other side, some of the materialistic approaches for urban centers could consider the historic areas as an obstacle for development of modern cities, in fact such thought is referred to the lack of awareness and the exploitive approach of land-use, in which, most of the historic areas and single heritage buildings are tempting targets for some urban planners and other stakeholders, especially, when they occupy strategic spaces within the cityscape.

4.3.2 Changes in the Historic Towns

It is quite notable that the rapid changes in Jordan cities gone too far in the disfiguration of the original historic fabric of the city including the changes in the unity of the cultural context, in which the entire city urban planning and design were based, most of these changes were destructive and rapidly changing the whole cityscape. However, these changes with their destructive attitudes draw the attention of its significance but most of the time as an economical rather than a cultural importance this has played in the long run, the city to be just old relics that squeezes some money for the country. In the other hand, the historic areas have been desecrated by the rapid urban development and the violent movements of the new buildings upon the historic centers, consequently, sever changes in the cultural, architectural, and aesthetic values were occurred on the long run.

4.4 Threats

4.4.1 Modern Urban development

The advent of new transformational aspects in urban development was highly observed during the last decades of the 20th and 21st centuries due to the demographic growth and development in all of the socioeconomic aspects. All of these aspects caused to marginalize the importance of the cultural heritage as a part of the identity of the local community. The strength of the historic areas in terms of cultural identity is gradually lost when people are isolated from them. Modern urban development is a key issue in

accelerating the loosing of identity, in a time where development means the expropriation and emptying the historic areas from their inhabitants. Most the time the historic towns are mostly threatened in the developing countries since the wrong urban development practices and the weak implementation of urban plans, in which they became disturbing for the agricultural landscapes as well as for the cultural one (e.g. Fig. 1)³.



Fig. 1: Areal view of Jerash city northern Jordan which can show clear urban movement toward the ancient city in the middle

4.4.2 Erection of huge landmarks and structures (High Rise)

The high rising buildings stand as a serious threat for the existence of the historic towns from different areas since it transforms the focal point of urban development to them causing the neglecting of the original urban generating core which is the historic centers, since they create a counter axial between the horizontal urban movement with the new vertical one this causes the rethinking process of which is the most important for the

³ Source: Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities 2005. www.locateme.jo, GIS system.

economy, the modern or the old especially if the modern one generates huge income to the city more than the historic towns, therefore, the new ways of dealing with the historic areas will be thinking of generating more income from them by an intensive wrong rehabilitation and adaptive reuse, but if it was no more potential then to be under the mercy of the municipal heavy vehicles to be transformed with the new high rise and vertical movement of the cityscape (e.g. fig. 2).



Fig. 2: A view from Irbid city northern Jordan, it shows the high-rise commercial building and the chaos it created in the urban cityscape.

4.4.3 Destruction of the visual context of the historic centers

The predominance of high-rises and their impact on the visual landscape, volumes and scales of buildings often do not match the historic pattern or the traditional typology and morphology. There is increasing and intensifying debate with regard to the rapidly changing face of historic cities in many parts of the world. Skyline transformation, public discussion is taking place about new urban and architectural developments and the extent

to which change is possible in order for cities to maintain their historic character and identity. In many cases and as part of a greater autonomy, cities are turning to high-profile contemporary urban and architectural interventions as they seek to emphasize their image and strengthen their competitive advantage in the globalized market place. If cities are to be prepared for the challenges of the future, the imperatives of preservation, transformation, modernization and ecologically sustainable development of the urban building stock must be carefully balanced.

4.4.4 Tourism Industry

The rich cultural heritage in Jordan and the important historic areas were the trigger for the advent of the tourism industry in the region since the people started the leisure travel as well as the development plans of government, whereby, the historic towns began to be transformed into an economic areas where monuments were rebuilt and reused in different incompatible ways to hold new lucrative activities for the country, all of these actions were having the major impact in accelerating the process of change on the historical fabric parallel with the time span and changes in lifestyles and values.

The general impact was mainly changed the value of the cultural heritage as a whole in our minds and therefore, in our life, in which we started to alter everything surround us and beyond. Moreover, the increasing demand and the increasing number of visitors to the region increase the demand and supply of constructing new tourism facilities and services, including large number of hotels, accommodations, resorts,etc, and therefor, causing more destruction to the historic areas.

5. Conservation for Historic Towns

5.1 Role of the Conservation Plan within the contemporary environments

Conservation role has to be shifted from the static role into an advanced role that could afford working within the rapid changes of the contemporary environment. In the

previous analysis of the problems within the contemporary environment we can conclude the role of conservation to be as monitoring, controlling, and management of the changes that may appear in the contemporary environment, which could affect the historical centers directly or indirectly.

One of the objects of urban conservation is to control the rate of change in the urban system. We therefore need to comprehend the life forces of that system and the potential causes of its decay. Conservation should concentrate in some main topics that is effective in dealing with the contemporary environment by activating and reviving the role of the historical areas as well as enforcing their sustainability.

5.2 Sustainable conservation

Conservation of the historic areas must be sustainable, in which the aim of conservation is to safeguard the quality and values of the resource, protect its material substance and ensure its integrity for future generations. In the other hand, the whole of historic areas should thus not be considered only in relation to an architectural framework; it should also include the human values related to its social and economic context, which are the basics of sustainability.

Sustainable conservation can be achieved by responsible monitoring, controlling and proactive management of use and change in the historic areas. The sustainable conservation approach in understanding the contemporary environment and its rapid change could be explained in the following points:

- Monitoring the tangible and intangible changes values of the historic areas.
- Controlling the damaging changes for the vulnerable areas or parts of the historic fabric

- Proactive management of future development and all of its effects on the total cultural resources.

5.3 *Common character*

The central challenge of contemporary architecture in the historic urban landscape is to respond to development dynamics in order to facilitate socioeconomic changes and growth on the one hand, while simultaneously respecting the inherited townscape and its landscape setting on the other.

Living historic cities, cities, require a policy of city planning and management that takes conservation as one key point for conservation. In this process, the historic city's authenticity and integrity, which are determined by various factors, must not be compromised. Therefore, we suggest the topic of extracting the common character in a defined historic area in order to invest it in the contemporary architecture.

The key point in the conservation of the historic areas and buildings is not only to preserve the architectural or the cultural heritage for the historic areas in Jordan, but also to create the harmony and sympathy within those areas in order to produce a unified whole of the modern and the old parts. In other words, improving the contemporary architecture within historic areas.

We should first conduct a regional survey, analysis and inspection of the organization and distribution of the new and old buildings. Inspections and surveys the town plan should relate to the potential in the existing building fabric (e.g. Fig. 3).

Detailed inspection of all surviving historic fabric will give planners a chance to plan realistically, using cultural resources to the best advantage. Therefore, the historic areas could be counted and identified, but what is needed here is to reshape the surrounding areas within the historic sites by making new standards for the new buildings or

installations in which the historical sites and buildings should be studied intensively in terms of their character, style, color, scale, and general features.



Fig. 3: photo for one of the famous cultural houses from Irbid⁴

Moreover, we should highlight some aspects for consideration in the new buildings defined by Bernard M. Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto, ICCROM (1993)⁵.

Including the following:

A **rhythm** that harmonizes with the urban rhythms and the morphological pattern of the surrounding fabric;

⁴ *Adaptive re-use of a private house into a cultural center done by the owners themselves, then the center was donated to the ministry of cultural to manage it in order to ensure the sustainability and continuity of the project on life by the permanent maintenance and conservation activity that the ministry can do while the ownership can not support.*

⁵ *Bernard M. Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto, ICCROM (1993) Management Guidelines for World Cultural Heritage Sites, Rome5.*

a **mass** in balance in its context not too large to spoil the intimate human scale of the historic center, and not based on an artificial combination of several lots to accommodate one large function;

a **street boundary line** following the line of the existing setbacks;

a **silhouette** respecting the traditional local character and silhouette;

materials that are traditional, or compatible with traditional materials;

windows similar in character and in window: wall ratio to typical buildings in the same area; and be of

high quality in construction and design, which might be achieved by careful proportions and — in appropriate cases by elevation relief or plastic treatment.

5.4 Contemporary Architecture

It is the primary objective of conservation planning to give strict priority to the conservation of existing historic fabric. The installation of new structures should not be an excuse for demolishing old ones. New construction may, however, be necessary to reestablish functional and architectural continuity, and in cases where empty lots might be hazardous to or further decay surrounding buildings.

Infill buildings are by definition contemporary constructions, and should therefore express the spirit of the present; at the same time, their design should also take into consideration the design of their historic context. The design of infill buildings should be based on a clear and systematic analysis of the historical morphology of the existing urban fabric and its functions. In principle, it should aim to reintegrate the lacunae in the urban fabric. Solutions to the design problem will vary according to the specific cultural values and traditions of the historic area, the type and condition of the existing structures, the degree of homogeneity of the place, etc. While it is impossible to provide precise general guidelines that apply to all infill the structures in all historic areas, specific guidelines can be established for particular cultural regions or sites.

5.6 Comprehensive urban plan and the implementations

The historic town should be counted within the large context of the modern urban planning for the city since it is the focal point of urban movement and future development. Ethic standards and a demand for high-quality design and execution, sensitive to the cultural- historic context, are prerequisites for the planning process.

Architecture of quality in historic areas should give proper consideration to the given scales, particularly with reference to building volumes and heights. It is important for new development to minimize direct impacts on important historic elements, such as significant structures or archaeological deposits.

Spatial structures in and around historic cities are to be enhanced through urban design and art as they are key elements of the renaissance of historic cities: urban design and art express their specific historical, social and economic components and transmit them to forthcoming generations. Preservation the sites also involve the design of public space: particular attention is to be paid to functionality, scale, materials, lighting, street furniture, advertising, and vegetation, to name a few. Urban planning infrastructure in heritage zones must include all measures to respect the historic fabric, building stock and context, and to mitigate the negative effects of traffic circulation and parking.

Townscapes, roofscapes, main visual axes, building plots and types are integral parts of the identity of the historic urban landscape. With regard to renewal, the historic roofscape and the original building plots serve as the basis for planning and design.

As a general principle, proportion and design must fit into the particular type of historic pattern and architecture, while removing the core of building stock worthy of protection (“façadism”) does not constitute an appropriate mean of structural intervention.

Special care should be taken to ensure that the development of contemporary architecture in World Heritage cities is complementary to values of the historic urban landscape and remains within limits in order not to compromise the historic nature of the city.

5.7 Conservation Plan

Conservation planning should provide a report on the historic areas. This report would include both archive research and a series of physical surveys. The results should be brought together and illustrated using maps of appropriate scales. The conservation plan and the norms for implementation will be based on this report, with due regard for the applicable rules and regulations, and should be duly worked out in consultation with property owners. A series of practical guidelines or manuals will be useful to provide property owners with information on technical questions.

The Conservation Plan should summarize the conclusions resulting from the analysis of historic areas. It will consist of a Map of the Master Conservation Plan and the Norms for Implementation. The plan will define the proposed conservation policy in each area concerned, and will indicate the parameters for treatment in particular buildings or areas. Clear indications should be made of areas for special protection, buffer zones, and the areas where guidelines should apply. In addition, the plan should identify areas where large buildings should not be erected, as well as the zones and the conditions for modern development (i.e., large or tall buildings, industrial sites, etc.) that will avoid damaging values in the historically valuable areas. The conservation master plan should be the fundamental reference for integrated conservation planning for both the city as a whole and the individual properties that belong to it.

5.8 Integrated conservation

A reconciling between conservation requirements and town planning objectives by considering the values and interests of the existing historic fabric as equal in status to other factors in general planning process. The basis for any planning and intervention in an existing fabric is the knowledge and understanding of resources, in terms of both its history and its present condition. A reconcile between conservation polices and development process through maintaining and enhancing the quality of historical buildings.

The starting point for conservation planning must be the identification, based on careful study and analysis, of the historic fabric of the town. On an urban scale, conservation involves not only cultural and historic values but also their inherent economic and social implications. Integrated conservation involves the conservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings and areas and the provision of appropriate public services that respect the criteria according to which these areas have been built. In order to be successful in the long term, this process should generally be done out in collaboration with the inhabitants, using planning legislation and norms as a tool.

The integrated conservation of such centers implies joining all political and technical forces and bringing together the skills of the archaeologist, ethnographer, sociologist and historian with architects and engineers in an interdisciplinary collaboration, under the leadership of a conscious conservation, and a qualified town planner.

5.9 Historical centers rehabilitation and protection

Historic cities and historic centers are confronted with intense pressures caused by requirements of urban mobility, housing, commerce, public services and other demands linked to development and modernization. In particular, urban development policies are to a large extent influenced by considerations of cost-effectiveness and the goal to attract international investors. For the conservation of urban heritage the challenge is to obtain the support of all actors, whether inhabitants, local authorities or the business sector; there is a need to establish cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural and cross-generational bridges if the legacy of our historic cities is to be handed down properly to future generations. In this regard, we have to focus on the ways of reviving those areas to be active in the urban planning and development in order to preserve of the urban heritage and present innovative old-new partnership by revitalization and rehabilitation of this part of the city. In the urban planning context, revitalization means the planning measures that are necessary to improve the social and economic activities of a historic area or a historic town, which has lost its original functional vitality and, as a consequence, historic

buildings and urban spaces have become redundant and dilapidated. The aim of revitalization should be an appropriate balance between conservation and development. The revitalization of a historic area which is economically run-down may require the rehabilitation of a large number of typical dwellings, as well as of obsolete buildings. In Jordan, most of the cases of historic areas suffer from Obsolescence and marginalized role.

Rehabilitation means the physical improvements that are necessary in order to provide an appropriate use to an empty or inappropriately utilized structure. Rehabilitation should always involve a use as close as possible to the original function so as to ensure a minimum intervention and minimum loss of cultural values; this also makes sense economically.

Rehabilitation and revitalization are important conservation interventions, which could pave the road for successful potential unity between the old and new urban areas. In addition, treatments aimed at the restoration of a heritage resource should refer to this new potential unity and should therefore be carried out within the framework defined by the new attitude dealing with the historical areas. The challenges of the conservation of historic urban environments, is to explore mutually satisfying solutions to conservation and development, and to reach a consensus among the different stakeholders.

5.10 Authenticity

Saving the historic urban centers and their functions is a key issue for the authenticity and the continuity of their cultural value as well as enhancing their role for enriching the new architecture while preventing damage and loss of the significant cultural heritage and exploiting the economic strength.

Authenticity is ascribed to a heritage resource that is materially original or genuine (as it was constructed) and as it has aged and changed in time. Authenticity can be threatened by the destruction of historical strata, the modern replacement of original elements (particularly if based on conjecture) and the addition of new elements. A heritage resource

that has passed the test of authenticity maintains its original integrity, as created or as it has evolved through its historical time line. According to the Operational Guidelines (juKA)⁶, four aspects of authenticity should be considered:

- Authenticity in design,
- Authenticity in materials,
- Authenticity in workmanship, or
- Authenticity in setting.

5.11 Conservation Management

Decision-making for interventions and contemporary architecture in a historic areas demand careful consideration, a culturally and historic critical approach, examining the spatial context between old and new, while respecting the authenticity and integrity of historic fabric and building stock. In Jordan, the cases are already desecrated and disturbed by the urban development and it needs more analysis and intensive study for the historic areas in order for a decision to be made in conservation.

A deep understanding of the history, culture and architecture of place, is crucial to the development of a conservation framework and single architectural commissions should be informed by urbanism and its tools for analyses of typologies and morphologies.

Taking into account the basic definition, urban planning, contemporary architecture and preservation of the historic areas should avoid all forms of pseudo-historical design, as they constitute a denial of both the historical and the contemporary alike. One historical view should not supplant others, as history must remain readable, while continuity of culture through quality interventions is the ultimate goal.

Creating an urban mix presents itself as an issue of crucial importance for the survival and development of the historic urban heritage. A mix of activities and uses, a social mix, but

⁶ Jukka Jokilehto, *Management Guidelines, ICCROM (1993)*

also a spatial and architectural mix, without causing destruction and fragmentation of the urban environment. Cities derive their meaning from the contiguity of different situations, but this juxtaposition of styles must be held together by a coherent frame.

5.12 Municipalities Role

As in Jordan the municipalities are responsible mainly in managing towns and cities, they should restrict land use transformations in historic neighborhoods. However, as part of the preservation strategy, municipalities should identify non-sensitive neighborhoods where land use would be demand- driven, so that activities that are restricted in the historic neighborhood can take place in “market-driven” neighborhoods. The usually high accessibility of historic centers by road and public transport generates the high land prices observed. Urban planners should try to deflect some of the pressure of the market by increasing the accessibility of less sensitive areas – possibly, but not necessarily, adjacent to the historic center – while maintaining high value- added economic activities in the historical center. Generally speaking, new services should not be introduced into a historic area without a clear understanding of its ability to absorb, use and maintain them (*e.g Fig. 4 & 5*). Present-day standards may not be compatible with the inhabitants’ way of life or the existing infrastructure (e.g., availability of water, electricity, and means of waste disposal).

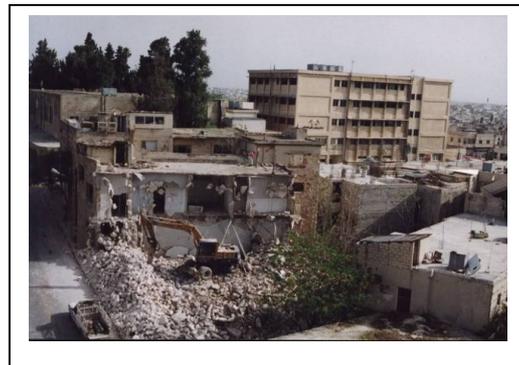


Fig. 4: A potential cultural building in Irbid city (Right)

Fig. 5: The same building which was sold and demolished for building a new one. (Left)

We can conclude some of the general topics regarding infrastructure and services needs within historic areas for the local communities and the tourists as well, which need more attention by the municipalities in Jordan:

- Traffic Circulation and Parking
- Water Supply and Sewage
- Solid Waste Collection and Disposal
- Municipal Facilities
- Municipal Finance and Management

6. Cases

After examining the historical towns and their contemporary environmental issues, we have to come for specific cases, which we have already studied before in our researches. We have four cases from Jordan and one from Italy. In Jordan, we have Amman, Jerash, Irbid and Umm Qais cities, as well as Matera in Italy. What is common about those cities that the architectural heritage faced genuine threats from the urban development and other related problems. Therefore, we tried to make a comparative analysis among these cases to find the best procedures that could be taken to save the threatened sites not only in those two countries but also for general international cases. In other words trying to discuss some important issues and solutions for conservation problems within the contemporary environment and trying to reengage them with the new image of the modern cities.

Jordan	Cases	Historical Town Character	Status	Contemporary Environment Problems	Dangerous Practices	Results
	Amman	Roman	Endangered	Demographic Growth Urban Sprawl High Rise Visual context disturbance Legislation and urban standards Infrastructure and traffic Congestion Air Pollution Tourism	Archaeological sites are used for seasonal huge events and festivals.	Shattered Remains with serious decay effects. Dissolved historic landscape Chaotic urban growth and unspecified new architectural styles. Destruction effects of tourism pressure
		Byzantine	critical			
		Islamic				
		Post Islamic	Vulnerable			
	Jerash	Roman		Demographic Growth Urban Sprawl Visual context disturbance Legislation and urban standards Infrastructure and traffic Congestion Tourism Lack of comprehensive conservation plan	Archaeological sites are used for seasonal huge events and festivals.	Bisected historic landscape. The eastern part of the city was completely dissolved under the modern one. Destruction effects of tourism pressure Chaotic urban growth and unspecified new architectural styles.
		Byzantine				
		Islamic				
		Post Islamic	Vulnerable			
	Irbid	Islamic		Demographic Growth Visual context disturbance Urban Sprawl Legislation and urban standards Infrastructure and traffic Congestion Air Pollution Tourism	Dangerous land-use and rebuilding the historic town. (Historic fabric replacement with modern architecture)	The historic town was totally dissolved Chaotic urban growth and unspecified new architectural styles.
Post Islamic		Vulnerable				

	Umm Qais	Roman		Lack of comprehensive conservation plan		
		Byzantine		Demographic Growth	Wrong rehabilitation practices represented the expropriation of a whole village without appropriate planning.	Destruction effects of tourism pressure Wrong land-uses Looting
		Islamic		Urban Sprawl		
		Post Islamic	Vulnerable	Legislation and urban standards Infrastructural and traffic Congestion Tourism Lack of comprehensive conservation plan		
Italy	Matera	Medieval		Demographic Growth Urban Sprawl Tourism	Wrong rehabilitation practices represented the expropriation of a whole village without appropriate planning.	

Conclusion

The historical towns is a fragile and non-renewable, irreplaceable resource. The aim of safeguarding the historical centers is to maintain their authenticity and the values for which they have been historical areas.

Therefore, any treatment should be based on the strategy of minimum intervention, and incorporate a program of routine and preventive maintenance. The degree of intervention and the techniques applied depend upon both the individual resource and the environmental context and climatic conditions to which it is exposed.

Historic towns are under intense pressure caused by the demands for mobility, housing, commerce, public services and other development- related activities. The need to obtain the support of all actors, be it inhabitants, local authorities or the business sector, compounds the challenge of urban heritage conservation.

The future of our historic towns 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.

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