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Dennis Rodwell*

Inhabited historic cities, urban heritage, and dissonances at the heart of the World Heritage system

1. Introduction

Heritage orthodoxy has long experienced difficulties in comprehending the complexity of the multifarious factors that coalesce and interact in the dynamics of inhabited historic cities. This, as the critical past-present resource for distinguishing the specific set of natural, manmade and human characteristics and qualities that determine the inherited and established *genius loci* of any given city, the baseline from which to guide its integrated protection and sustainable development for the future (Ripp, Rodwell 2016; Rodwell 2016; Ripp 2021).

Normative terms such as *urban heritage* need to be treated with caution, especially when applied simplistically to delimited physical characteristics and specified historical periods; likewise, academic and bureaucratic constructs such as *tangible* and *intangible* heritage, *heritage values*, *authenticity*, and *integrity*. Confusions and contradictions abound within heritage orthodoxy, major issues remain unresolved, and the deletions of *Dresden Elbe Valley* and *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* from the World Heritage List raise more questions than they resolve. The 50th anniversary of the 1972 UNESCO *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 1972a, the adopted French text; UNESCO 1972b, the adopted English text) signals an opportunity for the heritage community to take stock and assess re-calibrations.

Inhabited historic cities lie at the intersection of human geography, territorial and detailed urban planning, economic development, delimited heritage agendas, and global environmental and sustainability priorities (Rodwell 2007; Ripp, Rodwell 2015). A pre-occupation of the World Heritage Centre and its advisory bodies, urban heritage constitutes the major challenge that conservation theorists and practitioners face in this 21st century. Drawing on the author's decades-

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long practical, institutional, and academic engagement across a spectrum of inhabited historic cities, this paper focuses on crucial dissonances and offers a contribution to the debate.

2. Contexts in time: 1972 to 2022

The concept for the 1972 UNESCO *World Heritage Convention* matured through the 1960s from a convergence of interests. These included the commitment set out in the 1945 UNESCO Constitution to “assuring the conservation and protection of the world’s *inheritance* [this author’s emphasis] of books, works of art and monuments of history and science” (UNESCO 1945, Article 1, paragraph 2(c)); the foundation in 1948 of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN); and the establishment in 1965 of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

In the aftermath of the destruction of monuments and cities during the Second World War, notably but far from exclusively across Europe, the context in time recognised the cumulative effects of neglect and decay in tandem with peacetime threats posed by rapid social and economic changes coincidental with the ascendancy of new ideas in architecture and urban planning. Together with the advent of the environmental movement, key words at the time included *protection* and *conservation*. The concept of *sustainability* was subsumed for the natural world; popularisation of the term *sustainable development* awaited the *Brundtland Report* (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987).

In the ensuing half century, the 1972 starting points of neglect and decay have persisted, augmented by accelerating socio-economic changes and amplified by a resurgence of destructive armed conflicts including in the Balkans (1990s), the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (2000s and ongoing), and Ukraine (2022).

These challenges have been compounded by emergent and intensified phenomena, including: mass tourism; the commodification of heritage in tandem with the promotion and prioritisation of its *economic* value; the gentrification of historic neighbourhoods and associated socio-economic displacements; the primacy attached to *contemporary* interventions in the historic environment (CIAM 1933; ICOMOS 1964b; UNESCO 2005a; UNESCO 2011a); and the fashion for tall buildings allied to a disregard for their impact on land values and concomitant stimulation of destructive redevelopment pressures within and adjoining historic areas. These have been augmented by the actual and projected impacts of climate change and exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Whereas the ramifications of these multiple challenges are variable by location and time, the UNESCO brand has focused many of these in World Heritage

Sites. This imposes severe pressures on the duty of each State Party to the Convention to secure their protection, conservation, and transmission to future generations (UNESCO 1972b, Article 4).

3. The 1972 World Heritage Convention

The definition of cultural heritage in the UNESCO *World Heritage Convention* distinguishes three categories (UNESCO 1972b, Article 1):

monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

Subsuming urban heritage, inhabited historic towns and cities are conventionally taken to fall into the category of groups of buildings. Focused on designated *tangible* heritage assets, with limited conception of the multiple variables that are elemental to the protection and conservation of *living* – in the sense of functioning – heritage, the UNESCO *Operational Guidelines* consistently harbour narrow interpretations of the key words *authenticity* and *integrity*. Under the subcategory of “historic towns which are still inhabited”, the wording in the sequence of editions of the Operational Guidelines from January 1987 through July 2019 anticipated that the very fact of inhabitation and continuity of development “under the influence of socio-economic and cultural change, [...] renders the assessment of their *authenticity* [this author’s emphasis] more difficult and any conservation policy more problematical” (UNESCO 1987, paragraph 24(ii); UNESCO 2019, Annex 3, paragraph 14(ii); Rodwell 2016). This rudimentary understanding, which dominated mainstream heritage discourse through the late 20th century and is largely ongoing, underscores the dilemma confronting the domain of urban heritage today. In heritage orthodoxy, the concept of *change* is taxing, to hardliners, anathema.

The wording in the above cited 1987 through 2019 editions of the UNESCO *Operational Guidelines* was not deleted until the July 2021 revision (UNESCO 2021a). The failure promptly to advance substitute provisions, ones that recognise and promote the essence of living urban heritage, including embracing the expanded understanding of *authenticity* elaborated in the 1994 *Nara Document on Authenticity* (ICOMOS 1994), incorporated into the *Operational Guidelines* since the February 2005 revision (UNESCO 2005b, Paragraphs 79-86, Annex 4), impedes cognisance to inform the sustainable management of urban heritage. Human and urban geography are effectively not positioned either in the *World Heritage Convention* or the *Operational Guidelines* (Ripp, Rodwell 2015).

The widespread understanding of the 1972 UNESCO *World Heritage Convention* is that it is focused on World Heritage Sites and the World Heritage List. This misinterpretation is reinforced in all editions of the *Operational Guidelines* from the first, dated June 1977, to the most recent, July 2021, directed as they are on the parameters and processes for inscription, the monitoring and periodic reporting of properties in the List, and celebration of the World Heritage brand. Whereas the Preamble to the 1972 Convention (UNESCO 1972b, Preamble), echoing the 1945 UNESCO Constitution (UNESCO 1945), addresses “assuring the conservation and protection of the world’s *heritage* [this author’s emphasis]” as well as those “parts of the cultural and natural heritage [that] are of outstanding interest”, the intervening decades-long focus on the World Heritage List has overshadowed each State Party’s commitment to the collectivity of the cultural and natural heritage on its territory.

This over-arching commitment is encapsulated in Article 5 of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972b, Article 5), which opens:

To ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and *presentation* [this author’s emphasis] of the cultural and natural heritage situated on its territory, each State Party to this Convention shall endeavour, in so far as possible, and as appropriate for each country:

(a) to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community and to integrate the protection of that heritage into comprehensive planning programmes.

This commitment is reinforced in the contemporaneous 1972 UNESCO *Recommendation Concerning the Protection, at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO 1972c (adopted French text); UNESCO 1972d (adopted English text)) – the largely overlooked document in the UNESCO archive that underpins the 1972 Convention.

The 1972 Recommendation includes the following under *General Principles*:

5. The cultural or natural heritage should be considered in its entirety as a homogeneous whole, comprising not only works of great intrinsic value, but also more modest items that have, with the passage of time, acquired cultural or natural value.
6. None of these works and none of these items should, as a general rule, be dissociated from its environment.
7. As the ultimate purpose of protecting, conserving and presenting the cultural and natural heritage is the development of man, Member States should, as far as possible, direct their work in this field in such a way that the cultural and natural heritage may no longer be regarded as a check on national development but as a determining factor in such development.

Focus on the World Heritage List has assisted the disproportionate promotion of a highly selected group of heritage properties, prejudiced the advancement of comprehensive global heritage conservation and sustainable management, and contributed to the increasing politicisation of outcomes at successive sessions of the World Heritage Committee. In their selective approach to the provisions and commitments in the Convention, from inclusive to exclusive, the sequence of editions of the UNESCO *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, 1977 to 2021, is effectively mistitled.

The potency of the World Heritage brand, whether animated by economic or other dominating interests, is such that conservation has taken a back seat, today's foremost agendas of sustainable development and climate change are not subsumed, and efforts to address the manifest disconnections within academia and allied interests are less than convincing (Larsen, Logan 2018; Rodwell 2021a; ICOMOS 2021).

In this, is it important to be reminded of the final invocation in the Preamble to the *World Heritage Convention* (UNESCO 1972b, Preamble):

Considering that it is essential for this purpose to adopt new provisions in the form of a convention establishing an effective system of collective protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods.

Focus on the List has afforded weighting to the “5 Strategic Objectives of the Convention – known as the 5Cs”, namely *credibility, conservation, capacity building, communication, and communities* (UNESCO nda). In this author's view, equal (at least) priority should be assigned to the Critical “3Cs” of Effective Protection, *certainty, clarity, and consistency* (Gaillard, Rodwell 2015, pp. 17, 38).

The 1972 Convention cannot, in practical terms, be changed: to do so would require the individual agreement of all signatory parties (Rodwell 2012a, p. 77). The ongoing sequence of editions to the UNESCO *Operational Guidelines*, on the other hand, offers unbounded opportunities for revision and updating.

An important starting point is to clarify language discrepancies between the adopted French (UNESCO 1972a) and English (UNESCO 1972b) texts of the World Heritage Convention. Of these (as below), *mise en valeur* (French) to *presentation* (English), and *biens* (French) to *properties* (English), are perhaps the most immediate. The first intending *(re)valorisation* rather than *interpretation* (Rodwell 2007, p. 66; Rodwell 2012a, p. 77). The second, conveying an inclusive sense of *good* and *value*, and not limited to possessions.

4. Inhabited historic cities and urban heritage

4.1. Heritage orthodoxy

The orthodox cultural heritage framework is predicated on the “conservation [and] presentation” (UNESCO 1972b, Article 4) or “*conservation [et] mise en valeur*” (UNESCO 1972a, Article 4) of selected heritage assets. These are termed *biens* in the adopted French text of the 1972 UNESCO Convention (UNESCO 1972a); and *properties* in the adopted English text (UNESCO 1972b), a term associated with ownership that implicitly excludes renters and innumerable indigenous and established communities. The essence of heritage orthodoxy, the fundament of mainstream *doctrinal* documents, policies, and guidance, was formulated in the third quarter of the 20th century. Later, the 1994 *Nara Document* anticipated departure from the Anglocentric fabric-focused baseline (ICOMOS 1994); and the 2004 INTACH *Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage Sites in India* (INTACH 2004) attested to the potential for breaking out from what Marc Askew has described as UNESCO’s “fetishism for making lists” (Askew 2010, p. 32). The 2003 UNESCO *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003) has spawned consuming academic and administrative debate directed at particularising the distinction and responsibilities between *tangible* and *intangible* heritage, notwithstanding the recognition in the Preamble to the 2003 Convention of the “deep-seated interdependence between the intangible cultural heritage and the tangible cultural and natural heritage” (UNESCO 2003, Preamble), an interdependence that is the quintessence of an integrated approach to urban heritage.

Cultural heritage orthodoxy was founded on linear processes for the protection and conservation of closely defined heritage assets, not circular systems of dynamic continuity based on a broad understanding that manifold processes of continuous change are indissociable from the reality of living heritage in inhabit-



Fig. 1. Freiburg im Breisgau, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, traditional market day in the Münsterplatz in the heart of a historic city centre reconstructed following the Second World War. The interdependence of *tangible* and *intangible* heritage at an all-encompassing, everyday level is the quintessence of *living heritage* and an integrated approach to the management of an inhabited historic city, sustaining its over-arching *authenticity* and *integrity*. Photographed 2014 (© Dennis Rodwell).

ed historic cities, processes that neither exempt nor exclude designated *tangible* or *intangible* heritage assets.

Further, its context in time pre-dated today's global agendas of sustainable development and climate change.

4.2. *Inhabited historic cities*

The identity of any inhabited historic city is a conjunction of physical place, human space, and time. Its authenticity is a compound of manmade and associated natural elements coupled with a complex mix of human activities (Rodwell 2012b). Just as natural heritage sites cannot survive as ecosystems without wildlife, historic cities are contingent on human functionality. An integrated approach to urban heritage is not simply a question of the conservation of designated buildings, ensembles and public spaces together with the highlighting and commodification of selected traditions and practices. It subsumes an understanding of the dynamics of everyday life and timelines of socio-cultural continuity in the communities that host and animate a quantum and diversity that extends far beyond prescribed definitions and compartmentalisation into tangible and intangible cultural heritage (fig. 1).

Comprehended generically as embracing a legion of globally diverse living historic cities and urban districts in which citizens have and continue to conduct their daily lives in complex and dynamic relationships with a heterogeneity of physical environments, urban heritage is a highly complex field that fits uneasily into heritage orthodoxy. The human factor – the synergy between the miscellany of human activities and the myriad of physical places – is missing, as is the inclusive vision to position urban heritage mainstream in the geography of urban planning (Ripp, Rodwell 2015). *Inter alia*, anthropologists and sociologists are not incorporated into the orthodox heritage discourse. The primary reason for the existence of cities as places of everyday habitation, functionality and interchange is omitted, supplanted by academic constructs including the Operational Guidelines' key words of *authenticity* and *integrity*, contributing to the widespread *reductio ad absurdum* that urban heritage is object- and/or event-focused, and justifies its survival primarily as raw material for high-end urban regeneration – including the displacement of established communities and gentrification – and tourism.

4.3. *Urban heritage and heritage orthodoxy*

The principal root of mainstream approaches to urban heritage and practices in urban conservation lies with urban history and architectural heritage, with starting points that include the historical evolution of urban layouts and forms together with architectural styles, building materials and techniques (Jokilehto 2004; Glendinning 2013). A domain dominated by architectural historians and their peers, urban conservation was instituted as a largely ring-fenced discipline, detached from human geography and the mainstream of urban planning (Ripp, Rodwell 2015; Paccione 2009). The perception and reality remain, in various combinations both within the conservation community and viewed from the outside, that urban heritage is a specialist sphere, peripheral to the mainstream of urban planning policy, one whose limited focus on the historical, aesthetic and material aspects of heritage constitutes an impediment and resistance to change.

Previously regarded as concerned only with safeguarding selected physical components of the built environment for attributed cultural values, the field of urban heritage today aspires to address historic cities more holistically as inhabited places in the absence of essential collaborative working relationships with key supporting disciplines, ones that have evolved discrete conceptualisations and terminologies and have hitherto been largely assumed as adversaries. The discordances can have a cataclysmic impact on the integrity of the UNESCO World Heritage system.

The ancillary root of urban heritage, one that has suffered a fraught relationship with heritage orthodoxy, is *urban landscape*, a concept that enjoys a long



Fig. 2. Paris, France, Place des Vosges, illustrating side-by-side restored and unrestored houses. Photographed 1971 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 3. Paris, France, the unrestored eighteenth-century Hotel Vibraye in the Marais quarter, at the corner of rue Vieille du Temple and rue du Roi de Sicile. Photographed 1971 (© Dennis Rodwell).

history in the mainstream field of urban planning, and coincidentally subsumes an aesthetic and morphological approach to the management of change in historic cities that should confirm it as a firm ally.

4.4 Timeline of orthodox urban heritage practices

France has long been credited with initiating the first major projects of urban conservation in Europe. The 1962 *Loi Malraux* – named after André Malraux, France's first Minister of Culture – established the legal and financial basis for the programme of proactive *secteurs sauvegardés* (protected areas) in historic cities across France (Rodwell 1972, Sections B, C and D).

One of the first *plans de sauvegarde et mise en valeur* (conservation and valorisation plans) to be prepared was for the Marais quarter of Paris, until the early-18th century the fashionable aristocratic quarter of the French capital, later becoming an artisan quarter and falling into serious disrepair. The first *plan de sauvegarde*, guided by the Plan Turgot of 1739, aimed at the restoration of the



Fig. 4. Paris, France, the restored eighteenth-century Hotel Vibraye in the Marais quarter, converted into apartments. Photographed 1990 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 5. Chartres, Eure-et-Loir, France, a city that followed a re-appraised model for the implementation of the 1962 *Loi Malraux* focused on continuity within the existing community, Photographed 1971 (© Dennis Rodwell).

entire quarter to its earlier state: the opening-up of the gardens and spaces between buildings and within courtyards that had been built over; and the restoration of all the historic buildings externally and internally (Rodwell 2007, pp. 15-18). This *plan de sauvegarde* anticipated that “the *only* [this author’s emphasis] solution for the revitalization of the 300 large residences [*hotels particuliers*] in the Marais is to use them for embassies or head offices of large companies” (Sorlin 1972, p. 91); museums and governmental offices were also considered compatible uses (figs 2-4). By the mid-1970s, the initially inflexible architectural, historical and museological approach to the Marais softened: there were not 300 end-users for immaculately restored *hôtels*; other options needed to be explored. The initial plan projected a considerable exodus from the Marais quarter to the suburbs. The politics had to be rethought at a national level (fig. 5).

The initial programme for the 126-hectare Marais quarter of Paris served as an inspiration at the 1970 conference *The Conservation of Georgian Edinburgh* (Matthew 1972). The generic approach of the time was summed up in the editor’s

introduction to a publication celebrating European Architectural Heritage Year 1975 (Cantacuzino 1975, pp. 3-4):

... 'the starting point in a historic town' [...] 'must be its historic quality and visual character' – and not [...] *secondary* [this author's italics] social, economic or even ecological arguments.

Following the initial museological phase in the 1960s and early-1970s, the change of direction in the Marais quarter was significant. With its physical environment no longer destined to be fossilised in a time warp, and buttressed with detailed planning regulations, the Marais rapidly became one of the liveliest mixed-use quarters of the city (Rodwell 2007, pp. 128-131). Recalling the earlier inspiration for the 1970 conference in Edinburgh, Paris was then revisited for the 1990 conference *Civilising the City* (Rodwell 1990).

Experiences and practices in urban conservation have dramatically expanded geographically as well as culturally since the 1960s and 1970s. Across Europe, two examples can be cited:

First, the *living heritage* interpretation of *authenticity* and *integrity* coupled with *harmonious co-existence* between the revitalised and re-animated historic quarters and expanding modern parts of cities that was articulated and implemented in the German *länder* of Bavaria, the *Bamberg Model* (Hans-Schuller, Dengler-Schreiber 2010), and promoted with singular success also in Regensburg (Ripp, Rodwell 2016; Rodwell 2018, pp. 192–193) (fig. 6).

Second, the revitalisation programme prioritising the existing community in the historic centre of Sibiu, Transylvania, Romania (Rodwell, 2010) (fig. 7).

For Venice, by contrast, the media and heritage community's focus of attention has long been drawn to the environmental and related impacts of large cruise ships, the most visible sign of the city's transformation from an inhabited city into a mass tourism destination (fig. 8). Not emphasised, however, is the city's population drop from over 130,000 in the early 1970s to well under than 60,000 today, now mostly found in peripheral areas of the city. The procedures for World Heritage inscription and monitoring neither anticipate nor include provisions to over-



Fig. 6. Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany. Regensburg followed the *Bamberg Model* for the conservation and revitalisation of the historic city centre complementing developments in the expanding modern parts of the city. Photograph 2014 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 7. Sibiu, Transylvania, Romania, Piața Mică, in the heart of a historic city conserved and revitalised in accordance a programme prioritising continuity in the existing community (Rodwell 2010). Photographed 2007 (© Dennis Rodwell).

see major changes of functionality, including the supplanting of the core original function of cities as places of inhabitation. With a near tourist mono-culture, the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Venice could not have been more severe. As Alexander Youngson wrote in 1990: "Tourism is a great modern industry. ... We had lots of those during the Industrial Revolution and we have been cleaning up the mess ever since" (Youngson 1990, pp. 84-85).

The mainstream European-derived approach to urban heritage is manifest in the 2015 definition formulated in the context of India: "[Urban Heritage] refers to the built legacy of the city's history and includes protected and unprotected monuments, individual and groups of buildings of archaeological, architectural, historic and cultural significance, public spaces including landscapes, parks and gardens, street layout defining identifiable neighbourhoods or precincts, which together identify the visual, spatial and cultural character of the city" (National Institute of Urban Affairs 2015, p. 68). Parallel expression infused the manifesto of the immediate Past-President of the ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH) (Echter 2020).

To date, with limited exceptions, there are serious disconnections between the concepts and terminologies employed by the focused heritage community and the mainstream fields of human and urban geography.



Fig. 8. Venice, Italy, a city that has become a magnet for mass tourism, shedding well over a half of its residential population in the last half century. Photographed 2015 (© Dennis Rodwell).

5. The inter-change between languages: translations and interpretations

The inter-change between languages is not a simple matter of using dictionaries and vocabularies to ostensibly match words and phrases. At the level required for accurate international dialogue it necessitates an often-profound knowledge and understanding of the distinctive cultural as well as linguistic contexts, including the multiplicity of meanings that are attributable within any one language to seemingly simple words which do not match apparent equivalents in another.

Discordances offer a minefield of opportunities for disagreements and misunderstandings at scales from the interpersonal to armed conflict. Reciprocity requires great care, not least in the field of cultural and natural heritage and the pivotal roles that UNESCO and its advisory bodies play under the terms of international conventions and recommendations, charters and declarations, memoranda and resolutions, and the multitude of supporting agendas, initiatives, and guidance. Discordances can fall into several categories, including mis-translations, mis-interpretations, re-interpretations, and wishful thinking. Fundamental questions arise, notably:

- Where official documents have ostensibly parallel texts and there is manifest discordance, which version takes precedence and who decides?

- Is it legitimate to switch linguistic allegiance part way through a formal discourse, subvert the originally intended sense, and irrevocably validate elemental errors?

As this article relates, the words *contemporary* and *down* have furnished important examples where discordances have fuelled conflicts.

6. The 1964 *Charte de Venise* and *Venice Charter*: Opposing philosophies

6.1. The 1964 Venice Congress, guiding philosophy, two Charters

International conservation manifestos, charters and associated documents are a minefield of inconsistencies and contradictions. The 1964 Venice Charter, the doctrinal cornerstone of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and cardinal point of reference for the 194 States Parties to the *World Heritage Convention*, encapsulates this minefield in its two baseline texts. They constitute arguably the most damaging challenge to the integrity of the World Heritage system, from the inception of the 1972 Convention onwards.

To understand the rationale for the unresolved tensions that have animated debates for close on six decades, it is necessary to revert in time to 1964 and examine the sources of the two baseline language texts: the definitive French text, the *Charte de Venise* (ICOMOS 1964a), formulated by attendees at the Second International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments held in Venice from 25 to 31 May 1964 (the 1964 Venice Congress) and published in August 1964 (Pane 2010); and the subsequent interpretation in English, the *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS 1964b), prepared in December 1964 by the Hugh Fitzroy, Earl of Euston, later 11th Duke of Grafton, a key office-holder of the United Kingdom Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (the SPAB)¹, who was not party to the Congress, whose text was not authorised by the attendees, but which swiftly emerged as the dominant text in international philosophy and practice. Professedly corresponding, the variations between the two texts are such that they harbour discrete and, in key particulars, antithetical principles.

The concept for the Charter was initiated and promoted by Piero Gazzola (superintendent of architectural heritage in Verona; president of ICOMOS 1965–1975) and Roberto Pane (architectural historian and professor in Naples) (Pane 2010). The *Charte de Venise* was drafted during the days of the Venice Congress by a commission of 23 experts chaired by Gazzola, with Raymond Lemaire (first secretary-general of ICOMOS, 1965–1975; second president, 1975–1981) as rap-

¹ Euston/Grafton's roles with the SPAB included Deputy Chairman, 1949–1951, Chairman, 1952–1988, and President 1989–2011. Additionally, he was a member of the Historic Buildings Council for England, 1953–1984.

porteur, with responsibility for the formulation and coherence of the French text. The conservation and restoration philosophy that informed the Congress and the *Charte de Venise* was essentially Eurocentric, a coincidence of Continental European theory and practice, principally Italian and French.

Piero Gazzola and Roberto Pane were pupils of Gustavo Giovannoni (1873–1947), one of the most influential figures in the field of architectural and urban conservation in Italy through the first half of the 20th century (Zucconi 2014). Giovannoni's integrated theoretical approach and practical programme for architecture, urbanism and conservation was based on the premise that the built heritage of cities is less a collection of individual monuments documenting the past than a comprehensive cultural resource at all scales, to be respected on its own terms and integrated harmoniously with present-day cities and landscapes without sacrificing the character and significance of their historic centres (Semmes 2017). Giovannoni is credited with coining the term *urban heritage* and the concept of *living conservation* in the sense of functioning (Giovannoni 1998; Rodwell 2010, pp. 121–123).

At the architectural scale, embracing the legacy of Camillo Boito (1835–1914, architect, engineer, art critic and historian), Giovannoni sought to define and implement an intermediate position between the opposing *stylistic restoration* (George Gilbert Scott in England, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc in France) and *anti-restoration* (John Ruskin and William Morris in England) schools of thought of the second half of the 19th century (Rodwell 2007, p. 4), promoting new designs that respect stylistic and constructional traditions without literal replication. Modesty, context and setting are key themes (Semmes 2017). A 2019 Getty Conservation Institute (Getty CI) publication characterises “the Italian mode of conservation [as] premised on sensitivity to heritage values, imbued with strong design and artistic sensibilities, and committed to applying scientific methods to conservation” (Avrami *et al.* 2019, p. 16).

Giovannoni's over-arching vision is set out in *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova* (Old cities and new buildings) (Giovanni 1931), the seminal work in Italy for conservation planning and policies for historic towns (also: Giovannoni 1945; Giovannoni 1946). Giovannoni's multi-disciplinary perspective has close parallels to Patrick Geddes' evolutionary, sociological and conservative surgery approach to the study and practice of town planning (Geddes 1968; Tyrwhitt 1947; Rodwell 2018, pp. 181–183).

Andrea Pane (professor at the Department of Architecture, University of Naples Federico II, Italy) has researched the archives of Piero Gazzola and Roberto Pane in Italy. Claudine Houbart (professor at the Faculty of Architecture, University of Liège, Belgium) has researched the archives of Raymond Lemaire, positioning the text of the 1964 *Charte de Venise* in the context of Raymond Lemaire's background, training, and attachment to the theories and practices of the French and Italian traditions. In collaboration with Andrea Pane, she has ad-

ditionally accessed the archives of Piero Gazzola and Roberto Pane. Houbart emphasises the consistency of approach between Lemaire's vision, his contribution to teaching and missions for UNESCO, his determining role in the conversion and restoration projects with which he is mostly closely associated – notably the *Grand Béguinage de Louvain* (Houbart 2018), undertaken concurrently with the drafting of the *Charte de Venise* – together with his contribution to the 1994 *Nara Document on Authenticity* (ICOMOS 1994).

Lemaire's philosophy is encapsulated in *La mémoire et la continuité* (Memory and continuity) (Lemaire 1976), which insists on the "qualities of respect for the old work and modesty in the design of the new work, that value is found in the truthfulness of the witness it bears to the craft of its *own* time [this author's emphasis; *not* the *present* time], that pride makes a poor counsellor, and that the essential thing is to incorporate modestly into the global values of the architectural and urban fabric" (translation edited from the original French text).

The foundation of ICOMOS in 1965 under the aegis of UNESCO was a direct consequence of the 1964 Venice Congress.

6.2. Opposing philosophies

In 2018, in the framework of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, ICOMOS France convened the partially bilingual workshop *Retour à l'esprit de la Charte de Venise / Back to the spirit of the Venice Charter* (ICOMOS France 2018a; ICOMOS France 2018b). The reflection addressed three broad themes: the historical development of the Charter; its linguistic development; and the development of practices in Europe.

Andrea Pane and Claudine Houbart led on the historical development. Anne Magnant (former Vice-President of ICOMOS France) and Bénédicte Selfslagh (President of ICOMOS Belgium) led on the linguistic development. Their summary opens (in English, ICOMOS France 2018c; also, ICOMOS France 2018d):

The Venice Charter was drafted in French; the English translation was undertaken a few months later by Lord Euston, who was not a member of the drafting committee. It has not been subject to a careful re-reading by the commission, nor to any official approval. There are important differences, sometimes substantive, between the two texts. French words and sentences fragments that were not included in the English version, and the meaning of some translated sentences is distant from that of the original text. *It is hard to believe that these differences are fortuitous* [this author's emphasis].

And continues:

The French and English versions take a different approach to heritage from a political, philosophical and even a spiritual viewpoint.

The contradictory philosophies are easy to explain. The *Charte de Venise* derives from the Eurocentric Italian and French philosophy that accorded with the attendees at the 1964 Venice Congress. The *Venice Charter*, from the Anglocentric philosophy that inspired the foundation of the SPAB and its 1877 Manifesto (SPAB 1877; Rodwell 2007, p. 4). The two 1964 texts reflect the resumption of a controversy that was ignited a century earlier and reflect the strong SPAB-focused bias towards materiality, distinction and contrast.

6.3. Discordances between the Charte de Venise and the Venice Charter

Discordances between the two texts that are most pertinent to this article may be summarised as follows:

6.3.1. Preamble: Spiritual vs material

The first paragraph of the Preamble to the *Charte de Venise* opens:

Chargées d'un message spirituel du passé, les oeuvres monumentales des peuples demeurent dans la vie présente le témoignage vivant de leurs traditions séculaires.

The same paragraph in the *Venice Charter* opens:

Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses of their age-old traditions.

The key word *spiritual* is missing from the *Venice Charter*, reinforcing the Anglocentric preoccupation with original fabric over other attributes. This was only addressed 30 years later in the 1994 *Nara Document on Authenticity* (Nara 1994), and first incorporated into the UNESCO Operational Guidelines in 2005 (UNESCO 2005b, Paragraphs 79-86, Annex 4).

6.3.2 Article 9: Contemporary is prescribed ?

Anglocentric heritage orthodoxy insists that Article 9 of the *Venice Charter* stipulates that all present-day interventions in the historic environment, whether to individual buildings or urban areas, must be *contemporary* in the sense of con-

forming to modern ideas in style and fashion. This prescription is applied to World Heritage Sites and, by extension, to historic buildings and urban areas at all levels and scales. The *Charte de Venise*, on the other hand, is less all-encompassing and anticipates the opposite.

Under the heading *Restauration*, the *Charte de Venise* reads:

La restauration est une opération qui doit garder un caractère exceptionnel. Elle a pour but de conserver et de révéler les valeurs esthétiques et historiques du monument et se fonde sur le respect de la substance ancienne et de documents authentiques. Elle s'arrête là où commence l'hypothèse, sur le plan des reconstitutions conjecturales, tout travail de complément reconnu indispensable pour raisons esthétiques ou techniques relève de la composition architecturale et portera la marque de notre temps. La restauration sera toujours précédée et accompagnée d'une étude archéologique et historique du monument.

Under the heading *Restoration*, the *Venice Charter* reads:

The process of restoration is a highly specialized operation. Its aim is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historic value of the monument and is based on respect for original material and authentic documents. It must stop at the point where conjecture begins, and in this case moreover any extra work which is indispensable must be distinct from the architectural composition and must bear a contemporary stamp. The restoration in any case must be preceded and followed by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

Linguist colleagues have corroborated the following as an accurate translation of the text of Article 9 of the *Charte de Venise* formulated at the 1964 Venice Congress:

Restoration is a process that must retain an exceptional character. Its goal is to preserve and reveal the aesthetic and historical values of the monument and is based on the respect of the ancient substance and of authentic documents. It ends where the hypothesis begins. Concerning conjectural reconstitutions, any complementary work recognized as indispensable for aesthetic or technical reasons emanates from the architectural composition and will bear the mark of our time. Restoration is always preceded and accompanied by an archaeological and historical study of the monument.

As can be seen, “emanates from the architectural composition” is distant from “must be distinct from the architectural composition”. The one projects har-

mony; the other, disharmony; “It is hard to believe that these differences are fortuitous” (ICOMOS France 2018c).

In this, it is important to be reminded of the dictionary definitions of *contemporary*: “living or occurring in the same period”; “existing or occurring at the present time”; “conforming to modern ideas in style, fashion, etc.”; “having approximately the same age as one another”; “a person living at the same time or of approximately the same age as another”; and “something that is contemporary” [together with/relative in time] (Collins 1985, p. 241). Lemaire, in the passage quoted above from *La mémoire et la continuité* (Lemaire 1976), is implying the first.

The appropriation of *contemporary* by the modernist faction of architectural training and practice to the third dictionary definition above, confirms modernism’s unilateral claims to moral ascendancy (Le Corbusier 1957); in the process, favouring sectoral interests anti-pathetic to sustaining the *authenticity* and *integrity* of historic cities (table 1).

As John Betjeman wrote in 1933 (Betjeman 1933).

“Every style of Architecture lies open to our choice, and there is no *prima facie* reason why one should be preferred to another.”

To a bibliophile – in contrast to the modernism’s appropriation – a *contemporary* binding is of the same date as the book it covers, corresponding again with Lemaire.

The insistence on *contemporary* in the documents summarised in Table 1 conflicts with the 2005 UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* (UNESCO 2005c). Furthermore, it does not accord with the main thrust of ICOMOS documents (Ripp, Rodwell 2015, Appendix), including the 2011 ICOMOS *Valletta Principles* (ICOMOS 2011) and the 2014 ICOMOS *Florence Declaration on Heritage and Landscape as Human Values*, which insists on the recognition of the human values of cultural heritage as well as safeguarding and encouraging cultural diversity (ICOMOS 2014).

6.3.3. Article 12: Harmonious integration is prescribed ?

The French and English texts coincide:

Replacements of missing parts must integrate harmoniously with the whole, but at the same time must be distinguishable from the original so that restoration does not falsify the artistic or historic evidence.

This accords with the sense of Article 9 in the *Charte de Venise*, but not with the sense of Article 9 in the *Venice Charter*, which anticipates contradiction and disharmony.

Year	Source	Document
1877	SPAB	<i>Manifesto of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings</i> (SPAB 1877). Sets out the SPAB's hard-line anti-restoration philosophy.
1933	CIAM	<i>Charte d'Athènes (Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne)</i> (CIAM 1933). Recognises the protection of "fine architecture" (paragraph 65). States: "The re-use of past styles of building for new structures in historic areas under the pretext of aesthetics has disastrous consequences. The continuance or the introduction of such habits in any form should not be tolerated" (paragraph 70).
1964	ICOMOS	<i>International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter)</i> (ICOMOS 1964b: the unapproved English text). See 6.3.
2004	ICOMOS	<i>Pécs Declaration on the Venice Charter</i> (ICOMOS 2004a). (Re)Asserted the <i>Venice Charter</i> (not the <i>Charte de Venise</i>) as the baseline document of international conservation,
2005	UNESCO	<i>Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture – Managing the Historic Urban Landscape</i> (Vienna Memorandum) (UNESCO 2005a). Reinforced the CIAM 1933 insistence on <i>contemporary</i> as the only valid approach to interventions: "... urban planning, contemporary architecture and preservation of the historic urban landscape 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" (Article 21).
2011	UNESCO	<i>Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</i> (UNESCO 2011a). Echoes the insistence in the 2005 <i>Vienna Memorandum</i> .

Table 1. Summary timeline of the insistence on *contemporary*.

6.3.4. Article 15: Reconstruction is proscribed ?

At Articles 15 on both language texts – under the heading *Fouilles* in the *Charte de Venise*, and *Excavations* in the *Venice Charter* – reconstruction is *only* ruled out in the context of excavations and ruins, *not* in situations of natural and accidental disasters, armed conflict and wars. Any misunderstanding in this is a major contortion of the two texts.

Consistent with its Manifesto (SPAB 1877), the SPAB has strongly opposed a number of post-fire reconstructions and restorations to major historic buildings and complexes in the United Kingdom, including to Windsor Castle (Insall 2008,

pp. 70, 211-220), the country houses of Up-park (Rowell, Morrison 1996) and Clandon Park, and the Glasgow School of Art. Denial of restoration is also denial of craft and skills training and employment opportunities in the conservation sector.

Primacy afforded to the *Venice Charter* over the *Charte de Venise* inspired lively debate both internationally and in Paris following the disastrous April 2019 fire to Notre-Dame de Paris, was accompanied by modernistic opportunism in the promotion of major *contemporary* interventions to the main roof structure and to the Viollet-le-Duc spire, and was only rebutted later through referral to the *Charte de Venise* (fig. 9). Such debates constitute a serious distraction from the imperatives of *conservation [et] mise en valeur* in the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972a, Article 4). Protagonists in such debates are more concerned to stake positions, intellectually and practically, than seek harmonious restoration in accordance with Articles 9 and 12 of the *Charte de Venise* (Ripp, Rodwell 2015, pp. 249-250).

6.4. Contestation over the Venice Charter

Challenges to the text of the *Venice Charter* and its discordance with that of the *Charte de Venise* have manifested in multiple forms and forums since the 1964 Venice Congress.

1964: In a letter dated 7 December 1964 to the Director of National Monuments in London, in a paragraph opening “The third problem ...”, Raymond Lemaire asked if Lord Euston’s translation of the *Charte de Venise* into English could be accepted as the official translation of the definitive French text voted at the Venice Congress (Lemaire 1964). No reply to this letter has been sourced.

1971 to 1978: Lemaire’s several attempts to revisit the Charter were frustrated.

1994: In the context of his debates with Herb Stovel over the text of the 1994 *Nara Document*, Lemaire wrote, “in a burst of anger” (Dawans, Houbart 2016, p. 54), that Anglo-Saxons “don’t have any intellectual dispositions for abstraction and philosophy” (Lemaire 1994).

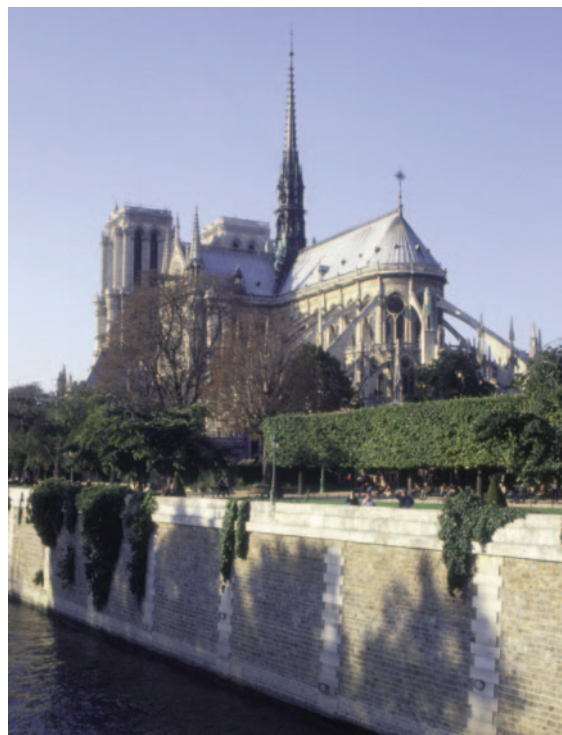


Fig. 9. Paris, France. Notre-Dame de Paris before the devastating April 2019 fire, showing the Viollet-le-Duc spire, whose reconstruction was opposed by adherents to Lord Euston’s 1964 *Venice Charter* and supported by adherents to the 1964 Venice Congress’s *Charte de Venise*. Photographed 2006 (© Dennis Rodwell).

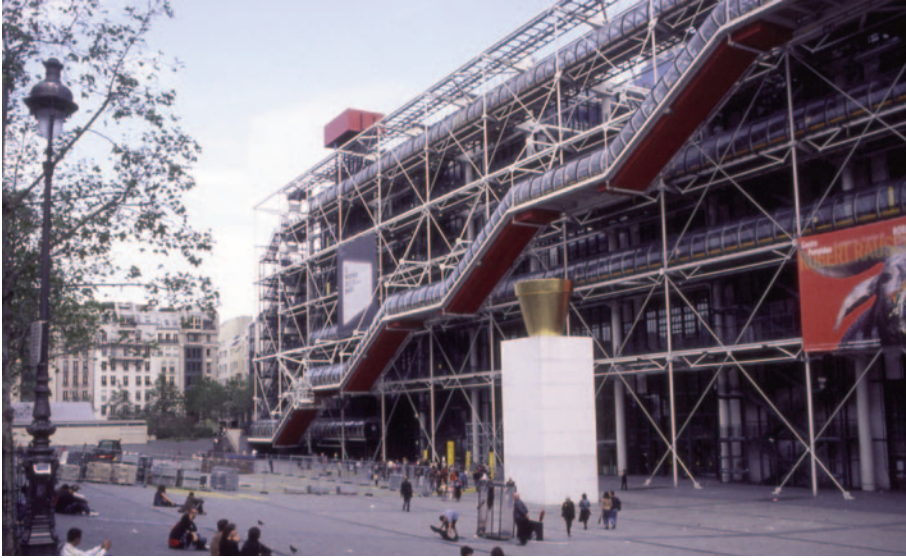


Fig. 10. Paris, Paris, Pompidou Centre. At an event in 2015, the director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre likened the structure to a petrochemical factory and derided the notion that architecture can exist in isolation from its context (cited in Rodwell 2006). By contrast, Mies van der Rohe, one of the modern movement's most influential figures, conceived each building as an individual object, never as part of the urban fabric (cited in Rykwert 2000, p. 128). Photographed 2006 (© Dennis Rodwell).

2009: The edited collection of 64 essays in the 824-page book *The Venice Charter Revisited*, focused on the *Venice Charter*, and not referencing the *Charte de Venise*, is a forceful polemic for a pluralist approach to *contemporary* – in the sense of occurring at the present time, *not* conforming to modern ideas in style and fashion – interventions in the historic environment, whether to individual buildings or the design of new buildings in historic areas; one that is not founded on fundamentalist ideologies, whatever their source (Hardy 2009).

2015: The article “Fifty Years of the Venice Charter” characterises the *Venice Charter* as a “child of modernism”, writing “that the demands of heritage professionals often clash with the wider social context and the interests of other actors in heritage conservation, including the owners of listed building[s] and monuments” (Coady Schaebitz 2015).

2016: The co-authored article “From the Spirit to the Letter of the Charters: Mind the Gap for the Future!”, positions the *Charte de Venise* in its post-Second World War context in time, and notes discrepancies between the French and English, including today's interpretation of “contemporary stamp” (Dawans, Houbart 2016).

2018: The workshop *Retour à l'esprit de la Charte de Venise / Back to the spirit of the Venice Charter* (ICOMOS France 2018c), as summarised in 6.2 above.



Fig. 11. Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom, the recently constructed superstructure to the St James Quarter Hotel in the heart of the *Old and New Towns of Edinburgh* World Heritage Site, viewed from Calton Hill. Dubbed disparagingly in the local media and community as the *Golden Turd*, enquiries have failed to establish if concerns have been expressed by ICOMOS and/or the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. Photographed 2021 (© John Pelan)

2019: The table of heritage values in the Getty CI publication quoted above, confirms the dominance afforded to the *Venice Charter* in international doctrine and compares it unfavourably with the *Burra Charter*. Spiritual value (also scientific value), for example is acknowledged against in the *Burra Charter*, but not shown against the *Venice Charter* (Avrami *et al.* 2019, Table 1, p. 52; Australia ICOMOS 2013; Rodwell 2021b). The definitive *Charte de Venise* is ignored.

6.4. Impacts of the Venice Charter

The *Venice Charter* has been a design point of reference for interventions as discordant with their historic environments as the Pompidou Centre in the Marais quarter of Paris (fig. 10); the Kunsthhaus, nicknamed variously the *Friendly Alien* and *Inflatable Pigskin*, in the heart of the *City of Graz* World Heritage Site, Austria, inscribed in the List for its historic layout and ensembles; and the St James Quarter Hotel, dubbed disparagingly the *Golden Turd* in the *Old and New Towns of Edinburgh* World Heritage Site (figs. 11-12). Numerous of such *contemporary* interventions read more as practical jokes and *egotecture* than architecture.

In this author's view, focus on the *Venice Charter* as compared with the *Charte de Venise* has set back the safeguarding and constructive management



Fig. 12. Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom, the *Golden Turd* viewed from St Andrew Square in the *New Town*, behind the 18th-century Dundas House. Photographed 2021 (© John Pelan).

of cultural heritage for present and future generations by half a century, the full lifetime of the UNESCO *World Heritage Convention*. In this discourse, the broad disciplines of human and urban geography have a major potential to advance a common understanding of the evolution and development of cities beyond distractive academic and “ethical” debates that do not conform to the invocation in the Preamble to the 1972 Convention (UNESCO 1972b, Preamble).

7. The delisting of Dresden Elbe Valley: Elemental mis-translation

In 2015, the co-authored article *A Failure of Process? Comprehending the Issues Fostering Heritage Conflict in Dresden Elbe Valley and Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Sites* was published (Gaillard, Rodwell 2015). At that time, *Dresden Elbe Valley* had already been deleted from the World Heritage List; *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* was delisted in 2021. Both delistings were opposed by the States Parties concerned, continue to be contested on ethical and procedural grounds, and are considered to contradict the injunction in the Preamble to the 1972 World Heritage Convention that calls for a “convention establishing an effective system of collective protection of the cultural and natu-



Fig. 13. Dresden, Saxony, Germany. *Waldschlößchenbrücke*, in the middle distance, viewed looking west along the course of the Elbe Valley towards Dresden city centre. This does not corroborate the notion that the completed bridge has had a detrimental impact on the evolutionary process in the *cultural landscape*. Photographed 2014 (© Bénédicte Gaillard).

ral heritage of outstanding universal value, organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods" (UNESCO 1972b, Preamble). This and the next section of this article examine and update these two cases. For *Dresden Elbe Valley*, the focus of attention is the bridge known as the *Waldschlößchenbrücke* (fig. 13).

Dresden Elbe Valley was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2004 under criteria (ii), (iii), (iv) and (v) as a *cultural landscape* (Table 2). Cultural landscapes are defined in the relevant edition of the UNESCO Operational Guidelines (UNESCO 2002, paragraph 36) as representing the:

... "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article 1 of the Convention. They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal.

Dresden Elbe Valley falls into the category of continuing cultural landscape "in which the evolutionary process is still in progress" (UNESCO 2002, paragraph 39(ii)). The ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation for *Dresden Elbe Valley* signalled this (ICOMOS 2004b, English text; ICOMOS 2004c, French text).

The first decade of this millennium witnessed a series of tense debates in the heritage community on the nature of *conservation*, its relationship to *preservation*, and uneasiness with the concept of *managing change*, a term which ob-

1862	Initiation of the project to construct an Elbe bridge crossing at the location of the <i>Waldschlößchen</i> – a hunting lodge.
Interim	Multiple bridge projects.
1988	4-lane bridge project aborted by the downfall of the German Democratic Republic (GDR).
1989	<i>The Baroque Ensemble of Dresden</i> nominated by the GDR. Recalling the war-time fire-storm destruction of February 1945, this nomination was not supported and withdrawn.
1992–94	Dresden City Council revived the debate for a crossing at <i>Waldschlößchen</i> .
1997	International bridge design competition for the <i>Waldschlößchenbrücke</i> concluded.
2000	Dresden City Council voted for the construction. Ground-breaking ceremony.
2003	<i>Dresden Elbe Valley</i> nomination to UNESCO by the Federal Republic of Germany (UNESCO 2004a).
2004	ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation (ICOMOS 2004b). Mission undertaken and report written by Jukka Jokilehto.
2004	<i>Dresden Elbe Valley</i> inscribed in the World Heritage List at the 28th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Suzhou, China (UNESCO 2004c).
2006	Missive from Michael Petzet to Mechtild Rössler (Petzet 2006).
2006	Visual Impact Study undertaken by the Institute of Urban Design and Regional Planning of the Technical University of Aachen (RWTH Aachen).
2006	<i>Dresden Elbe Valley</i> first inscribed in the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger (UNESCO 2006b).
2009	<i>Dresden Elbe Valley</i> deleted from the UNESCO World Heritage List at the 33 rd Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Seville, Spain, on the premise “that the construction project of the Waldschlösschen Bridge would irreversibly damage the Outstanding Universal Value and integrity of the property in accordance with Paragraph 179 (b) of the <i>Operational Guidelines</i> ” (UNESCO 2009).
2013	<i>Waldschlößchenbrücke</i> opened to traffic.

Table 2. *Dresden Elbe Valley* World Heritage Site: Summary chronology.

tained international currency through the 1999 revision to the *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS 1999, Article 27).

Michael Petzet (President of ICOMOS Germany, 1988-2012; President of ICOMOS International, 1999-2008) was one of the senior ICOMOS members who were challenged by the concept of *managing change* and who took part in strong advocacy throughout this period. His presentations at conferences held in Prague and Florence in 2011 and published the following year (Lipp *et al.* 2012) encapsulated his driving philosophy; they are indicatively titled *Conservation or Managing Change?* (Petzet 2012a) and *Conservation/Preservation: Limits of Change* (Petzet 2012b).

On 10 January 2006 Petzet wrote a missive in reply to a request from Mechthild Rössler (UNESCO World Heritage Centre Chief of Europe and North America, 2001-2010), noting that “The new bridge had already been foreseen in the urban master plan for Dresden and several alternatives had been subject to an in-depth study, including other locations and the possibility to construct a tunnel”, synthesising post-World Heritage Site inscription concerns that had been raised within the State Party about the scale and construction implications of the planned bridge, and noting *inter alia* that the “Saxon Conservation Department [...] has never opposed its construction [...] but] insisted *explicitly and successfully* [this author’s emphasis] that the bridge remain low” (Petzet 2006). In this Missive, Petzet claimed that the planned bridge resembled a “motorway”, and that “The project will result in tearing apart the affected parts of the city and mostly the valley area of the river Elbe”. Fig. 13 does not support this claim. As expressed to this author in an e-mail dated 14 October 2010, “I do feel the removal of Dresden because of the river bridge is pedantic in extreme especially when you look at the poor old Tower of London” (quoted in Gaillard, Rodwell 2015, pp. 29-30).

Referring to the evaluation mission that had been undertaken on behalf of ICOMOS by Jukka Jokilehto in 2003 (ICOMOS 2004b), Petzet opened his missive with the comment that triggered the re-opening of the pre-inscription files and the sequences that culminated in the deletion of *Dresden Elbe Valley* from the World Heritage List in 2009. Petzet wrote: “During the mission, the project for the bridge, planned upstream from the city centre (*mistakenly mentioned in the ICOMOS evaluation text as “foreseen 5 km down the river from the centre”* [this author’s emphasis]) was discussed with the authorities” (Petzet 2006). The passage in parenthesis confirmed a mis-translation of a passage in Jukka Jokilehto’s ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation Report (ICOMOS 2004b) into French (ICOMOS 2004c), the English to French translation having been undertaken under the authority of the ICOMOS-International secretariat in Paris, the organisation of which Petzet was the International President².

The procedures and processes for nomination and inscription into the UNESCO World Heritage List follow a strict linear sequence: submission of a nomination document and management plan; scrutiny and checks by the World Heritage Centre; referral to the appropriate Advisory Body; receipt of the Advisory Body Evaluation Report; further scrutiny and checks by the World Heritage Centre; referral for consideration by the World Heritage Committee; followed by actions dependent on the Committee’s decision. The procedures require that any and all questions be formulated, addressed and answered at each step before moving to the next, and in the event of inscription in the World Heritage List, the Convention, the Operational Guidelines and all associated protocols do not au-

² This is confirmed in an e-mail to the author dated 21 April 2021 from the Director of the ICOMOS Evaluation Unit.

thorise return loops. The procedures from nomination to inscription in the List do not sanction any moves equivalent to the child's game of *Snakes and Ladders*, let alone legitimise them at any time following inscription. At no time during the sequence for *Dresden Elbe Valley* was the discrepancy between the two language texts referred back for clarification; at no point were any errors, real or imaginary, left unresolved; and at no stage were any conditions imposed: for example, calling for design and construction details of the planned bridge.

The paragraph in Jukka Jokilehto's English text that led to the delisting reads (ICOMOS 2004b):

The construction of a new bridge is foreseen 5 km down the river from the centre. Its design results from an international competition. The profile has been kept slender and low in order to reduce impact on landscape.

The same passage in the ICOMOS translated French text reads (ICOMOS 2004c):

Un nouveau pont, dont la conception résulte d'un concours international, doit être construit à 5 km en aval du centre-ville. Son profil est élancé et bas afin de réduire son impact sur le paysage.

The phrase *en aval de* in this French text means *downstream from*. The *Waldschlößchenbrücke* is upstream as the water flows in the River Elbe.

Jukka Jokilehto's authority in the international cultural heritage field is unequalled; his maternal-level command and precision in the English language, legendary. The meaning that is clear from the French text is not that of the English text. The word *down* is employed in the English language in senses which may challenge translators unfamiliar with the spectrum of English usages, as has clearly happened here. Without digressing into a lengthy linguistic discourse, Jokilehto used *down the river from the centre* in the sense of *away from the centre*. This is a normal use of English, especially where major cities are concerned, and Dresden is the capital city of the German State of Saxony. This is a usage of *down* that the author of this article was brought up and educated with, and it is the usage employed here by Jukka Jokilehto³. The wording in ICOMOS 2004b is unrelated to the direction of the flow of the water in the River Elbe; it only concerns the position of the *Waldschlößchenbrücke* relative to Dresden City Centre. As with the *Charte de Venise* and the *Venice Charter*, the English and French texts of the 2004 ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation were not synchronised; likewise, it is the fallacious interpretations away from the original language texts that have been prioritised and institutionalised. Imperatively in the instance of *Dresden Elbe Valley*,

³ This has been confirmed by this author with Jukka Jokilehto.

the discordance between the English and French texts was not questioned pre-inscription, the only period during which it was legitimate to do so.

This elemental mis-translation was used by the World Heritage Centre as the lever to refer the inscription of *Dresden Elbe Valley* back to the 2006 through 2008 Sessions of the World Heritage Committee, culminating in its delisting at the 2009 Session. This process involved *inter alia* re-opening the nomination and management files and supporting a Visual Impact Study that over-turned the not unfavourable assessment of the competition-winning bridge design in the ICOMOS Evaluation (ICOMOS 2004b and 2004c).

Whereas it was entirely legitimate for the State Party to instruct and act upon a post-inscription Visual Impact Study for domestic reasons, internal to the State Party itself, there was no legitimacy for it to impact on the UNESCO inscription. In any event, the study carried out by RWTH Aachen failed to pick up on the obvious. The distinctive feature of the *Waldschlößchenbrücke* is its superstructure, the parallel arches that rise to surmount the carriageway. The arches of Dresden's historic bridges feature under their carriageways, not over them. There was no compelling engineering reason for the *Waldschlößchenbrücke* to have this design-competition-winning feature (Gaillard, Rodwell 2015, p. 28). The same consultants made a parallel omission in their Visual Impact Study for a new bridge across the Haliç (Golden Horn) in Istanbul (Rodwell, Turner 2018, pp. 63-66). If concerns about the superstructure had been raised pre-inscription and a condition imposed calling for a review of the design options for the planned bridge, the catalogue of procedural errors and mis-practices would have been avoided.

A further major concern to this author is the national affiliation of all the main players in the post-inscription drama culminating in the delisting of *Dresden Elbe Valley*. UNESCO is an inter-governmental body, and the ethical guidelines laid down for UNESCO officials, ICOMOS post-holders, and consultants working for and with both bodies, require that State Party nationals play no part in any advisory and decision-making processes that relate to World Heritage Sites in their own country. This is an elementary provision to avoid any suggestion of positive or negative interest and bias. Research to date has failed to identify any actors in the narrative, from senior officials at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre through senior post-holders in ICOMOS, the consultant who undertook the Visual Impact Study, to lobbyists including a former director of the World Heritage Centre, who were *not* nationals of the State Party. Scrutiny of the actors and actions that unfolded bears close resemblance to singularly uncivil post-inscription heritage and political warfare within the State Party, to the single objective of frustrating the construction of a bridge that was reported in the State Party's nomination and had the seal of approval of the ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation.

Numerous obfuscatory attempts have been made to explain and justify the de-listing of *Dresden Elbe Valley*, of which to this author one of the most blatant is Ringbeck, Rössler 2011. At the 23 June 2022 webinar *Liverpool – One Year*



Fig. 14. Dresden, Saxony, Germany. The German Military History Museum was not impacted by the fire-storm of February 1945. The Museum was, however, the subject of a six-year programme of extensive reconstruction, completed in 2011. Architect Daniel Libeskind added the transparent arrow-head to the façade. This accords with the 1933 *Athens Charter* (CIAM 1933), Lord Euston's 1964 *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS 1964b) and the *Vien-na Memorandum* (UNESCO 2005), but not with the 1964 Venice Congress's *Charte de Venise*. Photographed post 2011 (© Thomas Will).

On, focused on explaining *inter alia* to Liverpoolians the delisting of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*, one of the authors of that article opened her presentation on Dresden by stating that the problem started with a serious mistake in the ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation report – namely the elemental mis-translation referred to above – and admitted that the delisting “has left deep scars in the urban society ... and that it was heavy to accept the decision of the World Heritage Committee” (Ringbeck 2022).

To compound matters further, the City of Dresden has fallen prey to an aggressive *contemporary* intervention to one of its major historic buildings (fig. 14).

The chronology from inscription in the List of World Heritage in Danger through to the delisting of *Dresden Elbe Valley* occurred at a time when the World Heritage Centre and Committee were intent on flexing their muscles *pour encourager les autres*. An important lesson for all 1154 Sites in the current World Heritage List is that none is secure from predatory opposition at any stage. If the World Heritage Committee was intent on securing a *kill* in 2009, it should have chosen a case that had scientific and ethical credibility, not one that lingers unjustifiably as a scar in the affected community, one that had already been ravaged in the war-time destruction of February 1945 (Taylor 2004; McKay 2020).

In short, in this the 50th anniversary year of the World Heritage Convention, it is high time that the delisting of *Dresden Elbe Valley* is recognised and admitted as a miscarriage of justice and the healing process to recover the integrity of the World Heritage system is opened.

Serving as a precedent in time as well as repeating a contradiction with the terms under which it was inscribed, also in 2004, a process was opened in 2012 that culminated in the 2021 delisting of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*.

8. The delisting of Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City: Misalliance of terms

For *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*, the root of the controversy that enveloped the inscribed site and precipitated the delisting was a confusion between the heritage term *cultural landscape* and the urban planning term *urban landscape*, leading to the latter being taken out of the proposed wording of the justification of *outstanding universal value* in the State Party's nomination document, then retrospectively founded upon to promote the delisting of the inscribed site (Rodwell 2014; Gaillard, Rodwell 2015; Rodwell 2021c; Rodwell 2022).

Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2004 under criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) as a *group of buildings* (table 3). Groups of buildings are defined in the 1972 World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 1972b, Article 1) as:

... groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.

The first decade of this millennium witnessed a series of debates in the heritage community on the nature and management of urban heritage. Throughout this period UNESCO and ICOMOS fashioned discrete paths.

UNESCO promoted the term *historic urban landscape* in the 2005 *Vienna Memorandum* (UNESCO 2005a), and adopted the UNESCO *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* in November 2011 (UNESCO 2011).

Contemporaneously but independently, ICOMOS developed their own *Valletta Principles*, named for the Maltese capital, home city of Ray Bondin, then president of CIVVIH, who undertook the ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation for *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* (ICOMOS 2004d). ICOMOS shunned the term (*historic*) *urban landscape*, and in the same month of November 2011 adopted their *Valletta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas* (ICOMOS 2011). ICOMOS conflated the term *urban landscape* with *cultural landscape*, confusing an urban planning tool – policy and practice – with an academic construct.

Neither the 2011 UNESCO *Recommendation* nor the 2011 ICOMOS *Valletta Principles* embrace *human geography* and *urban geography*, concepts and terms that have a long history in the field of urban planning (Ripp, Rodwell 2015).

1999	Entered in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Tentative List.
2003	<i>Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City</i> nomination to UNESCO (UNESCO 2004c).
2004	ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation Report (ICOMOS 2004d). Mission undertaken by Ray Bondin, President of the ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Cities, Towns and Villages (CIVVIH). Report finalised by the ICOMOS World Heritage Adviser.
2004	<i>Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City</i> inscribed in the World Heritage List at the 28th Session of the World Heritage Committee held in Suzhou, China (UNESCO 2004d).
2005	UNESCO <i>Vienna Memorandum on “World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture – Managing the Historic Urban Landscape”</i> (UNESCO 2005a).
2006	First UNESCO-ICOMOS Mission: focus, Museum of Liverpool and Mann Island projects (UNESCO 2006b); implicitly invoked the 2005 UNESCO <i>Vienna Memorandum</i> (UNESCO 2005a, Article 21).
2009	Liverpool City Council’s <i>Liverpool - Maritime Mercantile City World Heritage Supplementary Planning Document</i> adopted (Liverpool City Council 2009).
2011	UNESCO <i>Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</i> (UNESCO 2011a).
2011	ICOMOS <i>Valletta Principles for the Safeguarding and Management of Historic Cities, Towns and Urban Areas</i> (ICOMOS 2011).
2011	Second UNESCO-ICOMOS Mission: adjudged the impact of the completed Museum of Liverpool and Mann Island projects positive; main focus, “Liverpool Waters” project (UNESCO 2011b); explicitly invoked the 2011 UNESCO <i>Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</i> (UNESCO 2011a).
2012	“Liverpool Waters” approved by Liverpool City Council.
2012	<i>Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City</i> first placed in the UNESCO List of World Heritage in Danger (UNESCO 2012).
2013	“Liverpool Waters” approval endorsed by the UK Government.
2015	Third UNESCO-ICOMOS Mission: focus, issues related to the “Liverpool Waters” project (ICOMOS 2015); again, explicitly invoked the 2011 UNESCO <i>Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</i> (UNESCO 2011a).
2021	Everton Football Stadium project, Bramley-Moore Dock, approved by Liverpool City Council (fig. 15).
2021	<i>Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City</i> deleted from the UNESCO World Heritage List at the Extended 44 th Session of the World Heritage Committee chaired from Fuzhou, China and held online, on pretexts that focused on development projects in the urban landscape, without any acknowledgement that <i>urban landscape</i> had been deleted from the State Party’s justification of <i>outstanding universal value</i> in the ICOMOS Advisory Body’s Evaluation (UNESCO 2021b; ICOMOS 2004d; Rodwell 2021; Rodwell 2022).
Footnote: 11 years after its adoption, the UNESCO <i>Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape</i> has yet to feature in the UNESCO <i>Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention</i> .	

Table 3. *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* World Heritage Site: Summary chronology.



Fig. 15. Liverpool, England, United Kingdom. Visualisation of the Everton Football Stadium, Bramley-Moore Dock, located at the northernmost boundary of the now former World Heritage Site. Its distance from the Pier Head Group can be discerned. The planning permission granted for its construction was represented by the World Heritage Adviser and Norwegian delegation at the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2021 as the "tipping point" for the prosecution of the delisting of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*. Visualisation 2021 (© Everton Football Club).

Further, the UNESCO text uses the term *layering*, understood *inter alia* in the sense of the superimposition of one layer upon another, in sequence from the documents shown in Table 1, whereas the *Valletta Principles* uses *continuity* and emphasises *harmony*, in sequence from 1964 ICOMOS *Charte de Venise* (ICOMOS 1964a) and the mainstream of ICOMOS documents. UNESCO and its Advisory Body were not in accord.

The justification of *outstanding universal value* for a nominated then inscribed World Heritage Site is the statement that focuses the significance and attributes that serve as the point of reference for monitoring. In the case of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*, the ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluation sets out two versions (ICOMOS 2004d). First, the one proposed by the State Party. Second, the one that was revised by ICOMOS and then adopted at the 28th Session of the World Heritage Committee in 2004.

Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City was nominated and inscribed under criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv). The following are the texts for criteria (iii) and (iv) that record the critical variation that sealed the fate of the inscribed World Heritage Site (ICOMOS 2004d).

Under *Justification by the State Party (summary)*, the ICOMOS Evaluation reads:

Criterion iii: Liverpool was the leading international seaport of the British Empire and Europe's foremost transatlantic port from the 18th century to the early 20th century. Liverpool was a highly successful general cargo port, for both import and export, and a major European port of trans-Atlantic emigration. ... *The urban landscape of the site* [this author's emphasis], including its architecture, layout, dock complexes and transport systems, combined with the comprehensive cultural and historical records held on the site, form a unique testimony to the commercial acumen and mercantile strength of the British Empire in the period from the early 18th century to the early 20th century. No other port in Britain, the former British Empire or the world bears such testimony.

Criterion iv: The nominated site is a *complete and integral urban landscape* [this author's emphasis] that includes an outstanding architectural and technological ensemble of buildings, structures and archaeological remains. The *landscape of the site* [this author's emphasis] developed primarily during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries during the Industrial Revolution, the growth of the British Empire and general European expansion throughout the world. These processes are significant stages in human history that have shaped the current geopolitical, social and economic environment.

Under *Recommendation with respect to inscription*, the same ICOMOS Evaluation reads:

Criterion iii: The city and the port of Liverpool are an exceptional testimony to the development of maritime mercantile culture in the 18th and 19th centuries, contributing to the building up of the British Empire. It was a centre for the slave trade, until its abolition in 1807, and to emigration from northern Europe to America.

Criterion iv: Liverpool is an outstanding example of a world mercantile port city, which represents the early development of global trading and cultural connections throughout the British Empire.

The critical variation is in the wording that is highlighted. All reference to *urban landscape* and *landscape* was deleted from the text against which *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* was inscribed.

A core theme in the State Party's 2003 nomination document was *urban landscape* (UNESCO 2004c), a term that has been familiar in the management of historic cities across Europe for at least a century. In France, the term *paysage urbain* has impacted directly in the management of cities such as Bordeaux and Paris (figs. 16 and 17), the host city of the UNESCO headquarters. In Germany, *stadtlandschaft*, in the post-Second World War reconstruction of cities such as



Fig. 16. Paris, France. The urban landscape viewed westwards from the south-west tower of Notre-Dame de Paris in 1960. Starting from the 1920s, strategic planning measures were put in place to distribute development pressures across the Paris region and safeguard the urban landscape of the city within the *boulevard périphérique* (Rodwell 2007). Photograph 1960 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 17. Paris, France. The same view as fig. 16, 46 years later. The only visual impact on the urban landscape is in the construction of *La Défense* on the horizon to the west, beyond the *boulevard périphérique*. Photographed 2006 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 18. Nuremberg, Bavaria, Germany, a city that was devastated in the Second World War and re-constructed to accord with its pre-war urban landscape. Photographed 1971 (© Dennis Rodwell).

Nuremberg (fig. 18), and less war-impacted cities such as Bamberg and Regensburg (figs. 19 and 20). In Italy, *paesaggio urbano*, for cities such as Bologna (fig. 21), Florence and Rome. In the United Kingdom, where the term *townscape* is also familiar, in cities including Bath (figs. 22-23), Edinburgh and Salisbury.

The report of the 2007 UNESCO World Heritage Centre regional conference held in Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, to present and debate the *historic urban landscape* initiative (Van Oers, Rodwell 2007) (fig. 24), reads:

One of the key characteristics of [the city's] *historic urban landscape* is its horizontality, broken only occasionally by modestly scaled highlights, and the relationship that this reinforces between people and the city's streets, public spaces and parks, canals and riverbanks. This horizontality was recognised as a key characteristic of the city, experienced most poignantly along the panorama of the river Neva. [...] This project focused delegates attention on the need for an embracing working concept to enable historic cities to be managed effectively in the age of globalisation and at a time of increasing development pressures, and there was general agreement that *historic urban landscapes* is an essential concept for St Petersburg.

Kevin Lynch, in *The Image of the City*, writes: "This book is about the look of cities, and whether this look is of any importance, and whether it can be changed. The urban landscape, among its many roles, is also to be remem-



Fig. 19. Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany, the historic city centre viewed across the river Danube. Photographed 1971 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 20. Regensburg, Bavaria, Germany, the same view 40 years later. Photographed 2011 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 21. Bologna, Emilia-Romagna, Italy, view from one the city centre's historic towers, illustrating the clear distinction between the protected urban landscape in the historic centre and the design and constructional freedom afforded in the expanding modern city (Giovannoni 1931). Photographed 2009 (© Dennis Rodwell).

bered, and to delight in. Giving visual form to the city is a special kind of design problem ..." (Lynch 1960; also Lynch 1972, Lynch 1981).

Gordon Cullen, in *Townscape*, encapsulates the essence of good urban design as "the agreement to differ within a recognised tolerance of behaviour" (Cullen 1961).

For *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*, the consultant responsible for defining the boundaries of the nominated site to protect its *urban landscape* has confirmed to this author that *urban landscape* is about appearance, height(s), urban morphology, and traditional/historic identity⁴.

The term *urban landscape* features 47 times in the *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* nomination document, including *urban landscapes* twice, *outstanding urban landscape* three times; also, *historic urban landscape*, before UNESCO's promotion of the term. The explicit deletion of this key urban planning term and tool from the inscription text sent a clear message to the State Party and Liverpool City Council that the *urban landscape* was not an attribute of consequence and would not – the ethical position – be subject to monitoring. In the volatile political and financial environment that blossomed in Liverpool from the

⁴ Most recently, in a video call on 14 January 2022.



Fig. 22. Bath, England, United Kingdom, view from Prior Park to the south across the valley of the river Avon towards the city centre and its protected urban landscape. Photographed 2017 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 23. Bath, England, United Kingdom, view along the river Avon in the city centre. Photographed 2005 (© Dennis Rodwell).



Fig. 24. Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation, panorama looking westwards along the river Neva. Photographed 2002 (© Dennis Rodwell).

1990s, this was fatal to the *urban landscape* of the World Heritage Site (Boland *et al.* 2022) (fig. 25). *Inter alia*, it gave an unstoppable green light to the speculative development project of *Liverpool Waters* (Gaillard, Rodwell 2015).

Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City fell between a mainstream international planning term – with which key elements of the World Heritage system were clearly not familiar – and a recently devised academic construct. In the course of his evaluation mission Bondin stated that *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* was not a *cultural landscape*⁵. Whether it was he or the ICOMOS World Heritage Advisor who deleted *urban landscape* from the inscribed justification of *out-standing universal value* has not been clarified.

However and wherever the confusion arose, the switch serves to confirm that heritage orthodoxy lacks connections and partnerships beyond its orbit, with consequences that can prove disastrous for urban heritage. In the vital field of inhabited historic cities, the World Heritage system is over-loaded with academic concepts and ill-equipped with urban planning training, practitioner, and management skills. *Urban landscape* is a time-honoured and essentially simple concept; in many respects the UNESCO *historic urban landscape* initiative has befuddled the concept – including by defining it both as an area and an approach

⁵ Confirmed to this author by Liverpool City Council officials who accompanied Ray Bondin during his mission.



Fig. 25. Liverpool. England, United Kingdom, panorama of the Liverpool waterfront viewed from the seaward north-west approach along the river Mersey from the Atlantic Ocean. With a handful of low-rise exceptions, all of the buildings in the World Heritage Site north (to the left two thirds in the photograph) of the Pier Head Group have been constructed since the 2004 inscription of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* and the deletion of *urban landscape* from the State Party's justification of *outstanding universal value*. Photographed 2011 (© Dennis Rodwell)

– which makes it unsurprising that take up in the *Global North* is limited. That statements of justification of *outstanding universal value* can become so detached from playing a central role in directing the *conservation et mise en valeur* of a World Heritage Site is, to this author, alarming.

What is clear to this author in the case of *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* is that the failure by ICOMOS and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre to at any time admit the self-evident moving of the goalposts does not accord with the injunction, quoted above, in the Preamble of the World Heritage Convention, nor to the Critical “3Cs” of Effective Protection, *certainty*, *clarity*, and *consistency*.

In the weeks leading up to the agenda item to debate the delisting of the *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* at the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee in July 2021, this author published a “Personal Reflection”, distributing it *inter alia* to key post holders at the World Heritage Centre and officials of ICOMOS International (Rodwell 2021c). This reads:

For my part, I have critiqued much of what has happened in the field of urban planning and over-arching heritage management in Liverpool in recent years; the sequence of my publications confirms this.



Fig. 26. Liverpool. England, United Kingdom. A closer view of the Pier Head Group and the three *contemporary* interventions in unnecessarily close proximity to it: the Museum of Liverpool (right), the Mann Island trilogy of slanting black slabs (centre), and the Ferry Terminal (left). All were endorsed in the First and Second UNESCO-ICOMOS Mission reports before and after construction (UNESCO 2006b; UNESCO 2015). The Museum of Liverpool has encouraged allusions to a skateboard park, the Mann Island trilogy is known variously in the local community as the *Three Disgraces* and the *Three Coffins*, and all have vied for national infamy in the Carbuncle Cup, an annual award for the ugliest new building in Britain (Rodwell 2014). Along with the Military Museum in Dresden (fig. 14), as also with Edinburgh's *Golden Turd* (figs. 11-12), they accord with the 1933 *Athens Charter* (CIAM 1933), Lord Euston's 1964 *Venice Charter* (ICOMOS 1964b), and the *Vienna Memorandum* (UNESCO 2005). Photographed 2011 (© Dennis Rodwell).

However, in the matter of basic integrity, I deplore even more the attempt by the World Heritage Centre to transfer responsibility for the 2004 error in the Advisory Body's Evaluation on to the State Party (and Liverpool City Council), by promoting the Draft Decision to delete Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City from the World Heritage List. If the World Heritage Centre and Committee do not like what has happened since the 2004 inscription, the starting error should be acknowledged, and steps taken to reform the relevant procedures and avoid repetition across the system.

No heed of this was taken in the debate led by an ICOMOS World Heritage Advisor and supported by a Norwegian delegation. It is this author's view that, in the manicuring of carefully selected "evidence", they misdirected the 44th Session of the World Heritage Committee.



Fig. 27. Liverpool. England, United Kingdom. The *Three Disgraces* / *Three Coffins* block the view of the Three Graces across Canning Dock. Photographed 2011 (© Dennis Rodwell).

The inscription and then delisting of both *Dresden Elbe Valley* and *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* have close parallels. Both trajectories opened with errors made at the stage of the ICOMOS Advisory Body Evaluations. For *Dresden Elbe Valley*, the elemental mis-translation of the correctly worded English text into French, latched on to by State Party dissidents who mounted a rear-guard campaign to prevent, at any cost to the integrity of the World Heritage system as well as to the citizens of Dresden, the construction of the competition-winning design for the *Waldschlößchenbrücke*. For *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City*, in the removal from the State Party's justification of *outstanding universal value* of the key provision designed to safeguard it. The mis-practices appear to be contagious. Both cases smack of “the pot calling the kettle black”; both call for strict measures to be put in place to prevent further repetitions; in this author's view, both constitute *miscarriages of justice*.

In the conclusion to a post-de-listing article, this author wrote that “the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and ICOMOS need to sort their acts out if the “mantle of UNESCO stewardship” (as another author has termed it) is to have more merit than Hans Christian Andersen's *The Emperor's New Clothes*” (Rodwell 2022).

As with the City of Dresden (fig. 14), and with far greater impact across the city and waterfront, *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* fell victim to a major onslaught of *contemporary* interventions in immediate proximity to the Pier Head

Group, popularly known as the *Three Graces*, interventions that were endorsed in the first and second UNESCO-ICOMOS Mission Reports, and all of which have attracted derision in the national and local media and in the community (Rodwell 2014) (figs. 26 and 27). The World Heritage system has not served the historic port city of Liverpool well. One has to ask if the system has the capacity to comprehend the management of inhabited historic cities.

9. Re-thinking the heritage paradigm

9.1. Debate within the heritage community

The need to revisit traditional approaches to cultural heritage is being increasingly voiced across today's heritage community.

Jukka Jokilehto, first writing in 1999, was one of the earliest to question the direction of the heritage community for this 21st century (Jokilehto 2004, p. 19):

During the twentieth century [...] the increase in scale and the recognition of diversity in cultures and physical conditions have led to a new situation, where the meaning of cultural heritage itself, and the policies for its safeguard have required reassessment. [...] Against this new background, one can well ask if the conservation movement, as it evolved from the eighteenth century, cannot be considered as concluded, and whether modern conservation should not be redefined in reference to the environmental sustainability of social and economic development within the overall cultural and ecological situation on earth.

This theme was central to *Conservation and Sustainability in Historic Cities* (Rodwell 2007).

Anne Parmlly Toxey, writing in 2011, concluded that preservation needs a fundamental rethink, extracting it from a fetish with what she described as the “artistic straightjacket” of abstracting and preserving selected monuments, allying it with broader agendas of environmentalism, sustainability and creative continuity, and revaluing the landscape at large for its intrinsic worth and usefulness *as well as* its cultural meaning (Toxey 2011).

Writing in 2013, Miles Glendinning concluded that conservation had, in the previous two decades, displayed signs of a movement in a state of disorientation, and that it may only be able to advance if it surrenders its core identity as a specific and unique phenomenon concerned primarily with the historic built environment, and synthesises with wider, overarching agendas (Glendinning 2013).

Sharon McDonald, also in 2013, emphasized that there is a growing tendency to define more and more objects, traditions and cultural practices as *heritage*. Adopting the compelling term *Memorylands*, she connects this development with the change in identities of European citizens (McDonald 2013).

These reinforce the view that integrated approaches derivative from the broad discipline of geography have much to offer.

During an online conference on 19 November 2021 under Theme 11, *Beyond the List*, in the succession of debates and initiatives of the Foundation *Our World Heritage* (Our World Heritage nd), Divay Gupta (INTACH India) shared:

[...] the need for a more fundamental shift in the concept of World Heritage, where the arbitrary differentiations between culture, nature and intangible heritage can be removed, and rather linked using digital technology. He added that segregating heritage into silos of nature, culture, art, tangible, intangible, etc, is an artificial distinction, whereas all heritage should be seen as an inter-connected system. This realization needs to be addressed at World Heritage level, where we tend to celebrate a few isolated icons, while reassessing many more to be of importance⁶.

Given the changed contexts in time from 1972 to 2022, this necessarily questions whether the heritage orthodoxy established in the third quarter of the 20th century is fit for purpose as we approach the second quarter of the 21st century.

9.2. Heritage is a modern construct

At the conference *The Limits of Heritage* held in Krakow in June 2013, this author presented a paper entitled *The Limits of Heritage: What Limits?* (Rodwell 2015, pp. 25-41). This argued that the *heritage construct* is a linguistically unconvincing abstraction (also, Rodwell 2007, p. 7). Through its preoccupation with protecting the past, ignorance of the past-present-future timeline, and the attribution of extrinsically devised and often highly selective systems of cultural values, it disassociates physical objects as well as knowledge, skills and expressions, both from the complexity of the societies that created them and those who are their beneficiaries and custodians today – who may or may not their descendants or cultural successors.

This is especially contentious in historic cities where *heritage* is commodified as raw material for the *heritage industry* (Hewison 1987), that can be traded for transient economic, social, professional or political purposes, and policies are in place to evict their established renter communities and substitute ones that are

⁶ Taken from the unpublished draft report of this event.

deemed more socio-economically suitable (Rodwell 2010; Toxey 2011; Feighery 2011; Rodwell 2012b).

Intrinsic values – such as functional, material and societal resource – are disregarded in this paradigm, and *heritage* that is not recognised by academics and their peers is ignored and considered disposable (Rodwell 2012a). The social importance of tangible heritage of the type that is, generally, unrecognised officially, was compellingly expressed in 2007: “The unlisted buildings enshrine the human stories, the memories of the community. They are the real heritage. It is they that determine the sense of identity, of place, and of belonging. These are the places where the historic environment is at the heart of sustainable communities” (Rodwell 2016, p. 301).

Of far greater relevance to inhabited historic cities is the *anthropological vision*: a dynamic approach to heritage that is focused on processes that safeguard geo-cultural identity and secure its creative continuity in harmony with the evolving aspirations of peoples and communities (Rodwell 2007, pp. 74, 84, 187, 206). It focuses on people as both the custodians and creative vectors of cultural diversity and identity. Instead of *heritage* and *contemporary* being in conflict, *heritage* and *creative industries* are held to be in harmony as part of a cultural continuum, as two sides of the same coin. Placing *heritage* in a box, selectively identified and appropriated by primarily external academic interests, distances it from places and people today. Critics of the selective approach to designations represent that we should not, in this 21st century of global environmental concerns, talk of *heritage management* but of *resource management* – of which heritage coupled with cultural continuity is a vital component.

UNESCO defines *heritage* broadly and well: “Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration” (UNESCO ndb). To many, however, heritage has a far more limited meaning: for example, the culture, property, and characteristics of past times, or today’s perception of a pattern of events in the past. As such, heritage has become a construct, a concept that relates only to history, that can be packaged for education and branded for tourism, and is perceived to be divorced from individual and community life today. Laurajane Smith articulates the *authorized heritage discourse* in *Uses of Heritage* (Smith 2006), arguing that the dominant discourse “constitutes the idea of heritage in such a way as to exclude certain actors and interests from actively engaging with heritage”, framing audiences as passive recipients of the authorised meaning of heritage and creating significant barriers to “the social and cultural roles that it may play”.

The 1945 UNESCO Constitution committed States Parties to the conservation and protection of the spectrum of the world’s cultural *inheritance* (UNESCO 1945). Varying by time and place, today’s *heritage construct* emerged around the turn of the third and fourth quarters of the 20th century. Nathalie Heinrich, in her evoca-

tively titled book *La fabrique du patrimoine: de la cathédrale à la petite cuillère* (The invention of heritage: from the cathedral to the little spoon) positions the construct from the early 1970s (Heinich 2009). The construct did not come into this author's consciousness until 1972, after the completion of his tertiary education.

Previously, *heritage* was *inheritance* and understood holistically. Inventories did not distinguish *tangible* and *intangible* heritage, and graded value judgements did not become a common feature across Europe until the mid-20th century (Rodwell 1975). In the United Kingdom, *heritage* as *inheritance* features in the 1611 King James Bible; *heritage* features just once in the novels of Jane Austen, in *Emma* (Austen 1816). Notwithstanding its title, the 1939 edited volume *Our Nation's Heritage*, which paints an overview and has sections including everyday life, farming, nature, roads, and places – regions, towns and gardens – employs *inheritance* not *heritage* in the selection of 64 texts (Priestley 1939). Inheritance is normal; heritage, selected and abnormal. The 1972 World Heritage Convention has long been applauded for expressing and symbolising the duality of culture and nature (Rodwell 2012a). To countless societies around the world, the two have never been perceived as separate; nor tangible and intangible.

Importantly, processes of inclusion into lists of heritage are simultaneously processes of exclusion, of people as well as places.

In today's interdisciplinary field of heritage studies, heritage is understood “as a social and political construct”, in which “heritage results from a selection process, often government-initiated and supported by official regulation” (Logan, Smith 2006, p. xii). Selection processes are top-down not bottom-up, and the protection of heritage is generally assumed to be atypical and exceptional, largely determined by specialists, and expensive.

Mainstream concepts of heritage confer value based on the perspective of an educated elite. This can exclude both long-established and incoming communities within historic cities. Narratives constructed to evidence *outstanding universal value* for the purposes of the inscription and management of World Heritage Sites constitute carefully edited variants of the authorised heritage discourse. “We connect people to their heritage” headlines the mission statement of Edinburgh World Heritage Trust (Edinburgh World Heritage nd). Urban populations are not homogenous. Such statements imply that their multiple constituent communities are not connected to *their* heritage; the narrative is hierarchical and exclusionist. At its simplest, no-one in the cultural heritage field should anticipate respect for their own narrative of *heritage* until they first comprehend and respect those of others. Limited perceptions and top-down definitions of *culture* and *heritage* can alienate citizens, rendering them as foreigners in their own city.

To date, heritage orthodoxy has shown limited appetite to make the switch from *heritage* as a selective and costly specialism to a mainstream activity that can respond to and integrate with the core agendas of sustainability and climate change in this 21st century.

9.3. Culture is a modern construct

As with heritage, *culture* has inspired a strong tendency to a limited comprehension. Especially in today's context of the *sustainable development* and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, understanding *heritage* as *inheritance* allied to the generic comprehension of *culture* is essential.

Culture, described as "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language" (Williams 1988, pp. 87-93; Williams 1981; Eagleton 2000), may be summarised here as the distinguishing characteristics of what any given society *has* (material possessions and objects), *thinks* (ideas, traditions and beliefs), *does* (behavioural patterns including recreations), and how it relates to and interacts with its natural and manmade environment. In this context *culture*, in the sense of *cultivation* (as a process) rather than the restricted notion of *civilisation* (selective refinement), is primordially dynamic rather than static. It is an inclusive rather than exclusive concept: one that does not interpose notions of superiority between different manifestations and expressions, forms of *creativity*, or between different ethnic, faith or socio-economic groups. It does not distinguish between the arts, literature and beliefs (for example), and scientific processes be they agricultural improvement (the early usage of *culture*), biological research, or any other.

From this generic understanding, this author does not open by formulating a connection between *culture* and *creativity* that would restrict it to the arts at the expense of the sciences, preclude professions, skills and sectors of the population that some may depreciate as *uncreative*, or brand *popular culture* an oxymoron. This understanding recognises the synergy between an unconstrained interpretation and one of the familiar catchphrases of *sustainability*, "top-down meeting bottom-up", wherein local knowledge is placed on an equivalent footing to received theories from outside. A fuller exposé of the catchphrases of sustainability may be found at Rodwell 2007, pp. 183-197, 203.

In the lead-in to 2015 and the definition of the Sustainable Development Goals, the initial intention was to introduce *culture* as the fourth dimension of sustainable development, complementing *environment*, *society*, and *economy* (Brundtland Commission 1987). In the event, consensus was not reached between competing claims, the opportunity to position *culture* as the common feature that binds human engagement across all 17 SDGs and 169 targets was missed, and *cultural heritage* features explicitly and implicitly only to a very limited extent. As such, the potential of *culture* to impact coherently across the sustainability agenda is seriously constrained. There are many challenges to positioning *culture* in the mainstream; *The Age of Culture* is just one example of the elitist approach (Schafer 2014).

9.4. Conservation and sustainability

The word *conservation* is understood differently between academics and professionals focused on *cultural heritage* and those on *natural heritage*; the first, in a delimited field; the second, environmentally unlimited.

R.J.S. Hookway, of the Countryside Commission, speaking at the 1967 Town and Country Planning Summer School held in Belfast, summarised a definition that should apply to both *cultural* and *natural heritage*: “Conservation means the planning and management of resources to ensure their wise use and continuity of supply” This focuses on a connection that is directly relevant to today’s awareness of Planet Earth’s finite resources.

In the same European Architectural Heritage Year 1975 publication quoted earlier, the Foreword by the Countless of Dartmouth showed prescience. Prompted by 1973 oil crisis, it predicted “the end of the throw-away society. Recycling is the fashionable word. [...] This sudden turnabout in a carefree world of easy destruction is helpful to conservation. No longer is it just an emotional issue to want to save old buildings. It is both economical and essential” (Cantacuzino 1975, pp. 1-2).

Sections – limited so far – of the cultural heritage community are awakening to the environmental imperative to address the retention and adaptable reuse of not merely those structures and historic areas that are designated as cultural assets, but all of sound construction for their contribution to today’s global imperatives including Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

9.5. India: re-visiting Patrick Geddes; re-focusing on people

A longstanding champion of an inclusive approach to India’s urban heritage is Professor A.G. Krishna Menon. Writing in 1989 and comparing the Western origins of concepts in conservation with the growing body of knowledge deriving from indigenous experience in India (Menon 1989), Menon characterised the former as defensive, focused on preserving material authenticity in structures selected for survival, with the emphasis in the latter on the creative and dynamic continuity of community traditions and identity dating back millennia allied to improving the quality of life for citizens today (figs. 28, 29 and 30). To re-focus from objects to people, Menon stressed the need for a metamorphosis in heritage orthodoxy (Menon 1989, conclusion):

Conservation in India ... needs to shift its priority to what is *becoming* of our historic cities rather than on what they were. This shift in values is predicated on an understanding of the current Indian reality and future



Fig. 28. Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Street scene with mobile vendors on Ghandi Road, with, in the background, the 15th-century Teen Darwaza, one of the many surviving gates in the historic city. The *Historic City of Ahmadabad* was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2017. It is the epitome of a vibrant Indian city where *tangible* and *intangible* heritage are indissociable across the mainstream of local communities; notwithstanding which, much academic and bureaucratic endeavour is directed at compartmenting them to accord with imported constructs. 75 years after independence, it is this author's view that post-colonial perceptions should assume dominance. Photographed 2018 (Carsten Hermann).



Fig. 29. Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. Built shop with its front open to the street, Manek Chowk Road, adjacent to Ahmedabad's principal mosque, Jama Masjid. Photographed 2018 (Carsten Hermann).

prospects. There is also a need to understand that the true heritage of our country is in the traditional skills of our artisans and craftsmen and less in the objects they created which they knew would deteriorate in time. Thus, the specificity of the Indian situation is in the fact that *authenticity* [this author's emphasis] can be created.

Writing again in 2017, Menon notes that big-budget urban renewal initiatives in cities such as New Delhi, influenced by processes of globalisation and with acronyms such as SMART Cities, are not addressing basic civic needs, ignore the concepts of history and meaning that underpin the continuities of urban living in India, and are neither environmentally nor culturally appropriate (Menon 2017). He argues that “the nascent field of urban conservation in India offers the potential to review the dominant paradigms of urban planning and develop more context-specific and appropriate strategies for tackling the problems of Indian urbanisation” (Menon 2017, p. 34).

For this, Menon recommends re-visiting the pioneering approach demonstrated by Patrick Geddes in the reports he produced for Indian cities in the period 1915 to 1919 (Tyrwhitt 1947; Stephen 2015), at a time before the administrative and technocratic conventions of modern town planning, together with what Laurajane Smith has characterised as the elitist *authorized heritage discourse* (Smith 2006), acquired traction and gained dominance. Regarding the city as an organic system, each a unique human artefact in its equally unique local and regional environment rather than simply an example of an abstract typology, Geddes insisted on the need for comprehensive historical, geographic, biological, climatic, sociological, economic, cultural and institutional insight and knowledge, and on nurturing the shoots of innovation and creativity rather than restraining the evolution of a city based on its roots at some historical moment in time (Geddes 1968).



Fig. 30. Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, Cooking in public open space in the walled city between the food market and the Rani no Hajiro queens' tombs, typical of the contradictions, complexity and chaos that are a quintessential characteristic of the living heritage of India's historic towns and cities. Photographed 2018 (Carsten Hermann).



Fig. 31. Asmara, Eritrea, Horn of Africa. Comprehending the human needs and aspirations of the inhabitants of this multi-ethnic, multi-faith city was central to the tangible–intangible heritage ethos that drove this author's 2004 mission. Photographed 2014 (© Dennis Rodwell).

9.6. Holistic approach to an inhabited historic city: Asmara, Eritrea

A practical case with which this author has been closely involved is Asmara, the capital of Eritrea in the Horn of Africa. It is offered here as indicative of the range of real-life issues for which an inclusive approach to culture and cultural heritage can advance the binary objective of protecting heritage and managing inhabited historic cities. It subsumes indications of the range of partnerships that the heritage community needs to consolidate to position itself at the heart of the effective management beyond academic aspiration.

The objective of a 2004 assignment, immediately antecedent to the launch of the UNESCO *historic urban landscape* initiative, was to prepare over-arching urban planning guidelines for the “historic perimeter” of Asmara – covering an area of approximately 4 square kilometres – in the context of the city as a whole, coordinating specialist studies already prepared and in hand, all to the objective of promoting an integrated approach to heritage protection and sustainable urban development (Rodwell 2004a; Rodwell 2004b). The mission was undertaken within the framework of the Cultural Assets Rehabilitation Project (CARP), an initiative of the Eritrean government and people supported by the World Bank.

A major determinant was understanding and respect for Asmara's complex, inter-related and evolving tangible and intangible cultural heritage traditions, embracing indigenous cultures, the colonial and Modernist era, and the city's status as the capital of a re-emerging nation (figs. 31 and 32).

The factors embraced by this Mission included:

- Water supply and sanitation
- Food supply and markets.



Fig. 32. Asmara, Eritrea, Horn of Africa. The city skyline is dominated by the towers and spires of its churches and the minarets of its mosques. The relationship between land and building uses and urban morphology formed a core part of the guidelines for an integrated approach to heritage protection and sustainable urban development for the city. Photographed 2014 (© Dennis Rodwell).

- Housing supply and quality serving the city's diverse communities and varied lifestyles.
- Traffic and transportation within the historic perimeter and across the metropolitan area.
- Land and building uses, building heights, urban morphology and design issues appropriate to different locations in the historic perimeter and wider city.
- Identifying incompatible land and building uses (summarised as large-scale office buildings and hotels, retail stores and shopping complexes, depots and warehouses, large-scale workshops, factories and heavy industry).
- Identifying vacant land and underused plots and buildings and their suitability for development, including for recreational, other community uses, and public art.
- Over-arching historic building conservation guidelines allied to the need for training and related capacity-building initiatives.
- Identification of the need for an integrated city-region masterplan together with subjects for ongoing detailed studies, including socio-economic data collection; review of legislative, regulatory and administrative systems; support for community engagement; and the city's tourism potential.

A main driver for this assignment was to position basic human needs along-

side social processes, considerations of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in their inclusive sense, and relationships with the wider natural environment: promoting an *evolutionary and sociological approach* to the city in its entirety as an *urban ecosystem*, echoing Patrick Geddes' in his native Edinburgh and in India.

The assignment was immediately followed by the drafting of the Tentative List submission to UNESCO, and informed the nomination and management plan for the inscription of *Asmara: a Modernist City of Africa* at the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee in 2017.

9.7. Recognising the compendium of values of urban heritage

Heritage orthodoxy maintains a limited appraisal, attribution, enumeration of the values of urban heritage, with considerable ambiguity towards economic value, branding and tourism.

To supersede the third quarter of 20th century simplistic agenda of the specialist and selective survival of heritage objects and be in rhythm with 21st century agendas including Sustainable Development, Climate Change, and the New Urban Agenda, the *values* or *factors* (the word this author prefers) need to be expanded.

The encapsulation of this author's current working list reads:

- Community – all social values and relationships, especially everyday ones by inhabitants; tools include social and cognitive mapping at all levels.
- Usefulness – including ongoing adaptation and creative re-use; together with resource, related to the 3Rs of sustainability – reduce, reuse and re-cycle.
- Resource – in multiple senses, including environmental capital/embodied energy as well as financial; relates directly to CO² emissions and climate change.
- Environmental – including as exemplars of sustainable passive construction that promote human comfort, resource efficiency, and ecosystem protection without reliance on energy-demanding technology (Larraín de Andraca, Rodwell 2021).
- Cultural – broadly defined; especially as recognised and appreciated by inhabiting communities, through processes of citizen engagement rather than just 'things'.

Orthodox heritage values are just one of the factors in this Compendium.

The Compendium presupposes that a substantive shift to systems approaches in the appraisal and management of historic cities are prioritised and introduced (Ripp, Rodwell 2016; Ripp 2021), accompanied by a move from exclusive *heritage management* to inclusive *resource management*.

10. Conclusion

November 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of UNESCO's flagship World Heritage Convention. It is a time for celebration of its many achievements as well as an opportunity to assess re-calibrations.

The contexts in time between 1972 and 2022 have dramatically changed, from the post-Second War period of optimism and recovery through to the emergence of the defining global agendas of our time, the Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change. In the same period, the world's human population has tripled. The imperative of environmental conservation – the planning and management of resources to ensure their wise use and continuity of supply – is augmented. In the cultural heritage field, however, conservation remains a specialism, at a time when the needs of environmental conservation anticipate that the field of cultural heritage conservation is broadened to become mainstream. Heritage orthodoxy, whose roots date from the third quarter of the 20th century, has not yet advanced to embrace this reality. It remains a specialism, one whose core doctrinal documents, notably the *Charte de Venise* and the *Venice Charter*, have never been synchronised and reflect conflicting philosophies, with consequences which this author considers have done immeasurable harm to the *authenticity* and *integrity* of the world's tangible heritage, not least in historic cities.

Heritage orthodoxy remains focused on tangible heritage and delimited manifestations, and the spectrum of factors that coalesce and interact in the dynamics of inhabited historic cities are not integrated into the World Heritage system. Dissonances are not limited to single pairs of texts; they infuse much of the system, including in the rival 2011 UNESCO *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* and the 2011 ICOMOS *Valletta Principles*. Translation and interpretation errors impact on baseline documents critical to the processes from the nomination through inscription to management and monitoring of World Heritage Sites. The miscarriages of justice in the delisting of *Dresden Elbe Valley* and *Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City* compromise the integrity of the World Heritage system; the errors have become institutionalised and anticipate earliest response.

The Preamble to the 1972 Convention calls for “a convention establishing an effective system of collective protection of the cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value, organized on a permanent basis and in accordance with modern scientific methods”. The case studies featured in this article strongly suggest that the system's *modus operandi* has some distance to go before the ‘Critical 3Cs of Effective Protection’, Certainty, Clarity, and Consistency, are recognised and applied. It is the author's hope that this article will contribute to the achievement of this, imparting a strengthened foundation for the coming decades of the implementation of the flagship World Heritage Convention.

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Abstract

Urban heritage constitutes the major unresolved challenge facing conservation theorists and practitioners in this 21st century. Inhabited historic cities lie at the intersection of human geography, territorial and detailed urban planning, economic development, delimited heritage agendas, and global environmental and sustainability priorities. By the third quarter of the 20th century – from roots traced from the Italian Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment in Europe – cultural heritage orthodoxy became systematised and institutionalised with the aspiration to establish and promote universal principles for the protection and conservation of designated heritage assets. Notably in the context of the world's diversity and wealth of inhabited historic cities, the core premise has been challenged from multiple directions, including contradictions at the heart of the World Heritage system. As we mark the 50th anniversary of the 1972 UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, this paper interrogates this conundrum from first principles.

Keywords: Dresden Elbe Valley, Liverpool – Maritime Mercantile City, living heritage, UNESCO, urban landscape, Charte de Venise/Venice Charter.

Il patrimonio urbano costituisce la maggiore sfida irrisolta per i teorici e i professionisti della conservazione nel XXI secolo. Le città storiche abitate si trovano all'intersezione tra geografia umana, pianificazione urbana territoriale e di dettaglio, sviluppo economico, contenute agende per il patrimonio culturale e priorità ambientali e di sostenibilità di ordine globale. Dal terzo quarto del XX secolo – con radici nel Rinascimento italiano e nell'Illuminismo europeo – si è sistematizzata e istituzionalizzata una "ortodossia" nel campo del patrimonio culturale, con l'aspirazione di stabilire e promuovere principi universali per la protezione e la conservazione dei beni culturali. Nel contesto della diversità a livello mondiale delle città storiche abitate, la premessa alla base di questo discorso è stata messa in crisi su diversi fronti, esponendo anche contraddizioni al cuore del sistema legato al "Patrimonio Mondiale". In concomitanza con il cinquantesimo anniversario della Convenzione UNESCO del 1972 concernente la protezione del patrimonio culturale e naturale dell'Umanità, l'articolo indaga questo paradosso a partire dai primi principi.

Parole chiave: Valle dell'Elba (Dresda), Liverpool – Città Marittima Mercantile, patrimonio vivente, UNESCO, paesaggio urbano, Charte de Venise/Venice Charter.

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