



Building the Future

The Role of Heritage in the
Sustainable Development of Yangon



Report of an International Conference
held in Yangon, Myanmar
January 15–17, 2015

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Acknowledgments

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YHT believes that the conservation of Yangon’s rich cultural and built heritage plays a vital role in making Yangon one of the most livable and profitable cities in Asia. As part of their work they advocate for heritage conservation, develop draft guidelines, advise local and regional government, consult the general public, undertake specific conservation projects, facilitate trainings, and organize studies and conferences within a rapidly evolving social and economic climate. yangonheritagetrust.org

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Preface

Bonnie Burnham, President, World Monuments Fund
U Thant Myint-U, Chairman, Yangon Heritage Trust

In the fall of 2013, Yangon's historic center was included on the World Monuments Watch, to raise awareness about its exceptional heritage and the extraordinary situation of the city as it confronts the future. Since then, World Monuments Fund (WMF) and the Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) have developed a close collaboration, which led to this forum, *Building the Future: The Role of Heritage in the Sustainable Development of Yangon*, in January 2015.

A great deal has happened since our organizations first joined forces. We have seen through many articles in the international press how Yangon has evolved, with a rapidly developing economy, a huge demand for property and occupancy, and the consequent pressure on an aging stock of fine old buildings that now may and must find a new life.

In Yangon, and Myanmar in general, there is a huge drive for modernization. In many Asian cities, and throughout the world, we have seen urban landscapes transformed, often at the expense of their building traditions and picturesque pasts. Will the same thing happen here? Yangon is poised at a critical moment. It has an opportunity to forge new ground by fully integrating heritage within the decision-making frameworks of a new urban vision. It is this fascinating opportunity that brought together professionals and policymakers from Myanmar and around the globe to share experiences and promote innovation.

The Yangon Heritage Trust has taken up the mantle of preserving the historic center as its champion. World Monuments Fund hopes to be the facilitator of this vision, and this is why we are partnering to help define this new horizon. YHT understands that the heritage of Yangon is not simply its well-known colonial buildings. Rather it is the dynamic environment of both people and places that comprise the lively streetscapes, close-knit neighborhoods, and iconic views of the historic downtown. Understanding, protecting and effectively utilizing this mosaic of heritage is integral to the success of the future urbanism of Yangon in the larger sense.

This forum was supported principally by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, with additional support from the Asian Cultural Council and several individual donors. WMF and its collaborators chose to make this investment because YHT felt it was the most important thing that the international community could do—to bring to the decision-makers of this community the ideas, parallel experiences, and recommendations of experts elsewhere, and above all to convey our conviction that the heritage of this city can be its crown jewel, its truly distinguishing feature, in the future—the asset that will both attract people and support their wellbeing. We hope that the results of this discussion, outlined in this report, help to formulate policy that will underpin the sustainable development of this historic place. However, we also believe that, as in so many other instances, a great value from this gathering will be the relationships that were established and continue long into the future. We share a common passion and concern for the historic resources of our planet. Through collective action, we can support the idea that the unique character of this city, as it is today, so deeply infused with the historic events that have happened here, will shape its future.



Introduction

Kecia Fong, Samantha Earl, and Erica Avrami

Yangon is at a pivotal point in its urban development. Events of recent years have produced the conditions for significant change, including the relocation of the capitol to Nay Pyi Taw in 2005, the approval of a new national constitution in 2008, the election of a new government in 2010, and the easing of international sanctions in 2012. Additionally the passage of a new Foreign Investment law in 2012 brought new opportunities to the country. These changes are having a profound effect on the built environment of Yangon. Framed by many as a last frontier ripe for modernization, Yangon is struggling to envision its future. The modified liberalization of the economy within a weak but emerging regulatory framework, limited professional expertise, and mounting pressures for development render Yangon vulnerable to hasty decisions with potentially lasting effects.

Unlike most Southeast Asian cities of its size, Yangon retains a remarkable degree of its historic built environment and the socio-cultural interactions that heritage supports. These factors distinguish Yangon amongst its urban contemporaries. How Yangon will respond to the intense pressure to modernize remains uncertain. In anticipation of the imminent and dramatic changes to the urban landscape, the Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) was established in 2012 to promote and protect the architectural heritage of Yangon as a crucial element of the city's vibrancy. Yangon Heritage Trust advocates an integrated planning approach with heritage as a critical component of modernity and conservation serving as a catalyst for urban revitalization and sustainable growth.

Over the past two years, YHT, the Yangon City Development Committee, the Association of Myanmar Architects, and others have accomplished an impressive amount given available resources and limited regulatory infrastructure. Expressions of goodwill and interest have arrived from various international agencies, governments, universities, and individuals to support the conservation and sustainable development of Yangon. While the arguments for built heri-

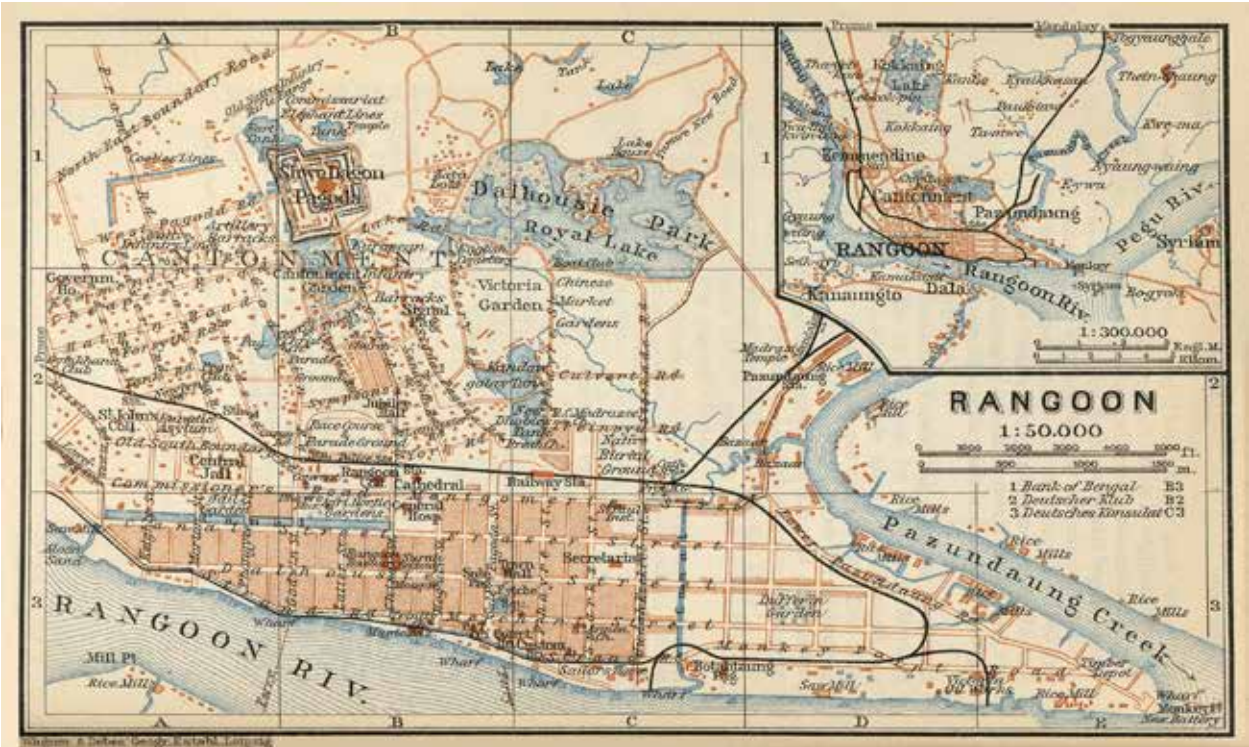


FIGURE 1. Historic map of Rangoon, showing the downtown at the bottom left.



FIGURE 2. New development in downtown Yangon, such as the AGD Bank on the left, often towers over the older structures, fracturing the historic urban landscape.

itage conservation as an aspect of modernization are gaining traction, there is a need to make a stronger case for its economic viability. In 2014 Yangon was included on the World Monuments Watch to raise awareness about the value of its historic urban landscape. That same year, YHT and World Monuments Fund agreed to host an international forum to elucidate the economic potential of urban conservation and advance strategic mechanisms for integrating heritage within sustainable development planning. In preparing for the forum, several issues and areas of need have emerged regarding heritage conservation policy in Yangon:

- **Regulation and Operational Frameworks**

There is a lack of existing data, criteria, guidelines, and regulations to assist the government and other entities in the identification, conservation, and redevelopment of heritage properties or proposed historic zones within urban planning policies.

- **Real Estate Procedures and Property Rights**

Lack of clarity on rights, terms, and procedures for conservation, redevelopment, and transfer of historic properties is exacerbated in many instances by unclear or contested ownership.

- **Financial Policies and Incentives**

Market-based financial tool and incentives, such as tax credits, access to low interest loans, transfer of development rights are examples of mechanisms needed to encourage sympathetic and complementary heritage conservation and development policies for sustainable growth.

- **Public Education, Professional Training, and Institutional Capacity Building**

To advance heritage discourse and practice, there is a need to extend concepts of heritage to be understood by the public as a key element in the vibrancy of Yangon. There is similarly a need to enhance professional and institutional development to support such a vision.

- **Conservation Initiatives**

A number of conservation initiatives, including international collaborations and site-based projects are proposed or underway in Yangon. Ensuring local engagement will be critical to developing these initiatives as replicable models.



FIGURE 3. Yangon's Economic Bank 2, formerly the Chartered Bank, is one of the downtown's historic Art Deco buildings.

Yangon Today

Yangon City and Greater Yangon are home to approximately 5.5 million people¹ and cover 1535 sq km.² Downtown Yangon contains the highest concentration of historic structures within its 6.91 sq km area.³ The city is bounded on the south by the Yangon River, on the west by the Hlaing River, and on the east by the Bago. Shwedagon Pagoda, a site of holy pilgrimage and the most important landmark of Yangon, long marked the northern reaches of the city. Today it sits squarely between historic downtown and the proposed secondary business district, currently named Mindama CDB. The geological configurations of Yangon have historically oriented urban growth northward. While this remains true today, new development has begun to appear across the rivers toward the southeast in Thanlyin with Star City, and to the west in Hlaing Thar Yar with Pun Hlaing Housing. Additional developments are under consideration. Downtown Yangon is in a seismic zone and sits at sea level, raising questions about disaster preparedness and climate change-related sea level rise.

Yangon developed as an international port city and has been a center of trade, commerce, and cultural innovation for centuries. After the 1852 Anglo-Burmese War, Dr. William Montgomerie from Singapore and Lieutenant Alexander Fraser laid out a Cartesian grid for the city anchored by Sule Pagoda as the center point and Shwedagon to the north. This grid remains largely intact and constitutes the downtown historic core of the city today. Many of its buildings reflect the social, political and economic landscape of the colonial era in which they were built, but it is their continuous use and adaptation by generations of city residents that renders them a facet of Yangon cultural heritage. The built heritage of Yangon is crucial to understanding the history of the city and the lives of its residents.

Yangon served as the country's capital from 1948 to 2005 and as the center of British colonial administration from 1854 to 1948, with brief occupation by Japan during World War II. Since the relocation of the capital to Nay Pyi Taw in 2005, questions have arisen about the fate of the many monumental structures the ministries once occupied. The dramatic influx of investment and its attendant development pressures have contributed to an environment of speculation, inflated property values, and a desire for short term profit. This is manifested in the demolition of historic structures and the erection of new buildings with little regard for the existing physical and social context of the urban fabric. New buildings are frequently erected at twice the height and massing of the structures they are replacing. While the function of new buildings may remain consistent, such as mixed-use residential and commercial occupancy, the density, massing, and materials often differ dramatically from their surroundings.

Many of the downtown historic buildings were constructed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However an inventory of historic properties would likely include buildings up through the mid twentieth century. The late-nineteenth and early twentieth century structures are predominantly brick masonry buildings finished in plaster and the mid-twentieth century buildings are steel frame reinforced concrete. The monumental structures that most recently housed ministerial functions are in the best physical condition and frequently were more regularly updated with modern facilities to support necessary office functions. The vast majority of residential and commercial buildings, while structurally stable, have lacked maintenance or upgrading for the past half century. In the absence of building codes and zoning plans, repairs and changes have been *ad hoc* and piecemeal. At a city-wide level, many planning and infrastructure issues have been neglected or only partially addressed. Ownership complexities and the absence of building committees or facility managers have also contributed to deteriorating physical conditions. The physical urban infrastructure is aged and overburdened. There is frequent flooding in certain parts of the city. Drainage, potable water, consistent electricity and waste disposal are priority physical infrastructure concerns.

There are no available statistics for the percentage of freehold or leasehold land in the city, nor is there a registry of ownership or rental properties. Construction is monitored through the issuing of permits and building completion certificates as granted by YCDC. Many construction projects are illegally performed by unlicensed contractors who simultaneously serve as the developer. This practice is rampant in some townships such as Thingangyun.⁴

Since 2010, the real estate market in Yangon has become increasingly dynamic and market values have risen exponentially since the easing of sanctions in 2012. An expanding economy, a surplus of cash derived from extractive industries, and the influx of foreign investors, tourists, and foreign aid agencies have collectively contributed to an environment of inflated property



FIGURE 4. The Yangon Division Court building, circa 1900, was bombed during World War II and the damage is still evident.

values. During a period of relative isolation, the last several decades in Myanmar were marked by an unpredictable economy and an unreliable banking system. Those with cash invested their savings and profits in the purchase of land and property, as these areas were perceived to be the only reliable assets available. Media sources regularly report on the escalating state of the Yangon real estate market. In 2013, Bloomberg stated that the price of real estate in Yangon had exceeded that of New York City.⁵ Similarly, broker CBRE Group Inc. reported that as of 2013 rent for both residential and office space had on average increased fivefold;⁶ and a recent article in the May 2014 edition of *Irrawaddy* cited UNICEF as paying \$87,000 in monthly rent for its 33,000 square-foot office space.⁷

The most recent development to impact the physical layout and form of the city is the explosion in car ownership, leading to severe traffic congestion, a demand for parking, and widening of the roads. The narrowing of the once ample sidewalks has directly impacted the characteristic street life of the city depriving street vendors and consumers of a variety of economic and social exchanges the sidewalks once supported. Another casualty of the street-widening campaign has been the elimination of trees, reducing arboreal coverage of Yangon's once green streets.

UN statistics on urban development are well known; more than 50% of the world's population currently resides in cities. By 2050 that figure is predicted to rise to 70% with the majority of growth occurring across Asia and Africa.⁸ The global interdependence of cities and economies is undisputed. The proliferation of regionalized identity debates presents a complexity to urban dynamics. What is underway in Yangon is reflective of and pertinent to these trends. Within Myanmar, Yangon is the locus of Burmese heritage debates as the discourse challenges commonly accepted notions of what constitutes national heritage and what place heritage has in visions of a modern Burmese future. Ultimately, the conservation of built heritage in Yangon contributes to farther-reaching agendas of sustainable development, governance, and an evolving civic responsibility.

The Conference

WMF and YHT joined forces to address the challenges underway in Yangon. Through this conference, they sought to promote the integration of heritage within the sustainable development and modernization of city and to demonstrate the positive economic contributions of conservation. The program included a series of panels engaging local government and nonprofit representatives as well as international organizations and experts. This report serves to document the conference proceedings and to support further development of dynamic heritage policy within Yangon.

Notes

- 1 The most recent Union wide census was conducted in 2014 but data is not yet publicly available.
- 2 Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2013, *The Project for the Strategic Urban Development Plan of the Greater Yangon: Final Report I, Part I*, p. xxii.
- 3 Japan International Cooperation Agency, 2013, *The Project for the Strategic Urban Development Plan of the Greater Yangon: Final Report I, Part II*, p. 21.
- 4 <http://www.mmtimes.com/index.php/business/property-news/10939-residents-ask-for-government-help.html>
- 5 'Yangon more expensive than NYC' <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-07-29/yangon-more-expensive-than-nyc-sparking-boom-real-estate.html>
- 6 *Ibid.*
- 7 <http://www.irrawaddy.org/burma/unicef-confirms-87000-month-rent-rangoon-office.html> It is important to note that UNICEF is likely not alone in the payment of such astronomical rental fees.
- 8 http://www.who.int/gho/urban_health/situation_trends/urban_population_growth_text/en/

Opening Address

*H. E. U Hla Myint, Mayor of Yangon on behalf of
H. E. U Myint Swe, Chief Minister of Yangon Region*

Ladies, Gentlemen, and distinguished guests, Mingalarbar. I am honored to welcome you all to the conference “Building the Future: The Role of Heritage in the Sustainable Development of Yangon.” I would like to thank World Monuments Fund and the Yangon Heritage Trust for their indispensable support in organizing this event. I am delighted that such a distinguished array of local and international contributors is taking part in these crucial discussions over the next days.

The planning of this conference began over a year ago, when Yangon was included in the World Monuments Watch. Recently, many institutions and individuals in Myanmar have become increasingly aware of the exceptional economic assets we have in Yangon’s unique urban heritage. With these assets, Yangon can aim to build one of the most livable cities in the region. Yet these very assets are under mounting pressure as our city develops rapidly to accommodate huge growth and change. Discussing and finding solutions to these urban heritage and landscape issues is tantamount to achieving our goals for the city.

Our heritage and cultural practices define the uniqueness of Yangon. They are the reason the world looks upon our city and sees something they cannot find elsewhere in today’s increasingly globalizing society. If we can make our heritage an integral part of our planning for the future, if we can invest in one of our most important assets, we will create opportunities for sustainable growth that cannot be matched by other cities, especially in Southeast Asia.

Toward this end, the Yangon City Development Committee has taken important steps in the past years:

- they are moving away from the demolition of heritage buildings,
- they have established the Urban Planning Unit, which is incorporating consideration of Yangon’s heritage into planning decision-making,
- they have supported the Yangon Heritage Trust’s blue plaques program,
- they have begun the process to review height controls and other zoning tools for Yangon, and
- they have cleaned up public parks and gardens, a major part of Yangon’s heritage as a green city.

But many challenges still remain ahead as we confront the rapid pace of new development, the upkeep of urban infrastructure, and the health and livelihoods of the city’s residents. New industries, such as tourism, provide an important opportunity to improve the economy and built fabric of the city, but will only be successful if they are managed to protect the social fabric of Yangon. Heritage conservation serves as a critical tool in such efforts, by strengthening the traditional relationships between the people and places of the city and ensuring its livability for all communities.

Yangon is at a tipping point. This city can become one of the most livable and economically profitable cities in Southeast Asia through the well-planned combination of modern development and heritage conservation. My hope is that this forum will address some of the key challenges that we face in achieving this vision and result in new recommendations to harness the economic, social, and livability benefits that conservation of our city’s heritage can provide. I very much look forward to receiving the recommendations resulting from this meeting.

On behalf of Chief Minister U Myint Swe, I express my sincere thanks to all participants for your attendance here in Yangon. I thank you also for your interest in the future of our great city. Your participation here will no doubt greatly assist our efforts to ensure that Yangon’s uniqueness is conserved for the social and economic benefit of present and future generations.



Keynote Remarks

H. E. Derek Mitchell, United States Ambassador to Myanmar

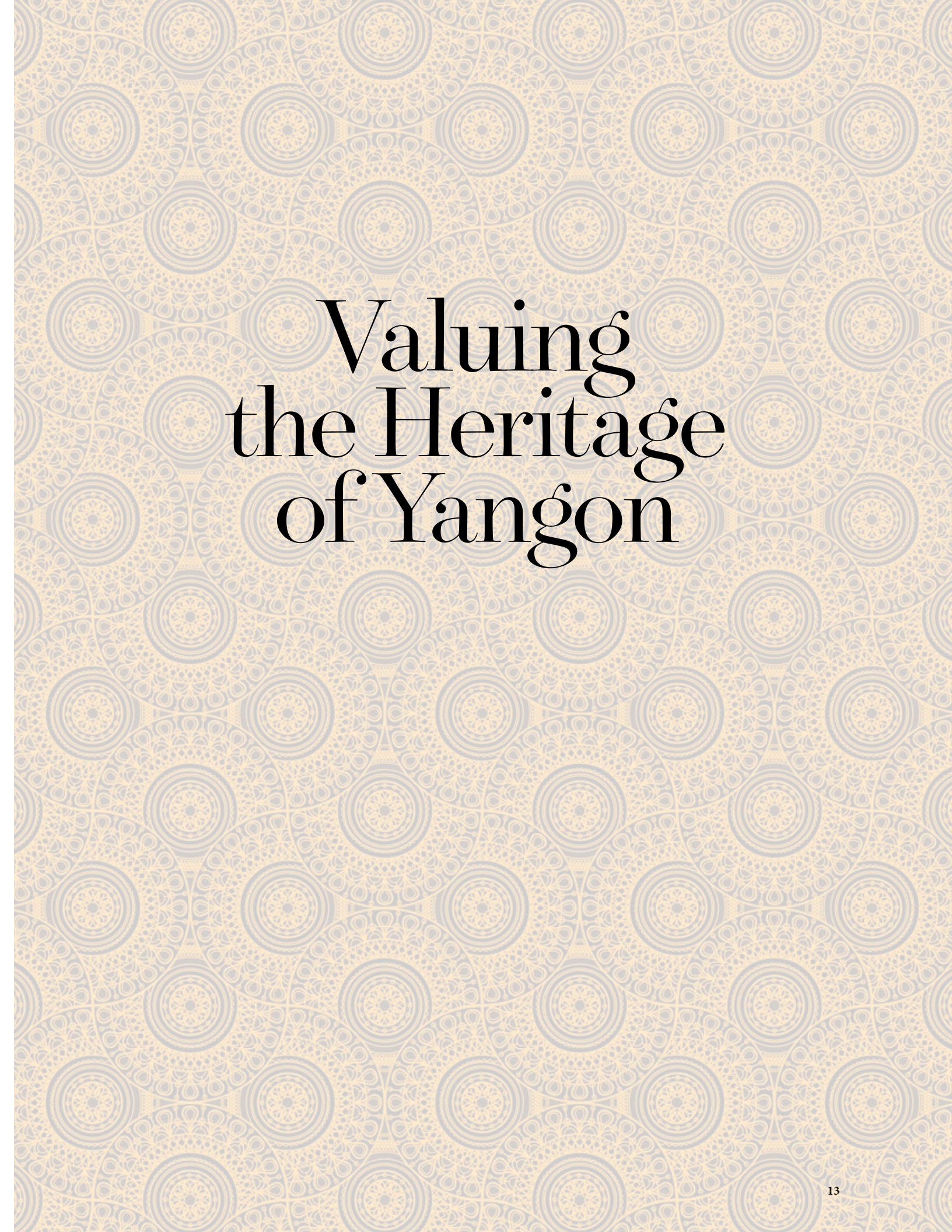
It was an honor to address the World Monuments Fund (WMF)–Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) conference on “The Role of Heritage in the Sustainable Development of Yangon” that took place from January 15 to 17, 2015. The US Embassy recognizes the importance of cultural, environmental, and architectural heritage preservation, and the unique opportunity this country has to develop Yangon—and the rest of the country—into a model of sustainable twenty-first century development.

As anyone who has traveled to Myanmar knows, this is a country of enormous historical depth and physical beauty. The former capital of Yangon has a unique and remarkable past, and contains elements that will remain essential to the country’s future success. Smart planning will help to preserve the qualities of Yangon that make it among the great historic cities of Asia. Cities have their own unique identities, souls as it were, and architecture and traditional ways of life should be cherished and celebrated. Most countries in Asia have failed in this regard—to preserve their heritage, the soul of their great cities, and often their physical and social environment at the altar of rampant development. Once lost, forever gone. There is still hope that Yangon may avoid this fate for the sake of current and future generations.

WMF and YHT are doing heroic work in this regard. Their principles of heritage conservation are fully consistent with responsible modern urban development. They consult with those who have been living in and around proposed project sites, with those who make a living in these neighborhoods, with local civil society groups, regional and national government, and experts in fields from architecture to economic development. They promote training and capacity building among local craftspeople and engineers to ensure that their efforts now are sustainable into the future. They analyze and document both the physical and the historical aspects of each site to fit them into a larger context of development. In short, they seek to ensure Yangon remains a unique city that balances its past, present and future, evolving thoughtfully to avoid becoming either a platform for rapid, destructive development, or conversely a static, ancient relic.

The U.S. Embassy seeks to do its part in partnership with the people of Yangon and others in Myanmar to support the effort to preserve this country’s natural and cultural heritage while assisting its development into a model twenty-first century sustainable city. For instance, we are assisting with the upgrade of the Waziya Cinema in downtown Yangon to help make that last remaining theater along historic “Cinema Row” into a centerpiece of the arts in the old city. With support from the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, we are underwriting WMF to help preserve the historic Shwe-nandaw monastery in Mandalay, a remnant of the old Glass Palace built by King Mindon, and one of the finest surviving examples of a teak wood palace in Southeast Asia. The project not only assists with the monastery’s preservation but also uses modern technologies to share best practices with local preservationists so they may take on projects related to historic wood structures throughout the country.

I was proud to take part in the WMF-YHT conference in January, and am pleased that the United States will continue to assist the people of Myanmar to preserve its unique cultural and environmental heritage—its heart and soul—while developing into a twenty-first century model for generations to come.



Valuing the Heritage of Yangon

Planning for Heritage Conservation in Yangon

U Toe Aung

Introduction

Yangon is the only city in Asia with its historic core largely intact, which is principally due to an extended period of political and economic isolation. Yangon has an estimated 2,000 properties that pre-date 1950. The city's historic heart reflects the uniquely rich and cosmopolitan past of the city—pre-colonial structures such as pagodas and temples, grand mansions and administrative buildings from the colonial period, as well as more recent built heritage.

The historic core is also the commercial center and location of choice for the many international businesses and brands establishing a presence in Yangon. After a long-denied desire for modernization, many of the original properties are being demolished to make way for modern buildings. Almost invariably this means that original three and four-storey historic properties are being replaced by modern eight to twelve-story structures that are transforming the cityscape at a rapid pace, and putting enormous pressure on public infrastructure. Appreciation of the economic value of historic buildings is largely absent, there is little awareness about heritage conservation among the resident population, and local business and construction companies lack the knowledge and technical skills necessary to modernize with respect to the historic streetscape. Investment capacity among residents also appears limited. Local livelihoods are changing, developers are moving in, and original residents are moving out as the cityscape is changing drastically. Given the pace of development, there is only a short window of opportunity before the unique character of Yangon's city center will be lost forever.

Because of decades of negligence, basic public infrastructure is insufficient to meet the needs of the residents, compounding problems related to frequent flooding, waste management and sanitation, and traffic congestion. The influx of new urban migrants and more cars has also increased pressure on existing services. The Yangon City Development Committee's (YCDC) objective for development of the historic core is to upgrade infrastructure and improve living conditions within the following parameters:

- Not to increase the density (population, traffic congestion, etc.)
- Maintain the residential function and livelihood of current residents
- Keep the historic identity, unique character, and streetscape

The economic forces unleashed since the opening of the country have brought investors and developers to Yangon. Keen to enter the market, luckily some recognize the economic potential of heritage buildings. Indeed, already a number of public and private buildings are being renovated and given a new lease on life, which is slowly changing the local mindset regarding the modern use of historic buildings. Thus Yangon needs additional incentives or tools to help unlock the investment potential of residents and other parties to finance renovation of publicly and privately owned properties in the historic center.

Basic Policies in Heritage Conservation

The “Strategic Urban Development Plan of the Greater Yangon” (conducted by JICA in 2013) sets out the development vision for Greater Yangon with the slogan of “Yangon 2040, The Peaceful and Beloved Yangon, A City of Green and Gold,” aiming to achieve peace through Myanmar democratization and making the city beloved by all its citizens. The slogan also consists of rich green images of the natural environment and gold lighting of Shwedagon Pagoda. Based on the slogan, the four pillars of the development vision are summarized as follows:

1. To be an international hub city
2. To be a comfortable city
3. To be a well-managed infrastructure city
4. To be a city of good governance



FIGURE 5. Development Visions of Greater Yangon

The strategic plan calls for action on “heritage and urban landscape” in five specific areas. Some limited progress has been made on points 1–3, but there is no foreseeable commitment of resources or time within the local government for points 4 and 5, underscoring the urgency of these matters:

1. Recording of Historical and Cultural Heritage
2. Establishment of the guidelines for Urban Regeneration plan Utilizing Heritage Building
3. Establishment of the Management Plan for the Implementation of Conservation
4. Cultivation of Human Resources of the Expert for Heritage Related Construction
5. Implementation to Renovate Heritage Buildings and Urban Landscape

The detailed explanations and background of each basic policy are as follows:

1. Recording of Historical and Cultural Heritage

In order to entrust historical and cultural heritage to the future generation, the history and physical dimensions of the city must be recorded. Among the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in this city are historic buildings and urban heritage zones as well as their surrounding environments. As for tangible cultural property, there are some lists for the conservation of historical buildings. Therefore, it is urgent to expand the common database. These databases are expected to be utilized as a basis for various planning initiatives such as policy development for the preservation of historic buildings and the urban landscape.

2. Establishment of the Guidelines for Urban Regeneration Plan Utilizing Heritage Buildings

In order to preserve historical buildings and to regenerate the unique urban landscape as a property of the city, it is urgent to develop guidelines to be shared among urban citizens. For the preservation of the urban landscape, some guidelines in response to different scales are required: (1) the building rule for the conservation of historic building, (2) the district rule for the conservation of the urban landscape, and (3) the whole city rule for the conservation of the silhouette of the city that centers on the Shwedagon Pagoda. By developing guidelines in accordance with the rule from one unit (the building) to the whole area (the city), it is expected to maintain a unique image of the city with certain order.

3. Establishment of the Management Plan for the Implementation of Conservation

For the implementation of the conservation plan, there is a need to establish a mechanism to commence the projects through certain organizations. Currently, the building application processes are being carried out by YCDC. However, measuring the historic or cultural value of buildings is limited. To implement conservation, appropriate evaluations by experts, guidelines to determine whether the plan is suitable as a preservation plan, and mechanisms for licensing need to be established.

4. Cultivation of Human Resources of the Expert for Heritage Related Construction

For the implementation of the conservation plan, it is necessary to cooperate with a variety of experts. While there is a need for specialists such as urban planners, architects, and historians in the planning stage, it is also urgent to train construction technicians who specialize in conservation repairs of historic buildings in the construction stage. Currently, these types of experts are scarce in Yangon City, therefore, repairs have not been carried out appropriately. For the implementation of the conservation plan, human resource development in each stage such as research, planning, construction, and maintenance is indispensable.

5. Implementation to Renovate Heritage Buildings and Urban Landscapes

It might be effective to carry out pilot projects by government agencies, prior to the implementation of the development by the private sector. In particular, most of the state-owned buildings in the central part of the downtown, which have been mostly used as the former government offices, have not been used enough as urban facilities for citizens. It is desirable to conserve, renovate, and convert these buildings in order for them to be used as new urban hubs.

Urban Landscape and Zoning

The city is continuously changing. The current urban area is composed of numerous buildings that have been constructed in accordance with the social, economic, and cultural needs of their time, and were woven in a multi-layered texture in each area. Currently, in the context of economic growth, the city of Yangon is exposed to rapid changes caused by private development. Rapid changes in the city resulted in the significant degradation of the urban environment and the fragmentation of the urban space. In order to regulate these rapid changes, it would be most efficient to create an urban landscape plan in each district, and to clearly define the areas to be conserved and to be developed. To conserve urban space does not mean letting the environment remain untouched. It is a method to regulate urbanization for a better quality of life. In order to adapt a unique, diverse, and attractive urban space for the future generation, it is urgent to record the current state of the city's rich cultural resources, to establish guidelines that can be shared by various stakeholders, and to construct a process for implementation.

YCDC is currently preparing the Yangon City Zoning Plan. This includes zoning regulations for the historic core. Important steps have been taken in recent months within the relevant committee, which includes YCDC, national level representatives, as well as civil society representatives such as the Yangon Heritage Trust and Association of Myanmar Architects. Through constructive dialogue a common understanding has been reached about a designated heritage zone in the historic core in which building height restrictions apply, as well as preservation of architectural heritage. Currently steps are underway to formulate specific building guidelines for the heritage zone, for which international insights and experience is much needed. Although YCDC's budget for urban infrastructure investment is limited, funds are currently distributed to local constituencies in Yangon City to improve streetscapes and infrastructure on a neighborhood basis.



FIGURE 6. Yangon Heritage Trust Proposed Downtown Conservation Area



FIGURE 7. Minister's Office, also known as the Secretariat, is a large government complex in need of conservation and redevelopment

Heritage Conservation by EU Funded Project

YCDC formed the Urban Planning Division in November 2011 for the future development of Yangon. To build capacities within the newly formed division, the European Union funding a 2-year project from 2013 to 2015, "Capacity Building of the YCDC Urban Planning Unit for a Better Yangon," which was undertaken by the YCDC in cooperation with its partner, Myanmar Egress, and its associate, the Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT). This project identified three primary drivers for elevating urban planning in Yangon to a level commensurate with the urban challenges that Yangon is facing ever more urgently: 1) improve managerial and technical urban planning capacity at YCDC; 2) include community outreach and consultation into urban planning policy-making and implementation; and 3) include heritage protection into urban planning. This project assists YCDC and YHT in strengthening institutional and operational capacities of the YCDC Urban Planning Division and YHT in three key areas:

- Enhance quality of urban planning and practice, in particular heritage planning framework
- Make planning processes more inclusive and accessible to citizens, including awareness raising for heritage conservation
- Provide capacity building, surveying and mapping equipment, data and software to embark on an inventory of heritage buildings

As part of this EU project, three studies are underway: 1) a built form study, 2) a livelihood study, and 3) a general international comparative study into heritage management guidelines and regulations. These studies provide a solid analysis of the technical state of the public infrastructure, the livelihoods of downtown Yangon's citizens, and how international lessons might inform Yangon's heritage management approaches. Both YCDC and YHT acknowledge that an assessment of the financial and economic feasibility of Yangon's urban regeneration with respect to its heritage would also be crucial.

Heritage Conservation by Asian Development Bank (ADB)-Funded Project

The new master plan for development aims for Yangon "to be a multi-ethnic city of heritage, culture and tourism," but it does not include detailed studies nor come with financial support for implementation. This fuels fears that development will continue to precede planning, and threatens the loss of one of the last intact unique urban heritage areas in Asia. The YCDC and

civil society, as represented by the Yangon Heritage Trust, agree that a planning strategy for preservation and investment in the downtown area is a priority issue.

In January 2013, YCDC made a request to the Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA) to support YCDC and YHT in designing an investment plan to use heritage renovation and integrated infrastructure development to catalyze urban regeneration in Yangon. CDIA missions have engaged the relevant departments in YCDC YHT, real estate developers, investors, and other stakeholders to define the scope of potential CDIA support to YCDC. In October 2014, YCDC and YHT applied to CDIA for technical assistance in preparing a Pre-Feasibility Study for Urban Heritage Conservation and Regeneration Project in Yangon, which CDIA approved, providing up to US\$ 350,000 in resources. The pre-feasibility study (PFS), launched at the end of February 2015, focuses on a maximum of three pilot areas in Yangon's historic core and includes the following components:

1. Development of Vision and Plan for the Historic Core

Based on the shared vision and guidelines for the urban conservation zones by YCDC and YHT, visualize the development vision for each of the pilot areas.

2. Identify Specific Opportunities/ Projects for Heritage Renovation

Determine the development and investment opportunities and constraints in each of the pilot areas and create a property portfolio detailing the technical, legal and ownership details, as well as historical background. The portfolio will also include an indication and visual impression of the development potential of selected heritage buildings, both those that are potentially bankable projects and those that have redevelopment potential as public/cultural facilities.

3. Linking these projects to Downstream Finance

Assist YCDC and YHT in business development for the heritage renovation projects in the portfolio, linking them to finance, exploring models that have been successful in heritage revitalization, and marketing the portfolio to local and foreign investors, developers, companies and institutions. The PSF will also assess the opportunity for a targeted housing finance vehicle that can help unlock current investment potential among residents, and evaluate the feasibility of a Special Purpose Vehicle for integrated neighborhood regeneration and infrastructure improvement that could receive funds from international financiers.

4. Additional Resources Required for Implementation

Identify current gaps in the regulatory policy framework and institutional capacity to realize heritage renovation projects and identify the current gaps in knowledge and skills for respectful urban upgrading among local developers and construction companies, as well as formulate a strategy and action plan in which the neighborhood upgrading initiative is used to spearhead an improvement in the current situation.

Conclusion

Yangon is truly unique because of the people who call it home, their cultural practices and daily economies. For this reason, making sure that Yangon is a livable city for its residents is a major aspect of conserving its uniqueness. Livability includes aspects such as environmental sustainability, green spaces open for the public to enjoy, access to basic services, and clean surroundings, as well as economic factors like job creation and attracting foreign companies and investors. Thus, creating the necessary conditions for locals to continue to use and reside in Yangon's historic center must be a priority for city planners and government departments.

Urban Heritage of Yangon

Daw Hlaing Maw Oo

The urban heritage of Yangon is comprised of both: *Tangible Heritage*, which includes natural and cultural heritage along with human-made heritage indicative of the urban history along with important landmarks; and *Intangible Heritage*, consisting of urban *scapes*, the urban silhouette, important vistas and visual axes, as well as the character, traditions and behavioral patterns of the people, defining the distinctive character or an identity of a particular urban area.

Some of the key elements of Yangon's urban heritage include:

- The urban grid with Sule Pagoda as the center point
- The grand scale in important administrative quarters southeast of Sule Pagoda
- The street patterns and orientations for proper wind flow and sun
- Building heights in relation to street width
- Accessible back lanes for ventilation and infrastructure provision
- Pedestrian walks
- Ethnic communities
- Specialized streets and clustering of activities
- Street life dynamics and small business economies

Downtown urban heritage needs to serve as the base for transforming Yangon into a future city of inclusive opportunities. This will only be achieved with proper understanding of the character, adaptability, and people's perceptions of heritage, and with proper heritage management and coordination.



Elements	Tangible	Intangible
Waterbodies, Green and Open Spaces	Riverfront Lakes and Environs Human Made Open Spaces	Recreation / Leisure Public Open Space Visual Axis, Vistas, Skylines Cultural Events
Human Built Environment	Ancient Monuments Listed Buildings Unlisted Buildings Urban Design—Yangon Downtown	Religious / Cultural / Festival Passive Recreation Public Open Space History Public Interaction
Important Visual Axes, Vistas, Skylines		Around Shwedagon Pagoda Towards Shwedagon Pagoda Around Sule Pagoda Towards Sule Pagoda, etc.
Human Activities and Culture		Activities Trade Culture Daily Life



FIGURE 8. The Yangon skyline at night with the Shwedagon Pagoda in the distance

Aesthetic of Yangon

U Aung Soe Min



The building tradition of architecture in Yangon was for structures to resist the weather, for example, columns and shade to avoid direct sunlight, space to avoid collecting heat, etc. Art and creativity should be considered in urban planning and the challenge of modernization. The political system needs to encourage creativity in every aspect of daily life, including preserving living monuments and developing the city for the future.

The old brick buildings of Yangon have many advantages. They resist the intense heat that bathes the city most of the year. They were built to have good passive ventilation, so even when the power is out, fresh air can still circulate. These are advantages that benefit anyone living or opening a business in an older building. Those who are community minded and often walk around Yangon find it is important to reduce air and heat pollution. As the founder of an art gallery, I prefer for people to be welcomed into an environment with some character when they come to look at art, as opposed to art in a “white box.” High ceilings are particularly important to show off paintings in a spacious environment.

But why are these old buildings better than the ones built in the last decades? During the years of dictatorship, Yangon’s artists were not able to express themselves fully and publicly in painting, sculpture, public monuments, or in architecture. The work of pre-dictatorship creative minds are an important reminder of the inspired past of Burmese artists. So we created Pansodan Gallery in 2008 and other places for intellectual culture to thrive. We have an archive encompassing newspapers, magazines, manuscripts, graphic art, ephemera, and of course many books and documents. We provide a meeting point where local intellectuals, writers, foreign scholars, and others interested in the past, present, and future of the country would gather and share knowledge, experience, observations, insights, and projects. We create and host events, including public lectures, discussions, and debates. We started a Burmese language club to help foreigners learn Burmese, a music studio, and video production. We showcase art, both strengthening the creative community and bolstering interest in art among the wider community. We have started

to consult for art work in hotels, housing developments, banks, and public spaces. We have also consulted for art investment management, so people with little knowledge of the art world can better engage with the creative community.

Art is important in any society, both for those drawn to create it and for those who appreciate it and are provoked by it. But in the years under strict regimes, much of the art work was dedicated to propaganda. There were many obstacles and red tape in displaying art work in exhibitions, publications, performances, and other public expressions. Now, as censorship has decreased, new conditions also inhibit artistic expression, including poor city planning, which has led to terrible traffic, and increased housing prices, which have forced artists to move to areas of lower rent, or to sell their homes.

While people have natural creativity, most lack the resources to develop their art forms. There is little artistic expression in daily life, and with the pressure of economic uncertainty, many people

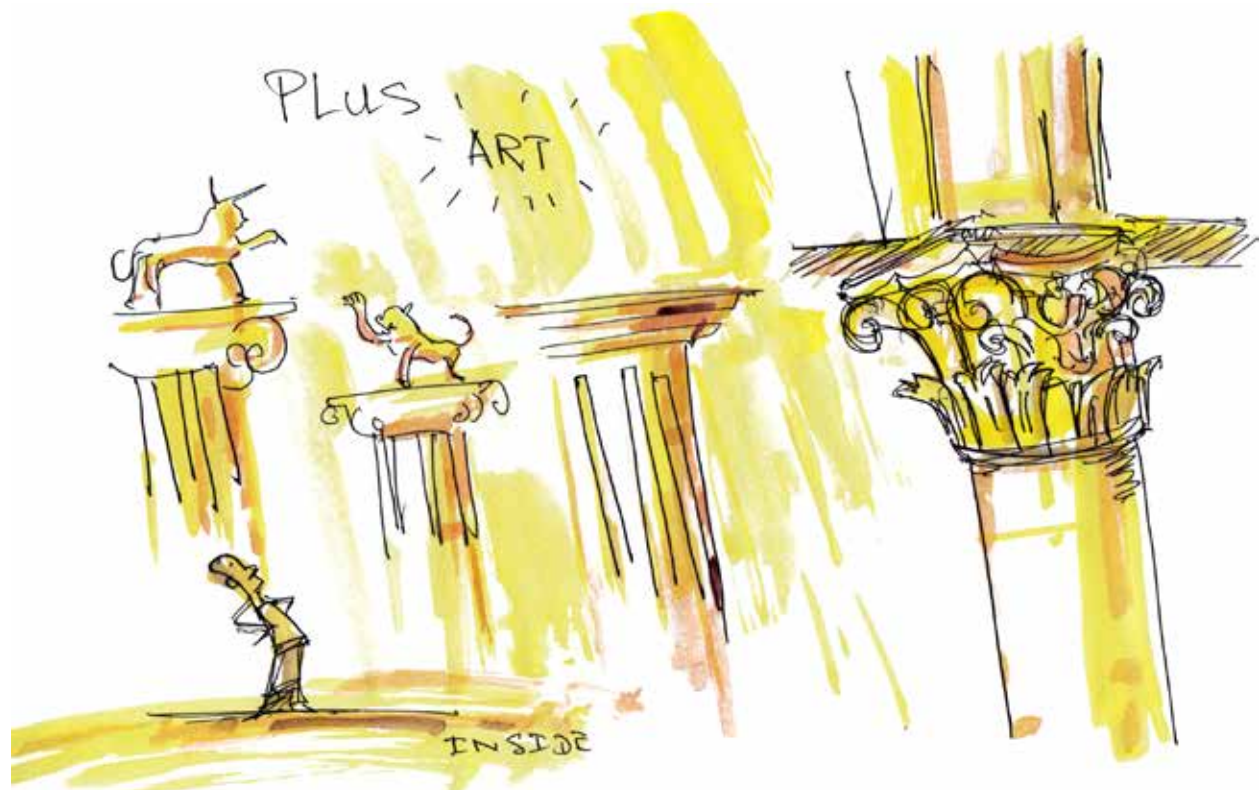
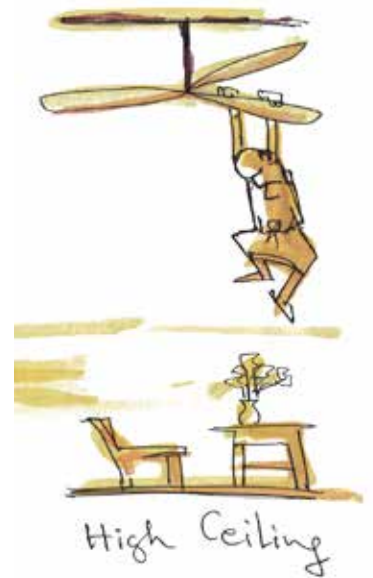


who might otherwise be creating or buying art are instead trying to protect themselves and their families against an unpredictable economic future. While other sectors of society have some form of support, there is no comparable support for the development of arts and culture. Other issues are perceived as more urgent.

There is an increase in international influence, and we have not had time to reflect on or develop our own aesthetics. Some people feel we are inadequate in the field and have nothing to offer internationally. We think we are poor in many ways, but we are surrounded by many precious things and natural resources. Because of this inferiority complex, we are not promoting our art, music, movies, etc. We need to change this mentality and honor local strengths and local cultural heritage. This must not be another stage for nationalism and xenophobia. We can respect our local culture, but also enjoy international engagement. It is time to reflect on history, which has been largely missing from our education and mentality. Many people do not realize that there can be more than one history, more than one way to understand events, more than one perspective on what has happened, such as, multi-ethnic history, peasant history, and social history. Local sources of information and languages are largely unknown.

Creative art is missing from most fields. If one generation lacks creativity, it will not value the creativity of another generation. This is very dangerous. There is still a tendency to control discourse. Proposed political solutions also lack creativity. Intellectual engagement between artists and the other parts of society is one of the answers. The creativity of art and language should inform thinking in politics, history, philosophy, urban planning, etc. Art is not a separate field, competing for attention, funding, space, or development. It is something that permeates all fields as the love of imagination and art is in every single person.

I used to tell to friends of Pansodan, "If we are flowing as a river, someday we will meet somewhere." Helping other causes to build modern Yangon and a modern country with sensible intentions will bring us together. I hope we can educate the generations who will shape the future.



Yangon's Urban Heritage: Reassessing the Historic Stages of Development

Frauke Kraas, Hlaing Maw Oo, Zin Nwe Myint, and Regine Spohner

In a globalizing world, the attractiveness of cities is increasingly valued beyond such economic measures as foreign investment and international transactions. More and more, “soft” and “intangible” factors are playing a role, and the cultural and social characteristics of cities are becoming increasingly important (Rypkema 2005). History and heritage are relevant for retaining a “unique competitive edge” in cities (Zukin 1995, 2), for successful urban development strategies, and for upgrading within the global hierarchy of cities (Logan 2002). Within urban communities, identity, authenticity, and quality of life are becoming ever more important (Léautier 2007). Friedmann (2006, 2) believes that the culture of a city (consisting of a region's built heritage and the distinctiveness and vibrancy of its cultural life) is one of seven clusters of regional assets, which should be the focus of a long-term endogenous development that will generate sustainable and wealthy city-regions.

Given its particular history of development, many cities and towns in Myanmar are characterized by a rare, genuine cultural vibrancy and uniqueness, which has been lost in many other places in Asia over the past decades due to the powerful effects of globalization, such as imitations of urban designs, ubiquitous spatial arrangements, or international investment activities. Culture, defined as cultural objects and practices as well as cultural values, traditions and ways of life, still plays a crucial role with regard to uniqueness, religion, spirituality, education, aesthetics, symbolism, and the creation of identity.

Against this background, this paper investigates the seven phases of Yangon's historic development and aims at reassessing their values in respect to their unique urban heritage potential.

Yangon: Pathways of History

The appearance, function and character of Yangon has changed several times during the city's long history. While the colonial period is reasonably well documented, later phases are rarely discussed in the literature (Kraas/Gaese/Mi Mi Kyi 2006, Kraas/Yin May/Zin Nwe Myint 2010, Kraas/Yin May/Spohner/Zin Nwe Myint 2014). Today, Yangon is among the so-called emerging Asian megacities, with a rapid pace of development, intensive restructuring, modernization and renewal processes, as well as strong social diversification dynamics. Its population has risen substantially from about 0.74 million in 1953 (Yin May 1962, 82) to 2.01 million in 1983 (Population Census 1983), and 4.11 million in 2003, reaching 5.2 million in 2014 (Ministry of Immigration and Population 2014, 11). In the last few years, the development dynamics—not only in the downtown area of Yangon but also along the major arteries and around the sub-centers of the city—have been growing substantially. Under this pressure, the enormous urban heritage of the city is now highly endangered, much of which is at risk of disappearing—if it has not vanished already.

The different layers of Yangon's urban evolution can be discerned by seven development phases—each with a different respective heritage potential.

Religious center and precolonial port (until 1852)

The traditional urban settlements in Myanmar's history were religious centers, fort towns, capitals, or supporting areas of ancient kingdoms. They were either located in central Myanmar in the vicinity of the Ayeyarwady River (such as Sri Ksetra, Bagan or Amarapura) or near the fertile southern delta areas and coasts (such as Suvannabhumi/Thaton, Bago or Syriam). Yangon, then Dagon, belonged to the latter region, which gained its significance from the existence of the golden Shwedagon Pagoda (Figure 9) and served as a minor port. After King Alaungpaya



FIGURE 9. Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon

defeated the Mons of Lower Myanmar in 1755, he destroyed their center of resistance in Thanlyin (Syriam) and rebuilt Dagon, which he renamed Yangon, meaning “end of strife”. During King Tharyarwaddy’s rule, Yangon was rebuilt again as a citadel in 1842, by this time stretching over an area of about 1.55 square kilometers (Zin Nwe Myint 1998, 41).

Today, a few eminent, mostly religious buildings still exist and are among the most important heritage sites of the country, namely Shwedagon, Sule Pagoda, Botataung Pagoda, Shwebonpwint Pagoda, Ngardatkyi, Chaukhtatkyi, Kodatgyi, Kyaik Kalo Pagoda, Kyaik Kale Pagoda, Kyaik Waing Pagoda and Kyaikkasan Pagoda. Their unique heritage status is uncontested. The level of care paid to their preservation and conservation is high, and they have been documented and recognized by the Ministry of Culture.

Colonial capital and main port under British rule (1852–1948)

After the Second Anglo-Burmese War and the annexation of Lower Burma in 1852, Rangoon (anglicized) became the capital and major port of the colony, integrating it within a network of other large port cities of the British Empire (Pearn 1939). As the former town had been almost completely destroyed during the war, Rangoon was rebuilt according to a new plan under the supervision of Dr. William Montgomerie and Lieutenant Alexander Fraser. The plan was based on a grid-pattern of main roads running from east to west, parallel to the Rangoon River, and minor roads running from north to south.



FIGURE 10. Yangon City Hall was built in the late colonial period in a syncretic style, combining local and colonial elements

Originally, the city was designed to accommodate about 36,000 residents (Pearn 1939). With high rates of urban migration in the early years, however, it grew much more rapidly as a result of (a) extraordinary economic growth and expanding commerce, through increasing trade in rice, timber, petroleum products and gems, (b) systematic site development for agricultural use in the Irrawaddy delta for growing rice exports, which further stimulated the economy and also encouraged in-migration, and (c) the annexation of Upper Burma in 1885, which provided additional impulses for the economic development of the port city.

The city limits expanded from two square kilometers in 1856 to 28.5 square kilometers in 1876 to nearly 80.0 square kilometers in 1921 (Than Than Nwe 1998, 92), while the population increased from 46,000 in 1856 (Yin May 1962, 32), to 98,138 in 1872, and to 341,962 in 1921 (Zin Nwe Myint 1998, 69). Apart from large-scale rural-to-urban migration from adjacent regions, the British encouraged Indian immigration to meet labor shortages, especially in agriculture and also in the construction sector.

Under British rule, Rangoon not only became the seat of the colonial government and thus the administrative center, but it was also the hub of trade and commerce for rice, forest resources, oil, and mineral resources. Industrial activities were insignificant at that time. Rangoon developed into a colonial city with typical urban features of the era—including administrative units, cantonments, schools, universities, hospitals, theaters, a zoological garden, parks and sports facilities, a railroad system, running water and a sewage system, parks, and public green spaces. In this period, the majority of today's officially acknowledged urban heritage buildings were constructed (Singer 1995). Remarkable among them are Yangon City Hall (Figure 10) and Yangon Central Railway Station, which were designed by the Myanmar Architect Sithu U Tin who sought to exemplify a distinct Myanmar character.

Nationwide strikes against British rule in 1920 contributed to a growing independence movement. After the Japanese invasion in 1941 and occupation until 1945, Burma regained independence as a sovereign state on January 4, 1948 and Rangoon became its capital.

Architecture built during the colonial period visually characterizes the historic urban landscape, particularly in the downtown area. These include numerous representative administrative and private sector buildings (Hlaing Maw Oo 2006), churches, education and health care-related edifices, shops and storehouses, and countless residential buildings (Figure 11) for varying income levels. While several official buildings have been in use and maintained continuously even after independence, many of the residential buildings and harbor-related storehouses have been altered, neglected, abandoned, or have deteriorated over the last few decades. Many have

been destroyed and replaced by modern, mostly multi-story residential buildings, particularly after the introduction of a market economy in 1988. The colonial urban heritage has been gradually disappearing due to strong, mainly private sector-driven development. While most of the public buildings had been maintained by the authorities (Hlaing Maw Oo 2006), the relocation of the national capital to Nay Pyi Taw in 2005 left many of the private residential buildings and ensembles neglected. Few examples of wooden houses still exist and many of the surviving structures are deteriorating.

Immediate post-independence urbanization (1948–1962)

Immediately after independence, Rangoon faced a massive population increase through the influx of rural refugees due to political instability, insurrection, and insurgency in the countryside. A driving force behind the migration was the so-called multicolored insurrection, i.e. armed resistance groups of various political persuasions that opposed the newly formed government of Burma (Than Than Nwe 1998, 95). Rangoon's population was around 450,000 inhabitants at the beginning of World War II. By 1951 it increased to about 650,000, one-third of which were refugees and about 50,000 were squatters. They were located mainly in Kyeemyindine, Ahlone, Botataung, Pazundaung, and Tamwe, as well as on vacant land in the central part of the city, in bombed-out areas and on the pavement of the main roads (Yin May 1962, 56-58).

In order to provide adequate shelter, new housing complexes were built under the Pyitawthar Project on vacant plots throughout the city, slum clearance was intensified, and three new towns were established in the late 1950s and early 1960s: North Okkalapa (about 75,600 inhabitants at that time), South Okkalapa (about 64,400 inhabitants), and Thaketa (55,000 inhabitants) (Yin May 1962, 61-63). These new towns were constructed with the primary purpose of resettling the squatters and fire victims from the central part of the city. Due to their remoteness, a relative lack of infrastructure and job opportunities, as well as limited public and private services, the development of these new towns into integrated urban units of Yangon occurred very slowly.

Numerous remarkable buildings were erected. Many are examples of the newly independent state demonstrating its power by constructing landmarks in a post-war design and layout. These buildings include the Library and Buddhist museum in Kabar Aye Road, the Inya Lake Hotel, the Yangon Institute of Technology, and the Department of Higher Education.



FIGURE 11. Residential Street with buildings from the Colonial period, Downtown Yangon

These post-war urban developments contributed significantly to the growth and stabilization of the capital. While the first new towns only slowly and gradually consolidated and added public functions (e.g. schools, hospitals, shopping areas), new towns established later for government employees were more fully equipped with public infrastructure and facilities. Although these buildings are not yet considered heritage sites, they represent a significant time period (e.g. residential buildings in Phonegyi or 48th Street).

Urban development inertia (1962–1988)

After a military coup in 1962, private commercial and industrial enterprises were nationalized based on the proclamation of a “Burmese way to socialism.” The establishment of a centralized planning system, and the development of an “economy based on state ownership of industries, public utilities, and complete control of foreign trade” (Naing Oo 1989, 239), led to an underdeveloped urban economy with a dominant tertiary sector, which ultimately resulted in a “low level of human-capital investment, skills, and productivity” (Naing Oo 1989, 246). Rising urban unemployment, an increasing informal sector, a decline in the real wages of urban earners, rising costs of living, and an increase in household expenditures for basic necessities reduced the appeal of the city and urban development stagnated.

Urban growth during this period, therefore, was mainly a result of naturally rising birth rates and boundary expansion. Although the city limits were extended, Thuwanna New Town was built in 1964, and Rangoon’s area increased to 164.57 square kilometers in 1965. No significant population changes were recorded during the intercensal years between 1973 and 1983 (Naing Oo 1989, 242-252). In 1983, the area of Rangoon was enlarged further to 346.13 square kilometers (Zin Nwe Myint 1998, 43), where it remained until 1989.

While there was less formal construction during this period, several exceptional structures were built that were constructed using architectural styles that ultimately became very influential across the country. The Mausoleum for Thakhin Kodaw Hmine is considered to be one of the boldest manifestations of modern Burmese architecture by U Kyaw Min.

Buildings from this period are vanishing rapidly to make way for larger, mostly multi-story constructions (e.g. along Pyay and Kabar Aye Road). Because they are rarely perceived to be important from a heritage perspective, protection of many of these remarkable and unique buildings is not usually given much consideration. They have not been systematically documented, and their design value tends to be overlooked.



FIGURE 12. Highrise buildings near the Independence Monument in downtown Yangon



FIGURE 13. Former Myanmar Railways Headquarters building in Yangon

Urbanization under market-oriented economy (since 1988)

With the introduction of a more market-oriented economy in 1988, and the associated support and encouragement given to the private sector, there have been major changes in the overall economic, social and administrative systems, especially in cities and towns. Massive development in Yangon has reinforced its function as a center for capital investment and enterprise.

The manifold processes and consequences of the incisive paradigm shift towards a market-oriented economy resulted in a number of changes. The newly instituted Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC, founded in 1990) was given the authority to carry out city development through contacts with local and foreign organizations and enterprises. With the development of industrial zones around Yangon and thus new labor opportunities, urban migration led to constant growth of the capital, causing substantial densification and territorial expansion. New infrastructure (including several new bridges), commercial complexes, shopping centers and housing estates were established. With the emerging land market, urban redevelopment gained momentum and colonial buildings downtown were gradually replaced by high-rise buildings, condominiums, and office towers (Figure 12). These trends reflected the rising demand of the private sector and urban middle classes for improved services. With the relocation of traditional markets to the urban fringe, a certain deconcentration process started, resulting in emerging nodes at major junctions.

Buildings and sites from this period are not yet considered urban heritage, given their relatively young age and ubiquitous presence. In anticipation of caring for tomorrow's heritage, these unique structures should be evaluated. For example, early shopping centers, cinemas, or hotels might in the future be considered representative heritage of the time period.

Urban re-orientation after the relocation of the national capital (2005–2011)

Since the relocation of the national capital from Yangon to Nay Pyi Taw (on November 6, 2005), Yangon has started to develop a new and different urban profile. After the center of government and administration moved, many of the former government buildings—mostly from the colonial period—were left abandoned and without function (Figure 13). Traffic congestion and the demand for land and housing eased for a short time, but growing economic impulses created a new demand for office and residential buildings. Thus, Yangon began to evolve into an Asian megacity with an emerging economy, where building height limitations were gradually lifted and taller buildings started to be constructed.



FIGURE 14. Downtown Yangon, west of Sule Pagoda (in 2013)

Opening policy-induced urban globalization processes (since 2011)

With the change of government and its reform-oriented open policy in 2011, further political and economic factors accelerated Yangon emergence as a leading economic center in Myanmar. Since then, numerous large-scale and high-rise building projects by national and international investors have transformed the historic downtown (Figure 14), major development corridors and residential areas, and displaced residential populations, small-scale enterprises, and traditional markets.

Urban heritage in Yangon: a call for reassessment

While the officially listed urban heritage buildings (now totaling 188 since one building was demolished; Kraas/Hlaing Maw Oo/Spohner 2014) have been spared from demolition, countless other potential heritage buildings are endangered and threatened by current globalization factors and urbanization processes. Yangon could lose its unique, authentic urban character and “soul.”

A reassessment of the definition and designation of urban heritage in Yangon is necessary, with the following considerations:

1. It is not enough to only consider buildings that are at least a century old and stem from pre-colonial or colonial times. Rather, newer buildings should also be considered, particularly those from the post-independence, socialist, and early market-economy periods.
2. The perception of urban heritage as individual buildings is too narrow as Yangon has architectural ensembles, districts, and planning layouts that deserve attention.
3. The cultural, social and individual characteristics of cities are increasingly important, for (a) national, regional and local identity, (b) the unique selling proposition of cities, and (c) a sustainable quality of life.

Therefore a re-evaluation of allegedly “old,” “out of fashion,” “deteriorated” or even “dangerous” buildings, sites, and ensembles is necessary in order to prevent the loss of historic values and assets for short-term gains and opportunities of exogenous development. On the contrary, considerate, embedded, and holistic long-term urban evolution includes endogenous potentials and can contribute to a more sustainable form of urban development.

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Culture and Heritage in Shaping the Future Development of Yangon

Naoko Kumada (Nu Nu Lwin)

Many have noted Yangon's special appeal. Visitors to Yangon are struck by their experience of the "genuineness" of Yangon and its people. While over the last four decades the rest of Southeast Asia has embraced headlong economic development accompanied by the destruction of much of its social and cultural heritage, Yangon has been spared many of those ills by the country's relative isolation. It has missed the gains but also the losses associated with late twentieth century development in the style of the "Tiger Economies."

Yangon's built monuments are an important part of its heritage. Commentators have also stressed the value of the streetscapes, vistas and patterns of the urban life of Yangon. These features exist within a living and ancient cultural context, an intangible heritage that sustains and is sustained by the physical environment. Therefore we should aim for a holistic notion of conservation that is cognizant of the historical and cultural context supporting the creation and inhabitation of urban space in Myanmar. Most importantly, Myanmar needs to develop its own vision and narrative for the development of Yangon.

Historically, cities in many civilizations developed around sacred space. Sacred space occupied a key role in a city's design, formation, and layout. In the case of Myanmar, located at the juncture of the Indian subcontinent and mainland Southeast Asia, it inherits a cultural heritage that has drawn from the civilizations of South and Southeast Asia. The design of Myanmar cities and villages and the architecture of its temples and monuments are influenced by Buddhist cosmology.

Conservation into the future should take into account the interaction between people, monuments, and space in their historical and cultural tradition and context. Such consideration will help to provide the insight and vision required for making an informed judgment on whether and how conservation should take place over the longer-term. I take this paper as an opportunity to illustrate a few examples of such interaction in the Burmese context. First we will explore a historical perspective of Burmese kingship where the concept of mandala played a key role in the formation of royal cities. Second, we shift our focus to the everyday perspective of village life, where the dichotomy between the otherworldly and the worldly shaped the layout and activities in village life. In both cases, we explore how Burmese cosmology and worldview shaped the design and layout of buildings and the orientation and geographic patterns of rural and urban space. We will also explore how such interaction gave meaning to the social, economic, political, and cultural activities of the inhabitants.

I conducted long-term intensive fieldwork and research in Myanmar before the country opened up in 2011. Between 1994 and 1999 I carried out fieldwork on the way religious practice shapes the society and culture of Burmese Buddhists, in rural communities and in Yangon. This included a year of fieldwork in a village in the dry zone of Upper Burma, in Magwe Division (currently Magwe Region). I tried to articulate an insider's perspective of Burmese society and culture.

Historical Perspective

Visitors to Myanmar will immediately notice the pagodas and monasteries that punctuate the Burmese landscape. The most famous pagoda in Myanmar is the Shwedagon in Yangon. The Shwedagon is said to be the most sacred pagoda in Myanmar, as it is said to contain relics of four previous Buddhas, including hairs of Gautama Buddha. The Shwedagon, as well as the numerous pagodas built throughout the country, represents the Theravada Buddhist cosmology and values that the Buddhist kings and rulers, as well as ordinary people, upheld throughout the country's history.



FIGURE 15. A nineteenth-century watercolor painting by royal painters depicts an Konbaung abhiseka ceremony

The Buddhist kingships that flourished in Myanmar were founded on concepts and cosmologies distinct from the Western and modern notions of the nation-state. The region that is today called Southeast Asia had long been influenced by the Hindu-Buddhist notions of kingship. The concept of mandala was important to the formation and implementation of kingships in Southeast Asia. Mandala represents the Hindu-Buddhist universe. For example, the plan of Borobudur in Indonesia is a mandala. It has a core and layers of concentric circles in the center, surrounded by roughly square-shaped outer layers.

In the Hindu and Buddhist kingships in Southeast Asia, not only religious monuments, but also royal cities and even kingships were modeled on the concept of mandalas. The kingships were based on the parallel between the Macrocosmos of the suprahuman universe and the Microcosmos of the human world (Heine-Geldern, 1942). The royal palace was identified with Mount Meru, the center of the universe. The kingdom was the representation of the Macrocosmos in the human world. Harmony of the kingdom was achieved by maintaining the parallel between the kingdom and the universe.

Unlike the modern-day nation-states that are defined by borders, Southeast Asian kingships were center-oriented. Often called the “galactic polity” by later scholars, the center-oriented space spread throughout Southeast Asia. The idea of center-oriented space was “fundamental to the geometrical design underlying the galactic state” (Tambiah 1978, 112-113). Reflecting the significance of the center, the names of capital cities were often used for the names of kingdoms, as we see in the Burmese case of Pagan and Pegu. Territory was defined not by borders but by the sphere of influence of the center. Reflecting the notion of concentric circles of mandala, the power of Burmese kings radiated from the center and diminished outwards. How far the king’s influence reached depended on his power in the center.

Burmese kings asserted their qualities as kings using concepts such as *cakkavati* (universal ruler) and *dhammaraja* (righteous ruler). By upholding the *dhamma* (morality), Burmese kings identified themselves with the righteous ruler. The *dhamma* was an absolute cosmic law that was maintained by the balance of power between *bhikkus* (Buddhist monks) and kings. *Bhikkus* were mediators between home and homelessness (world renouncer). Kings were mediators between chaos and social order (world conqueror). The former was considered to be higher than the latter, meaning that renouncing the world is higher and nobler than conquering the world.

As supporters of Buddhism and as a way to earn merit, many Burmese kings have built pagodas. Building a pagoda is often considered to be the highest act of giving, a way of merit-making. Building a pagoda is as-

sociated with a royal act, reserved for kings and powerful men who have the means for such elaborate giving. It shows the height of one's karma and good fortune. It is an act of renouncing one's wealth for the Buddha and His teachings. The Buddha (*hpaya*) is said to have great power (*dago*). He represents the highest values in Burmese Buddhist societies, such as benevolence and loving-kindness. Pagodas (also called *hpaya*) represent the benevolent power of the Buddha.

The king was able to occupy the geographic core of the kingship, the royal palace, and claim to be the righteous ruler by upholding the *dhamma*. The *dhamma* was the conceptual core of the Buddhist cosmology and kingship. As part of a king's roles as *dhammaraja*, Burmese kings ordered the compilation of *dhammathat*, or legal literature deriving from the Hindu *dharmashastra*. *Dhammathat* expressed the Burmese cosmology that defined the king's role as the mediator between chaos and order. *Dhammathat* was the absolute law of morality, higher than other legal literature such as *yazathat* (collection of rulings by the kings).

The Western notion of "law" did not exist in Burma until it was introduced by the British under colonial rule. With the collapse of the Burmese kingships and the introduction of the British legal system, *dhammathat* was identified as the "Buddhist law" governing the customs of Burmese Buddhists. *Dhammathat* lost the role it played in Burmese kinships. Only certain parts of *dhammathat*, largely those on marriage and family, were adopted in the British legal system. However, as Burmese society and its customs underwent change, even those parts gradually lost efficacy.

Burmese Village

Currently almost 70 percent of Myanmar's population lives in the rural areas. Here I introduce the interaction between cultural values and orientation of space in the village I studied in the dry zone of Upper Burma. Burmese villages throughout the dry zone have shared deeply rooted cultural patterns. Regional differences could be regarded as different variations of the same pattern.

The orientation of space and the village layout reflect the worldview and cultural values of the villages of Burmese Buddhists. The four directions, east, south, west, and north were important to the layout: east and south were auspicious (*mingala*) directions, and west and north were inauspicious (*amingala*) directions. Monasteries and pagodas—sacred spaces representing the Buddha, His teachings, and the monastic order—were usually built on the east or south side of the village, though other factors (e.g. terrain of potential sites) could also be a determinant factor. Cemeteries were often situated at the west or north side of the village. There was typically a main street running across the village, from east to west (or from south to north, or both). At the end of the street was the auspicious gate (*mingala daga*) and inauspicious gate (*amingala daga*). The auspicious gate was used for occasions such as novitiation ceremonies (*shinbyu*). The inauspicious gate was used for occasions such as funerals. Houses were built along the village streets, in harmony with the orientation of village space. Each house contains a Buddhist altar on the east or south side of the house (*gaunyin*). The villagers always sleep with their heads facing east or south and feet facing west or north.

Monasteries are associated with asceticism and otherworldly activities. It is where monks and novices, the sons of the Buddha who have renounced the life of the laity, live celibate lives. Villages are the domains of the worldly life of the laity. It is where mundane economic and reproductive activities take place. In the Burmese Buddhist hierarchy, monks are higher and nobler than the laity and there is a clear distinction between the two.

The Burmese Buddhist cosmology and concepts that shaped the architectural and geographic design of the village also shaped the way residents interacted with one another. Economic relations in the village were socially dense. Exchange occurred in large part through transactions governed by trust and delayed reciprocity rather than cash. The Buddhist notion of merit-making through *dana*, or gift giving, played a key economic function, with the monastery at

the center of the flows of redistribution. This norm encouraged villagers to give away what they could afford as an act of renunciation and sharing.

Notions of generosity and purity played an important role in the way people gave and the discourse of giving. It was thought that *saydana* (goodwill or benevolence) was the most important: “If one gave with true *saydana*, one may gain merit as big as a banyan tree, even if what one gave was as small as a banyan seed.” Certain kinds of giving were encouraged and were considered to be meritorious. The villagers gave frequently to monks. It was also important to give to the poor and needy. Digging wells and ponds and planting trees were considered to be meritorious deeds, as water is essential to human and animal survival and trees provide shade.

Sharing merit was an essential part of merit-making. Thus, when one did a good deed and earned merit, one would share the merit with all living beings. This included not only humans but also animals, spirits, and all other sentient beings in the Burmese Buddhist universe. Such sharing reflects the Burmese Buddhist worldview that encompasses all living beings in its system. Burmese Buddhists do not draw a line between oneself and other living beings, or one’s possessions and the possessions of others in the way the majority of people in modern capitalist societies do. One’s own life and the lives of other living beings are conceptualized in terms of continuity and relatedness. One may be born in this life as a human being but may have been a bird in a previous life, and one may become a dog in a next life, depending on his or her deeds and karma. The villagers were very much aware that taking another’s life—the life of any living being—is a bad deed and leads to bad karma. Moreover, the being whose life you take—an insect, bird, dog, or other beings—can be the previous or future form of you or someone close to you. Thus, the lives of other beings were considered to be very relevant to one’s own life.

Conclusion

The architectural and geographical design of rural and urban space is influenced by the Burmese cosmology and worldview. This interaction provided meaning to social, economic, political, economic, and cultural life. In order for monuments, streetscapes, and patterns of urban life to be meaningful in the development of the city of Yangon, we must preserve the living cultural context. We need a holistic notion of conservation that takes into account the cultural and historical context supporting the creation and inhabitation of the city. For Yangon’s development to be truly sustainable, the development needs to build on its heritage, rather than alienate itself from it. We explored just two examples of the ways in which the Burmese have used cultural concepts for the formation and continuation of architectural and spatial patterns. Myanmar exists on rich cultural soil where civilization flourished for many centuries. Yangon should build on such cultural and philosophical heritage in developing its own vision and narrative for development. After all, it is through understanding, maintaining, and rediscovering one’s roots and identity that a mature and developed community can best be built. Increased consumerism, tall buildings, and cars will not necessarily make Yangon a more developed city nor will they improve the quality of life in Yangon. The Shwedagon, a symbol of benevolence, purity, and the highest achievements in the life of Burmese Buddhists, overlooks the city and its downtown. The future of sustainable development in Yangon should be guided by the values and philosophy represented by the Shwedagon.

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Integrating Urban Conservation and Development

Community as a Basis for Development— Informality and Initiative in Yangon

Jayde Roberts

The national reforms initiated in 2011 followed by the lifting of international sanctions have ushered in fast-paced real estate development that threatens to alter the character of Yangon before local residents have a chance to reflect on what they value and how they want to respond. Rapid change has demanded rapid reactions, leaving little time for inclusion or a thorough consideration for the complex interconnections and contradictions in Yangon.

In this rush, the rhythm, logic and strengths of everyday life that have sustained Yangon for decades have yet to be discussed. In particular, the continued strength of community and its potential to contribute towards sustainable development and increased livability have gone largely unnoticed. The resilience of Yangon's residents and their unflagging effort to support each other through street-level self-organization—in other words, to form and maintain a sense of community—can serve as a basis for future growth.

Community is a dynamic phenomenon that is difficult to define or measure. However, everyday people and how they live together is always at the center of community—there is a sense of belonging and mutual aid which enables residents to live securely and comfortably in a place.

In Yangon, community is evident on numerous streets and blocks. On a daily basis, it is the children playing out on the street and the adults sitting on the steps or chatting on the streets. In the evening, families who live in the lower blocks of the smaller 30-foot-wide streets set out plastic chairs and socialize outdoors in order to take advantage of the cool evening air. On a seasonal basis, community is evident through the various Burmese holidays that are celebrated out on the street. Every Thadingyut (Festival of Lights), Tasaugndaing (Full Mon Festival) and Thingyan (Burmese New Year), neighbors set up temporary pavilions in order to collect donations for joint celebrations (Figure 16). These self-organized festivals last for several days and usually include Dhamma talks by renowned monks and free food for all in attendance. The collective pride derived from working together and self-funding generates a sense of shared ownership that helps to bind the community together throughout the year.



FIGURE 16: Community tent for Tasaugndine (Full Moon Festival) organized by residents on 14th Street

Streets: Spaces for Community and Commerce

These streets are spaces for community where casual daily interactions enable residents to build and maintain a sense of belonging, to come together in times of celebration and assist each other in times of need. They are also spaces for commerce. In Yangon, the spaces between the buildings constitute a vital part of the city's heritage, a "living heritage" that supports its residents and in return is renewed through constant use.

Some residents still shower on the street because they do not have the necessary facilities within their homes. Others use portions of the sidewalk to store goods or process their products (drying vegetables, sorting recyclables, etc.) because they do not have space inside. These uses of public space require an understanding (*na le hmu* in Burmese) between the neighbors so they can amicably accommodate each other's needs. Importantly, the street is not dominated by a particular type of user—cars, pedestrians, residents, merchants and vendors all use the streets in different ways and at different times. These uses overlap and occasionally interfere, but they also provide opportunities for interaction and relationship. Streets as communal spaces are like the glue that holds the social and physical fabric of the city together.

The design of the downtown core left by the British is a human-scaled, walkable city that fosters human interactions. A long-term resident on the upper block of Bogalay Zay Street commented that he and his neighbors once knew each other well. However, after a new eight-story building was constructed, there were too many people in one building, making it impossible to know everyone. As a result, it was difficult to communicate with each other when problems arose. He was unhappy with his neighbors but said there was nothing he could do about it. In particular, some residents were renovating and selling their units without considering how those actions might affect others in the building.

Unlike a common and lamented phenomenon in more highly developed countries, Burmese are generally aware of and sensitive to their neighbors. Private property ownership in Yangon has not precluded consideration for others. This consideration is a valuable commodity, and in order to properly plan for the future of Yangon, urban planners, architects and municipal officials must first understand local conceptions of public and private and how people use so-called public and private spaces in the city. As yet, there is still an unspoken and shared understanding (*na le hmu*) between people that regulates behavior. It is important that as Yangon develops and changes that *na le hmu* is not lost.

Na le hmu and Informality

Na le hmu is a common understanding built up through long-term interactions which enables people to communicate indirectly. It is a subtle but powerful social relationship that undergirds Burmese society and includes aspects such as feeling *a na deh*, that is, like one should not ask for something directly or be an imposition. *Na le hmu* is like a social contract, an implicit agreement that is informal and unofficial.

This understanding is not only the major basis for social interactions but also for doing business. *Na le hmu* underlies informal systems of business and one could argue that informality—both at the level of everyday people and at the various levels of government—is *the* system of Yangon. Little is transparent. Who you know greatly determines what you know and what you can achieve. This dual track system of "official" government regulations and informal *na le hmu* transactions—make it difficult to understand commerce in Yangon but the intertwined and often opaque interactions between the two systems are shared by most forms of business in the city.

The degree of unpredictability or informality in Yangon is uncommon in western countries and requires careful consideration. Many of the challenges for Yangon lie in the fact that there are few consistently applied policies, thereby rendering informality the dominant system. This dominant *na le hmu* system makes it difficult for everyone in the city at all levels to plan for and act on his or her future.



FIGURE 17: Morning wet market in Latha Township

In certain ways, however, informal systems have enabled Yangon to function and grow despite formal regulations that have threatened to keep the city at a standstill. Street vendors have shown initiative by doing business where and when they can and their micro-scale entrepreneurship has provided basic goods and services to the residents of Yangon at very affordable prices.

Informal systems are a part of every city, whether they are in so-called “developed” or “developing” nations. This discussion regarding *na le hmu* is a reminder to investigate how *na le hmu* actually works in Yangon and to recognize it for its paradoxical role both as a source of corruption and as a vital means for doing business.

Local Markets and Walkable Neighborhoods

The initiative and daily labor of street vendors make up the many wet markets in Yangon that help build a sense of community and bolster the local economy. Local wet and dry markets such as Theingyi Zay are centers for social life. The daily interactions in the markets not only enable Yangon residents to acquire basic necessities, they also knit the various people together into an urban community (Figure 17).

Most of Yangon’s neighborhoods are self-sufficient microcosms that enable their residents to fulfill their daily needs within a few city blocks. These blocks support various types of livelihood and enable residents to live securely and comfortably in their neighborhoods. They help create livable neighborhoods. The markets and the services located in and around them such as

plumbing and sofa repair might not be pretty but they fulfill practical needs for the local residents. Although Yangon is changing quickly, local markets can continue to foster a sense of community in order to maintain a living heritage.

This sense of community is much rarer in so-called developed countries where people drive everywhere and shop in chain stores. Scholars such as Jane Jacobs, Jan Gehl and others have argued that car-oriented cities are poorer places and are in need of reform. In response, many planners around the world are trying to make their cities walkable again, where necessary goods and services are only a few blocks apart.

In many cities around the world, local markets

are being maintained, upgraded or re-established as a way to reconnect growers, suppliers, service providers and consumers. Many of these markets, such as Pike Place Market in Seattle, have become critical urban food suppliers, important centers of city life, and tourist destinations as well.



FIGURE 18: Theingyi Market and street life on Mahabandula Street

Historic Markets and Market Districts

Historic markets such as Theingyi Zay and the areas around them (the *zay kwet* or market district) are known by local residents as generators of income or good places to do business (Figure 18). Business owners in Latha Township proudly proclaimed that their township is the most vibrant economically. As proof, one owner said, “Just look at the number of banks in Latha

Township. You don't see this many banks anywhere else. Why is this? It is because we have the largest number of transactions.”

The commercial environment in and around Theingyi Zay can be defined as “living heritage” that breathes life into the market and its surrounding neighborhoods. This heritage is living because:

1. The market building and surrounding area support various modes of livelihood: mobile vendors, built-in street stalls, stalls within the market building and shops in the nearby market district.
2. The market activities keep the buildings and neighborhood alive through their daily activities.
3. The various market activities are engines of growth for the Yangon economy because they provide the spaces and opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurs to take calculated and incremental risks in order to grow their businesses.
4. The relatively low entry requirement into this multi-tiered market creates a self-sustaining cycle of growth that brings new businesses in as established businesses move out in order to expand.

Many business owners in and around Theingyi Zay provided stories of how people started out as roadside vendors who then gradually made enough money to rent a stall in Theingyi Zay and then became successful enough to expand to independent shops. One merchant said that the owner of the largest electronics and stereo system store on Bo Ywe Street started out fixing transistors on Anawyata Street.

Everyday People's Heritage

The streets in Yangon are essential for sustaining urban communities and making the city livable. Luckily for Yangon, the human-scaled city designed by the British remains intact today. Of course, problems such as broken sidewalks, poor drainage and unreliable services are numerous and significant, but the city scale, the size of the blocks, the width of the streets and the height of the buildings are all supportive of active, connected urban living.

There are a diversity of residents intermixed with a diversity of businesses in Yangon's many neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have strong social connections and distinct characteristics that are well known to downtown residents. This lively mixture is one of Yangon's strengths that can be harnessed for economic growth. As noted above, those with initiative have managed to succeed through incremental risk-taking. These success stories provide hope and pathways for future entrepreneurs to improve their own livelihoods. If policies could be set up to foster the existing entrepreneurial spirit, the financial success of these businesses could contribute to the success of Yangon overall.

Heritage can play an important role in promoting sustainable development in Yangon. It can also lead to the displacement of local residents, particularly the poor, and result in sanitized tourist-scapes. Lively but messy places such as Theingyi Zay can be demolished or modified to create manicured spaces that look pleasant, but neither feel alive nor support the local community. Alternatively, Theingyi Zay and the streets around it could become a heritage conservation project that not only saves an historic building but also promotes economic growth for many segments of Yangon's population, while also providing an authentic experience for visitors.

As foreign direct investment and large corporations enter Myanmar, one must safeguard the spaces that encourage local initiative. If the urban plan of Yangon removes the small and informal spaces where people can begin to build a business, the city will not only displace a large segment of its population, it will remove a significant part of its economic and social vitality. A sensitive and responsive urban plan that recognizes, supports, and celebrates the distinct characteristics of the city, however, could achieve the goal of a Yangon that works well for everyone.

Community Preservation and Heritage Conservation in Downtown Yangon: Seven Lessons for Law and Policy

Andrew Scherer

Introduction

This article discusses legal and policy measures that can be taken to avert and mitigate displacement of community residents and assist in the preservation of communities as part of a long-term strategy for sustainable development and heritage conservation. As with all planning, planning for heritage conservation must take into account a fundamental truth: the urban environment is in a constant state of change. Sustainability does not mean, nor can it ever mean, stasis. The world around us is constantly evolving. With the passage of time and exposure to the elements and without intervention, the built environment deteriorates. Cultural, religious, political and economic forces continually shift, as do aesthetic values. Action and affirmative decisions or inertia and neglect can determine the nature and direction of change, but neither action nor inaction can halt change. Given that change is inevitable, the question for planning, particularly for planning heritage conservation efforts and sustainable development, becomes, “in whose interests is change directed; whose voices are heard in the decision-making process?”

Heritage conservation, at least in its most enlightened approach, is very much about people and their communities as well as the built environment. If the focus in development efforts is solely on the structures and not on the communities that inhabit those structures, what gets preserved is the shell but not the heart and soul of the built environment.

Throughout the globe, older central cities typically have relatively low-density architecture that is often old enough that it reflects the style and tastes of an earlier era and garners interest of those concerned with preserving structures of historic interest. At the same time, if the area has been economically neglected, it is likely to house and provide livelihood for people of modest



FIGURE 19: The facade of a downtown apartment building, where historic fabric and modern life intersect



FIGURE 20: The entrance to the historic Secretariat complex, which occupies 16 acres in Yangon

means. A typical and increasingly common pattern in the cycle of cities, for the last half-century or so, has been the redevelopment of these urban centers that have both relatively low-density architecture of historic interest and existing communities of modest means. Redevelopment has generally resulted in one of two alternatives: demolition of the existing heritage architecture and other structures, resulting in displacement of the existing communities; or restoration and preservation of the heritage architecture and huge increases in real estate market values, also resulting in displacement of the existing communities.

This article proposes that there can be a third way. An approach to heritage conservation that takes into consideration people and communities as well as structures and monuments is possible. Policies and laws can be adopted that preserve structures as well as the communities that use them. There is no simple formula, and there is woefully little literature on the intersection of development, heritage conservation, community preservation and displacement. No place has gotten it completely right; yet some places have been more thoughtful and considerate in their approach to displacement than others, and provide valuable lessons. Other places provide good examples of what not to do. What is abundantly clear, however, from the literature and the experience around the world, is that as heritage conservation measures move forward, it is critical to keep community preservation front and center on the development agenda; if not, communities will surely be destroyed and the residents dispersed.

The historic downtown of Yangon today faces enormous development pressures that threaten its heritage structures and the communities that inhabit those structures. Yet, it is still early in the development process and much of the historic built environment remains intact, as do the communities that live there. Due to the leadership of Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) and the cooperation and engagement of the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC), there is a growing interest in Yangon in preserving both the historic structures and the communities that inhabit them. With ongoing commitment to preserving communities as well as buildings, with focus, sustained advocacy and leadership, and with a continued pursuit of reasonable policy measures based on community engagement, Yangon has an opportunity to get it right: to develop a plan for sustainable development of the historic downtown that conserves both its built environment and the communities that live there. Yangon has an opportunity to be a model for the rest of the world in this regard.



FIGURE 21: A streetscape in downtown Yangon

Observations about Law and Policy in Myanmar

In general, the law and policy environment in Myanmar creates significant obstacles for adopting and implementing constructive approaches to sustainable development. The legal infrastructure that regulates the rights and responsibilities of actors responsible for or affected by urban development is weak and opaque in Myanmar. The policy infrastructure is just as opaque.

Myanmar has a number of laws with respect to housing, land and property rights that relate to sustainable development. These laws comprise a particularly complex and inaccessible web, consisting of a mix of colonial and post-colonial statutes as well as central government edicts. They include: the Urban Rent Control Act of 1960, which sets forth the legal limits on rent that may be charged; the City of Rangoon Municipal Law of 1922, which forms the basis for the municipal government of Yangon; and the City of Yangon development law of 1990, which vests the city's governance authority in YCDC. There is no law governing heritage conservation of non-ancient buildings, although at the time of the WMF conference, in January 2015, there was such a law under consideration.

Unfortunately, even in subject areas for which laws exist, laws in Myanmar are, in general, inaccessible to the lay public. There is no repository of laws online, nor are there written versions of the laws available in bookstores or libraries. Often, copies of the laws are not even available in law libraries. Thus, all too often, the text of legislation is difficult for lawyers as well as laymen and women to access. This makes it very difficult to discern the actual state of the law.

In addition, systems for administration of real estate in Myanmar have long been neglected. As a result of poor to non-existent record-keeping, it's extremely difficult to ascertain the ownership status of buildings and the legal tenure status of residents. This, in turn, makes it enormously difficult to execute formal agreements for transfer of tenure rights when one resident wants to move out and another wants to move in, with the result that most transactions are informal, unregistered and unregulated.

Moreover, the practice of law has been devalued in Myanmar over a period of decades in which strict authoritarian military rule left little role for attorneys. And similarly and for the same reasons, for many years, the courts have not, to any significant degree, provided forums where individuals can seek redress when they believe their rights have been infringed upon by private citizens or government. As a result, people tend to use informal and unofficial methods of mediation, negotiation and dispute resolution.

These impediments to the rule of law are hardly unique to matters related to development. They reflect broad patterns in Myanmar that affect all other sectors, and will need to be addressed if, in the long run, Myanmar is to have a stable, democratic regime based on the rule of law. In the short run, however, while recognizing that these impediments exist, measures can and should be taken for the sustainable development of Yangon and the preservation of its built and human heritage. Hopefully, these measures in this sector, along with similar efforts in other sectors, will contribute to lasting advances in the rule of law in Myanmar.

Overarching Principles, Strategic Approaches, and Lessons from other Cities

Set forth below are a number of principles, strategic approaches and lessons from the experience of other cities in the world that have proved useful in fostering community preservation in the context of urban development. Myanmar and Yangon, of course, need to find approaches that work well for the conditions they face. However, in charting their own course to sustainable development, they would do well to take these lessons from elsewhere into serious consideration.

Lesson 1: Law should strive to advance the general welfare:

Laws, policies and decision-making should strive to advance the general welfare. They should strive to advance and protect the well-being of the broadest range of people; while at the same time taking into consideration the needs of and protecting the rights of minorities and the most vulnerable. Laws, policies and government decision-making should strive to create an environment that makes it possible for fundamental human needs to be met, and when those needs cannot be met by private enterprise, government should take measures to meet those needs.



FIGURE 22: One of many street vendors in Yangon, whose livelihoods are integral to the historic downtown



FIGURE 23: The community of downtown Yangon is multi-generational, with children and their caretakers ever-present in street life dynamics

Heritage conservation should be regulated, with clear sustainability principles. The relevant laws should specify: that heritage conservation is about people as well as places; that community integrity will be respected and displacement of people and communities avoided or mitigated; that, if and when people are displaced, they will be entitled to adequate compensation and relocation assistance. There are examples of this approach in many parts of the world. For example, in the course of heritage conservation and development efforts in historic downtown areas, both Singapore and Havana offered displaced residents both relocation and compensation, including incentives for relocation to alternative social housing. In the United States, there is an obligation to provide relocation assistance to residents who are

displaced by projects using federal funds, under the federal Uniform Relocation Act (42 U.S.C. 4601 *et seq.*).

An approach that respects communities and protects residents is consistent with principles of international human rights law, under which people have a right to adequate shelter (see, e.g. General Comment No. 4 on the Right to Adequate Housing, UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights). It is also consistent with Myanmar’s 2008 constitution, in particular, Chapter VIII, which sets forth the rights and duties of citizens and protects the right to privacy and security of home.

Lesson 2: Law should clearly articulate substantive and procedural rights:

The ambiguities and opacity of current housing, land and property (HLP) laws in Myanmar create a substantial obstacle to rational planning for heritage conservation and sustainable development. HLP laws need to be clarified and tenure protections need to be sustained and enhanced. Myanmar’s Urban Rent Control Law and other laws and policies currently provide substantial tenure protections to urban residents. And ironically, the fact that the current state of housing, land, and property law in Myanmar is extraordinarily complex and unclear provides further (at least short-term) protections. Because it is difficult to ascertain exactly who has what rights, it is difficult—to nearly impossible—to effect a transfer of rights. Any clarification or restructuring of the law should retain the substantive protections. The pervasive lack of clarity cannot be sustained.

Some immediate concerns that should be addressed include: reinstatement of a comprehensive system to clarify and register real property possessory rights; apportionment of responsibilities for building conditions, or habitability, between residents and the people who “own” or from whom they lease property; clarification of building and housing codes; and clarification of eviction protections under the Rent Control Act of 1960.

In the longer term, there should be an evaluation of what, in the HLP legal infrastructure, needs to be retained, changed, supplemented or replaced. It would make sense, for example, to consider permitting ownership of individual apartments. Affordable housing strategies should be explored, such as: tenant subsidies / housing vouchers; development subsidies, with affordability requirements; tax breaks—exemptions and abatements; inclusionary zoning; government owned and/or operated social housing; transfer of development rights; community land trusts; and limited equity cooperatives.

Lesson 3: *Laws and policies need to be transparent, accessible and enforceable:*

Laws and policies not only need to serve the public interest, but they also need to be transparent, accessible and enforceable. People need to know what the law is and that their rights and responsibilities, whatever they are, are enforceable. With respect to development, government should articulate and publicize its substantive goals for development and the principles it expects to rely on to guide development. Those goals should make clear that human needs are a priority and that transparency and community engagement will guide the process of development.

Tools to make law more transparent and accessible include:

- Publishing and widely distributing laws in hardcopy through libraries and bookstores, and in electronic form online via a website created for that purpose.
- Summarizing laws in plain language and widely distributing those summaries in hard copy and electronic forms as well.
- Expanding/developing a program of community legal education at which laws and policies are presented at community-level gatherings.
- Instituting a program of civic education in schools or expanding currently existing programs and teaching children about their rights and responsibilities so that the next generation is well informed and primed to be involved in civic matters.

People also need to know that the laws are enforceable and that they are actually enforced. To accomplish this, it would make sense to designate specific government personnel who are directly responsible for enforcement of housing codes, rent control law protections, habitability complaints, etc. The development of a legal aid program should be accelerated to assist people with legal problems who cannot afford private counsel and to make it possible for them to assert their rights and have meaningful access to justice.

It is also enormously important to planning for sustainable development that the government gather relevant data and make it available and transparent. The government should gather and make available to the public data on demographics, on the state of the built environment, on development that is planned and underway, on social and economic conditions and on other matters relevant to urban development. This will result in better-informed, evidence-based decision-making and will enable planners and policymakers to learn from experience and gauge the impact of planned development.

Lesson 4: *Planning should be managed by a competent, accountable administrative agency with sufficient resources and authority:*

It is important to manage planning for sustainable development (and all planning) with a competent, ethical administrative agency that is well-versed in the relevant laws and policies, that operates in a transparent and inclusive fashion, that is provided with or is able to develop sufficient resources to fulfill its mission, that has adequate authority to investigate and determine conditions and to make binding decisions, that has the wherewithal to in fact realize its goals and that is accountable to the public and other branches of government for its performance.

The re-development of the central historic district of



FIGURE 24. Sharing meals at street stalls is an important part of Yangon culture



FIGURE 25: Growing public discourse in Myanmar is an opportunity to engage communities in heritage decision-making

Beirut after the Lebanese civil war provides a good example of what not to do—the government handed over management of the development process to a private enterprise with no governing principles, and no accountability to the public. This resulted in development that preserved the façades of historic structures while the prior residents were no longer able to afford or remain in the district. It also resulted in self-dealing on the part of the private development body that acted primarily for its own gain and not for public benefit.

Lesson 5: Laws, policies and plans should be developed through an open and consultative decision-making process:

The economically and politically powerful will always find a way to have their voices heard as planning policies and laws are determined and plans devised. Those vested with determining the policy and law and developing plans should strive to make space for the voices of the less powerful to be heard. Other cities, such as Cairo and Macao, have been successful in managing sustainable development efforts involving heritage conservation when they have approached the task in an open and consultative manner with the communities affected.

Inclusive decision-making works better because it gives decision-makers information about needs, desires and opinions of affected community members that can then be taken into consideration in plan and program design. Inclusive decision-making can build consensus, increase faith in government, and improve support for the decisions that are ultimately made. There are many ways to approach public participation:

- Use techniques to solicit input that give people the option of anonymity such as anonymous suggestion boxes and anonymous online surveys. This may be a good initial approach in Myanmar. There is so little experience with community input that people may feel more comfortable expressing themselves anonymously.
- Hold community meetings at which plans are presented and comments taken.
- Support the formation and formal recognition of community organizations as spokes-vehicles for their communities.
- Facilitate the development of interest groups to advocate for the rights of the most vulnerable—disabled, women, ethnic minorities, who otherwise may find it difficult or intimidating to participate in public discourse.
- Finally, appoint community people to governmental bodies and task forces so they have a “seat at the table” when decisions are made.

Lesson 6: Heritage conservation should be taken as an opportunity for community economic development:

Heritage conservation can present an opportunity for community members to gain marketable skills, increase job opportunities and foster entrepreneurialism. Some possible approaches include:

- Encouraging sustainable tourism founded on heritage conservation at a scale compatible with the community.
- Train local people in the skills and crafts needed to preserve and restore heritage structures. This has been done successfully in Cairo and Havana.
- Give preference for jobs to local community residents. This could be done by incentivizing or mandating local hiring.
- Value and promote, but regulate, street food. Singapore has had great success with this.
- Develop Business Improvement Districts (BID's) in which local businesses work together to bring resources and amenities to communities.
- Expand and develop programs of micro-financing to support local micro-entrepreneurs.

Lesson 7: Sufficient funding needs to be allocated to support a sustainable development effort:

Successful heritage conservation and sustainable development efforts need adequate funding to work. Money will be needed for an administrative infrastructure, to support community engagement, and to subsidize low-income housing, micro-financing, and other sustainability efforts. Development can, in turn, be a source of funds through taxation that raises revenue but does not deter development. Funds can be and are raised around the world through:

- Hotel taxes
- Anti-speculation taxes on undeveloped properties
- Luxury housing surcharges
- Progressive real estate taxes

In addition, because government owns and controls most of the land and structures, there is an opportunity in Myanmar to use government land and structures strategically to advance social goals and support a strategy for heritage conservation and sustainable development.

Conclusion

While there is no single, simple formula for heritage conservation that sustains and preserves communities as well as structures, the following elements should be incorporated into the approach to sustainable development of historic downtown Yangon:

- Concern for the general welfare
- Clear laws, rights and responsibilities
- Transparency
- Community consultation
- Responsible governance
- Community-based economic development
- Adequate funding

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Mapping Yangon's Urban Heritage: Concepts, Categories and Priorities

Frauke Kraas, Hlaing Maw Oo, Regine Spohner

Yangon: Urban Modernization versus Urban Heritage

Since the mid-1980s, views toward urban heritage in historic town centers and the revitalisation of inner city areas have been re-evaluated in Southeast Asia (Tunbridge 1984, Kong/Yeoh 1994, Chang 2000). Originally regarded as old-fashioned and outdated stumbling blocks to modernization and progress, urban heritage has gradually experienced a shift in the eyes of planning and development experts and civil societies alike since the mid-1980s. Understanding developed as to the cultural and personal values embedded in the past that would be lost without proper preservation and conservation (Singer 1995, Logan 2002, Henderson/Webster 2015).

Now positive outcomes are expected when urban heritage is valued. For example, with respect to global competitiveness between metropolises, cities with outstanding heritage potential are seen as offering a unique selling point (Zukin 1995). Furthermore, the heritage potential helps contribute to national identity in civil society (Yeoh/Kong 1996). The increasing appeal of inner city areas for local residents as well as for foreign investors and tourists has led to improved opportunities for urban development and marketing based on the uniqueness of the urban historic built fabric (Tiamsoon 2009, Baker 2013).

Against the background of these developments, which are taking place not only in Southeast Asia but also around the world, the rich urban heritage potential of Yangon can be regarded within the context of a generalized antagonism of “globalized urban modernity” versus “urban heritage conservation” (Kraas/Yin May/Zin Nwe Myint 2010). The forces of modernization and globalization via global capital bring forth ubiquitous and uniform high-rise buildings, glass-steel façades, interchangeable postmodern architectural styles and the known problems of ecological over-congestion, economic over-heating, land speculation, displacement of people, property vacancies and social polarization, and fragmentation and loss of social cohesion. Internationally exchangeable “visions” of urban modernism neglect the richness of the unique heritage character of grown/evolved established cities which are often disparaged/discredited as “backward,” “non-functional” or “outdated.” Thus far Yangon is among the few metropolises



FIGURE 26: Central Railway Station, Yangon



FIGURE 27: Fu Zin Kan Hou Temple near the harbor, Yangon

in Southeast Asia that still has many hugely rich, authentic, and diverse urban heritage sites and elements (Pearn 1939, Singer 1995). Since the late 1980s, as Myanmar shifted to a market-oriented economy, Yangon began a deep transformation process toward becoming a megacity. Modern high-rise buildings are replacing former traditional residential quarters and grown neighborhoods at a rapidly accelerating pace (Kraas/Hlaing Maw Oo/Zin Nwe Myint/Spohner 2015). This rapid development is profoundly affecting the character of Yangon.

These rapid changes to the built environment and urban society calls for identifying and choosing the best path based on the strength of such diversity and uniqueness. The choice seems to be between two scenarios (Hlaing Maw Oo 2006): a) Continuing opportunistic site by site development, uncoordinated and reliant upon individual, mostly global developers' interest to determine the city's future, or b) designating a coordinated pattern of growth that can be followed in order to serve the collective best interests of the city, nation and people by establishing an image based upon Yangon's most distinguished features stemming from its geographical location and its rich history.

If the first transformation scenario is selected, Yangon will become another monotonous example (Shaw 2009) of a city where the salient features and sense of place, as well as unique national characteristics, would be lost. In the latter scenario, the natural, historical and cultural urban heritage of Yangon has the potential to serve as the base for transforming it into a sustainable megacity with a strong character and identity (Tweed/Sutherland 2007).

Against this background, this paper thus attempts to highlight the importance and diversity of the existing natural, historical and cultural urban heritage sites and elements of Yangon, and prioritize their importance for conservation in order to utilize them as a base for planning and development in Yangon. At first, a categorisation of Yangon's urban heritage will be explained, followed by the introduction of the 189 listed heritage buildings. This leads to the Yangon Urban Heritage Map and the Heritage Inventory Downtown Yangon. Furthermore, major heritage laws, rules and regulations will be outlined and finally, concepts of people-oriented heritage conservation will be discussed.

The article is based on a joint German-Myanmar research project which builds up a comprehensive, multi-layered urban heritage inventory for Yangon. It uses a mixed methodological approach: High-resolution remote sensing and Geographic Information System analysis are coupled with field documentation and mapping in order to create a precise geo-referenced ground map in order to assess potential fields of awareness and action.

Categorization of Yangon's Heritage Sites and Elements

The term “cultural heritage” in Myanmar is defined as ancient monuments or ancient sites which are required to be protected and preserved due to their historical, cultural, artistic or anthropological value. Most of these monuments, buildings and sites reflect and stand as the evidence of the history of Myanmar. The term “urban cultural heritage” comprises *tangible heritage* that includes natural and cultural heritage along with human-made heritage indicative of the urban history along with important landmarks; combined with *intangible heritage* that consists of urbanscapes, urban silhouettes, important vistas and visual axes as well as the character, traditions and behavioral patterns of the people, which define the distinctive character or identity of a particular urban area. It also encompasses particular features and sites typical for urban areas, such as urban functions and urban communities—and thus includes tangible and intangible heritage issues.

As Yangon's most distinguished features stem from both its geographic location as well as its development and planning history, it is helpful to understand the urban planning history of Yangon when identifying its heritage conservation areas. As Yangon strives to become modern, several high-rise projects have been implemented both by foreign and local investors, and more are to come in the prime areas of the city. In most cases, the importance of preserving the unique and diverse heritage sites of Yangon has been overlooked by the myth that any so-called modern building will bring more dignity and better living conditions than an older building. Lack of proper identification and categorization of the heritage sites and elements of Yangon, as well as insufficient conservation guidelines, have intensified the situation. Categorization of the heritage sites and elements of Yangon, and a proper understanding of their significance is thus an essential initial step.

The current officially recognized heritage sites and elements of Yangon can be divided into the following four categories:

1. Ancient religious and cultural monuments

The history of most heritage sites and elements that belong to this category can be traced back to pre-urban Yangon. These are mainly religious shrines such as Shwedagon, Sule and Shwe Phone Pwint Pagodas. They are usually important not only historically and architecturally, but also socially and culturally.

2. Buildings and urban design of the British colonial period

This category includes the buildings representative of architecture, urban planning and infrastructure constructed by the British colonial regime during the period between 1852 and 1948, with the onset of Myanmar's independence. With most of the buildings erected in order to enable the British to control and manage the local population and exploit the resources of the country, the buildings typically include administrative, judicial and education buildings, defensive works, churches, housing, and trading facilities such as markets, warehouses and ports. Some of the examples are the Prime Supreme Court, Bogyoke Aung San Market and Yangon General Hospital. Most of the interesting building groups of the colonial period and its style in Yangon can be found in the downtown area which itself has a distinctive urban design character, mainly in Kyauktada Township around Sule pagoda and in the university compound of Kamaryut Township.

3. Social, ethnic and cultural buildings

This category includes not only traditional religious and social ethnic gathering places such as Buddhist, Chinese and Hindu temples as well as mosques, but also traditional semi-

commercial shophouses and residences of various social classes and ethnic groups. These are the elements representative of the diversified social culture and architecture of ethnic groups residing in Yangon. While religious places are scattered, traditional ethnic semi-commercial and residential buildings can be distinctively found in groupings mainly in the downtown area.

4. Natural scenic and environmental settings

Yangon, located on undulating terrain, has several conserved natural scenic settings in the form of green open spaces and bodies of water, which are considered “the lungs” of Yangon. This includes Royal Kandawgyi Lake and its environs, and Inya Lake and its environs. There are also several open spaces of historic value, such as Revolutionary Park; or from the planning and urban design point of view, such as People’s Park which not only serves as a great relaxation park but also enhances the grandeur of the Shwedagon Pagoda and strengthens the visual axis between Shwedagon Pagoda and the former Pyithu Hluttaw (Parliament) Building.

The 189 YCDC-listed Heritage Buildings

In May 1996, Yangon City Development Committee issued a list of 189 heritage buildings in Yangon. It includes religious buildings such as pagodas, monasteries, churches, mosques, Hindu and Chinese temples; monuments of an administrative and institutional nature such as offices, courts, museums or foreign missions; social and educational buildings such as schools, hospitals, community centers or ethnic clan houses; or buildings for the private sector, e.g. banks, markets or hotels (Kraas, Hlaing Maw Oo, Spohner 2014). However, privately owned buildings were not included on the original list. The list now contains 188 heritage buildings, since one monastery was replaced in 2001. In 2008 and 2009, the Ministry of Culture classified 17 ancient pagodas in Yangon Region as cultural heritage sites. The famous Shwedagon Pagoda was classified both as Ancient Monument Zone as well as Protected and Preserved Zone, while the other 15 were listed as Ancient Monument Zones. 11 of those 17 pagodas are located in Yangon City, and all of them are listed as heritage sites by YCDC as well. One more building has been classified as cultural heritage by the Ministry of Culture on 7th July 2015 with Notification 1/2015—the Ching Chong (or: Ching Tsong) Palace in Bahan Township.



FIGURE 28: High Court in Downtown Yangon

The Yangon Urban Heritage Map

Based on the 189 YCDC-listed urban heritage buildings, the first heritage map of Yangon was designed (Kraas, Hlaing Maw Oo, Spohner 2014), with geo-rectified locations, bilingual addresses and a systematic code number based on townships. Nine single sheets with different scales ranging from 1:5,000 (inner part of downtown) to 1:15,000 (overview downtown) to 1:20,000 (outer parts, suburbs and fringe) have been arranged into a folded pocket map which allows convenient use while in the field. Included are maps that display the rectangular downtown layout of the colonial city design and its central heritage sites, the urban quarters of the extended metropolis around the railway lines, the most important religious quarter of and around the Shwedagon Pagoda, and a formerly suburban site, the Kyeemyindaing Township. Five categories were chosen for the new classification of heritage buildings in order to distinguish different types of heritage:

1. Administrative buildings which include altogether 43 offices, courts, and foreign missions;
2. A wide range of religious and cultural buildings, totaling 89, which encompasses Buddhist pagodas and monasteries, Christian churches, Chinese and Hindu temples, mosques, museums, convention or conference centers;
3. Buildings with social functions that include institutions of higher education, namely university and college buildings, schools and hospitals, but also community centers and laboratories, totaling 41 buildings;
4. Numerous banks and hotel buildings and one market, totaling 11, are categorized as economy/commercial, and finally;
5. the central railway station, Kyeemyindaing Railway Station, and two physical infrastructure buildings that are categorized under “infrastructure.” The main aim of this new categorization is the possibility of including further buildings in an updated modified inventory of heritage buildings which is currently identified in another joint research project (HIDY: Heritage Inventory Downtown Yangon).

Heritage Laws, Rules and Regulations

The heritage list of YCDC was compiled in 1996 from lists of important, non-private buildings and structures of over 50 years of age, submitted by the townships. 100 years old is a requirement in order to be classified by the Ministry of Culture. It prohibits demolishing and altering external appearances, and requires prior permission for any other alteration or repair.

The Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage Regions Law (1998) defines a cultural heritage site as an “ancient monument or site which is required to be protected and preserved by reason of its historical, cultural, artistic or anthropological value”; ancient monuments as those “that have existed before 1886 or that have been determined as cultural heritage”; and an ancient site as a “place or high ground where a town or settlement of ancient people or ancient monument had existed before 1886 or which is determined as cultural heritage whether it is in the process of excavation or has not yet been excavated”.

The Law Amending the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage Regions Law (2009) amended the wording to include sites “that have existed since 100 years before the date on which the Department made inquiries” (Law No.9/98 and No.1/2009). These laws regulate construction, extension, destruction, alteration, renovation and maintenance of ancient monuments and monument sites depending on their degree of importance and influence.

Similarly, natural scenic and green areas are protected: Most of the major green open spaces have been continually maintained and enhanced. Some areas including the areas around the major bodies of water such as Royal Kandawgyi and Inya Lake have been transformed into major recreational zones. One of the examples is the Royal Kandawgyi Enhancement Project, undertaken in order to upgrade the quality of the environment and fulfill the recreational need of the citizens.



location of heritage building/complex	အမွေအနှစ် အဆောက်အအုံ/အနည်းစု	Township code	မြို့နယ် အမှတ်အသား
1401	ancient monument	01	Kyauktada
	heritage building code	02	Tamee
	no. of heritage building/complex in township	03	Pabedan
	မြို့နယ်အတွင်း အမွေအနှစ် အဆောက်အအုံ အရေအတွက်	04	Latha
		05	Dagon
		06	Lamañay
		07	Buñay
		08	Botaung
		09	Abone
		10	Kyee Mya Daing
		11	Spichang
		12	Tamee
		13	Pabedan
		14	Dagon
		15	Lamañay
		16	Buñay
		17	Botaung
		18	Abone
		19	Kyee Mya Daing
		20	Spichang
		21	Thirangyath
		22	North Okkalapa
		23	Miyangone
		24	Mingaladon
		25	Insein
		26	Insein
		27	Insein

Administration	Cultural
Office	Pagoda
Court	Church
Foreign Mission	Chinese Temple
	other religious buildings
	Museum
	Convention, Training or Conference Center
	Mosque
	Hindu Temple
	Buddhist Monastery
	Buddhist Nunnery
	Chinese Monastery
	Buddhist Monastery
	Buddhist Nunnery

Social	Economy	Infrastructure
Higher Education	Bank	Railway Station
School	Market	Physical Infrastructure
Community Center	Hotel	
	Hospital	
	Laboratory	

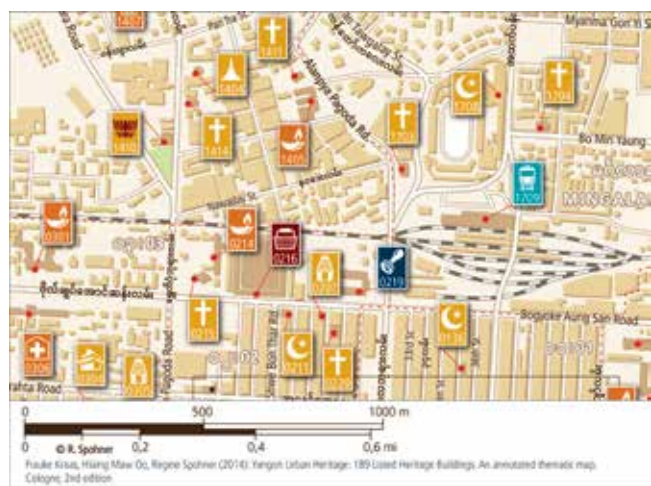


FIGURE 29. Details from the Yangon Urban Heritage Map: Area around Sule Pagoda (top) with numerous heritage buildings (mostly religious buildings, offices, banks, embassies), and the area around the Central Railway Station with mostly religious buildings, schools, market, and the hospital



FIGURE 30: Bogyoke Aung San Market in Yangon

Heritage Priorities for Yangon City Development

As Yangon strives to be modern and attempts to densify through high-rise buildings, careful consideration should be taken toward what the real development priorities and goals of the city are. Strategic areas for high-rise development have to be designated after identifying which areas should be retained due to their historic, cultural, socio-economic and ecological importance. Urban activities and traffic flow patterns have to be reconsidered and redesigned within the main road network for successful implementation of high-rise development areas and conservation of heritage areas alike. The potential high-rise development areas where densification is desirable will have to be made viable, attractive and sustainable through decentralization of some central activities toward them. High-rise development should be sited and allowed only in the areas designated as suitable for them, not outside the identified areas. Such strategic areas are currently under selection after careful consideration of their potential visual impact on the a) built and natural environment, b) key strategic views and approaches and c) conservation settings and listed buildings. Current projects located around the areas to be retained are carefully reviewed. Their positive and negative contribution towards the surrounding areas has to be assessed. The resulting development should have minimal visual and functional impact on sensitive historic environments and sites, and retain and enhance key strategic views and important vistas.

Careful designation of areas to be retained and residual areas to be densified throughout the whole city is expected to bring about coordinated development and conservation. Decentralization of core activities toward the areas of proposed densification will on the other hand release some of the pressure from the heritage conservation areas. This way, development and conservation will be perceived using an approach where the two are not competing for resources or priorities, but are complementary dimensions of the process of transforming Yangon into a sustainable megacity. Four vital variables of that process will include: a) development goals and objectives, b) conservation concerns c) development catalysts and d) community participation.

The areas to be retained will have to include the heritage conservation areas. In the case of Yangon, the top priority will have to be given to the existing conservation areas around Shwedagon and Shwe Phone Pwint Pagodas, as well as other areas around ancient religious and cultural monuments. Conservation areas around Ancient Religious and Cultural Monuments will have to be designated taking into consideration approach routes and vista en-

hancements. Another important area to be retained from further high-rise development is Kyauktada township in the downtown area, which contains the administrative heart around Sule Pagoda where most of the buildings of the colonial period are located. The other five downtown townships are: Pabedan, Seikkan, Latha and parts of Botataung and Lanmadaw,¹ in which commercial as well as social and ethnic cultural buildings are located and the culture and life of several ethnic groups can still be observed, are also to be retained from further high-rise development. Key strategic views and approaches that incorporate natural scenic settings and the areas that affect them are currently identified and will be controlled through development guidelines. Development guidelines have to include acceptable land use, building height, floor area ratio and building coverage area, as well as infrastructure provisions for traffic and pedestrian movement for all the designated areas.

More detailed studies to properly designate conservation areas will have to be undertaken. Heritage inventories and maps of conservation areas are currently under discussion, which include the boundary of the designated conservation area, core areas of conservation, frontage lines for preservation and restoration, and existing or potential vacant lots for development or renewal. Also, guidelines for conservation, development and renewal are underway. Planning guidelines that ensure sustainable conservation and development are currently established in order to cope with the increasing pressure for urban renewal due to the demands of modern living and the escalating price of land in the central business district.

The pressure for urban renewal in the downtown area where most of the heritage building stock is concentrated needs to be released through effective decentralization of commercial, institutional, and administrative services, and the improvement of infrastructure along with an integrated land use transport plan. The possibility of developing and managing tourism effectively should be explored as a mechanism to provide political and financial support for conservation of heritage sites and elements. Both negative and positive contributions will have to be taken into consideration to avoid and mitigate negative impacts and enhance the positive effects of tourism. Last but not the least, in order to attain the goal of coordinated development and conservation it will be necessary to build local capacity and human resource development for local professionals.



FIGURE 31: Sule Pagoda in the heart of downtown Yangon

People-oriented Heritage Concepts

The current urban heritage list of Yangon, which was initially compiled in the mid-1990s, is based on a rather traditional concept of heritage conservation, emphasizing single monuments or buildings of religious, historical, or architectural importance. Since then, concepts of heritage have evolved to acknowledge a broader range of typologies, time periods, and values, and conservation processes have become more community-oriented.

Seen through this framework, there are many more outstanding elements of Yangon's built environment that deserve acknowledgment and official listing. Some examples include traditional markets such as the Thein Gyi Zay (which is very unique in entire Southeast Asia) or significant pre- or post-independence private downtown ensembles (e.g. the eastern part of downtown), ethnic clan houses (many of which are in the so-called "Chinatown" part of Yangon's downtown), traditional shophouses and restaurants (with ethnic specialities, several dating from the period before 1988), zayats and dhamma halls (ubiquitous within almost all neighbourhoods), storage buildings (few traditional ones survived the transportation upgrades that took place along the river) and jetties on the river bank (which are the life lines for thousands of workers and employees from Twante and Dala to Yangon). These important elements of daily life and local tradition all contribute to the unique and authentic character of Yangon, and their future is at stake.

The time is ripe to establish a culturally adapted and enhanced concept of heritage conservation that can co-exist with Yangon's rapidly changing conditions. This concept should emphasize community engagement and include the needs and demands of people and communities, and includes key questions of identity, work and life activities, and daily culture. There is a wealth of local, site-based knowledge in the city and a strong sense of place and attachment amongst the families who have lived in Yangon for generations. Their experiences and voices are part of the "soul" of Yangon, and they are key players in maintaining its cultural continuity and unique character. They create the most valuable, non-visible, and thus intangible part of urban heritage: their values, views, perspectives, and attitudes are exemplified in the local rites, traditions, and festivals that sustain daily culture in communities. Integrating local knowledge and professional expertise through people-oriented planning and development approaches will help to create a more modern and sustainable urban environment. Living within this urban reality, residents are key stakeholders in preserving heritage while also fostering urban coherence and social cohesion—intra- and inter-generationally. Prioritizing people, and not only technical infrastructure, land use change and financial capital, is critical to creating a sustainable and successful urban development vision. And it is perhaps a last chance and tremendous opportunity for Yangon to chart a different future, one that does not follow the path of so many globalizing megacities in Asia that have foregone their unique character.

To seriously acknowledge Yangon's urban heritage requires carefully listening to the community's voices and views, their perceived intangible heritage, the different festivals, rituals and habits, the culinary heritage and the daily culture that informs their lives. Both resident and ethnic communities alike compel a deepened awareness, knowledge, and understanding. Of utmost importance are the current ties, economic connections, and social bonds within the urban core of Yangon—which can be understood with the support of local community centers, Yangon academics from various disciplines, the authorities, and socio-economic networks.

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Notes

- 1 Some parts of Lanmadaw and Botataung are already replaced with higher buildings and are therefore to be allowed for highrise development in case of blockwise development.

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Yangon Waterfront Opportunities

Ko Ko Gyi

Historic Yangon Waterfront

Yangon is rich in waterfront areas. The mouth of the Hlaing (Yangon) River has been occupied for more than 2,500 years. The village gained fame after the construction of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda on the highest ground in the area. The modern city of Yangon was founded by King Alaungpaya in 1755 when he captured the village called Dagon from the Mon. The name Dagon was changed to Yangon meaning “end of strife” by the King. This was later changed to Rangoon by the British. The city took on a larger commercial role as the primary port and the main arrival city for Myanmar. Yangon was the capital of Myanmar from 1885 until 2006 and it is still the largest urban city. Yangon has the largest number of British colonial buildings in Southeast Asia, many of which are in need of preservation.

At the northern part of the Old Rangoon Map in 1914, one can see the Inya Lake, Kandawgyi Lake and Shwe Dagon Pagoda. As shown by the original map, one can imagine how the waterfront looked like and how prominent the Shwe Dagon Pagoda was at the time.

Yangon’s downtown skyline was dominated by the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda which was built about 2,600 years ago. It is covered in 60 tons of gold and is 325 feet tall. At one time, it was visible from almost anywhere in Yangon. This is one of Buddhism’s most sacred sites.

Current Conditions of Yangon’s Waterfront

In addition to the waterfront along the Yangon River, the city has other rich waterfronts along the Bago River, Hlaing River, Pun Hlaing River, Kandawgyi (Royal) Lake, Inya Lake, Hlawga Lake, Twantay Canal and Nga Moe Yeik Creek.

In the middle of Yangon, just north of the city center and east of the Shwedagon Pagoda, there is Kandawgyi Lake, also known as the Royal Lake. The lake is surrounded by green parks, and a raised boardwalk around the edges of the water. The park is very popular with local residents, especially in the early morning and around sunset. The north shore of the lake has extensive parks, including a plant market, tea stalls and playgrounds. The most distinctive feature on the lake is the Karaweik Restaurant, on the east end of the lake.

North of Yangon’s city center is the large artificially-created Inya Lake. Like the Royal Lake, the shores of Inya are home to extensive parks, food stalls and hotels. The park is extremely popular around sunset, when young couples walk the banks or sit on the benches lining the pavement. The developments near Inya Lake are Sedeona Hotel, Inya Lake Hotel and Mya Kyun Thar amusement center. Hlawga Lake has a national park with wildlife. Twantay Canal serves as an important artery connecting the Delta region.

The present day Yangon riverfront has a floating hotel near Bohtataung Pagoda, several warehouses, and many port terminals which are being run by UMEHL, Asia World and Myanmar Port Authority.

Opportunities

The most important area of the Yangon waterfront is the land along the river. Most of the Yangon riverfront has been given to private companies such as Asia World, MIP and UMEHL under BOT contracts, dividing the riverfront from the city (try to show images of this).

However, an area nearly two miles long remains in the hands of the Myanmar Port Authority. This area presents an opportunity for an urban renewal project. If implemented correctly, this new urban development will add vibrancy to the nearby downtown.



FIGURE 32: Strand Road along the waterfront.

The Heritage Row along the Strand Road

The Heritage Row along the Strand Road next to the Yangon waterfront area is the home to heritage buildings. Developers should consider the following:

- Buildings should be designed properly so they are compatible with the heritage row structures.
- There should be unfettered access to the promenade.
- Density should be balanced with sufficient gaps so that there are clear views to the river from Strand road.

Waterfront Connectivity

The waterfront offers the opportunity to connect the Yangon Downtown area to the various parts of the river such as Pansodan, Lanmadaw, Hlinethayar (Pun Hlaihg), Dawpon (along Ngamoeyeik creek) and Thilawa.

Challenges

With opportunities, there are always challenges. The challenges for development are as follows:

- Existing ports will need to be moved.
- The Myanmar Port Authority, as a corporate entity, needs revenue from the waterfront area.
- The nearby Heritage Row requires developments to blend in well with it.

Responsible Development

So, do we develop or do we not develop? The best way forward is to balance the revenue requirement of the land owners with the city's desire for a vibrant urban center. The new development should be well integrated with respect to the natural and cultural environment. It should be compatible with the surrounding historic architectural heritage and provide public access to the promenade. Can a compromise be reached for a responsible development?

Examples of other waterfronts which have appropriate developments along the waterfront include Sydney, Chicago, Singapore, and Bangkok.



Fostering Investment and Collaboration

Incentives and Urban Conservation

Randall Mason

The subject of this paper is policy incentives to advance heritage conservation in the context of urban development. Before getting to specifics, a few broader, strategic points and assumptions should be made clear.

First, good urbanism is the goal of urban policy, and good urbanism is defined, broadly, by generating a broad spectrum of both private and public values.¹ Specific measures contributing to good urbanism need to create and sustain effective urban *process* (governance, investment, the reproduction of social and cultural life in its many guises) as well as create the urban *patterns* that are most often the focus of planners' and designers' interventions (buildings, streets, public spaces, natural environments, infrastructure). The production of values, as well as their distribution, are matters of central importance.

Second, heritage conservation must be acknowledged as one of the essential ingredients of good urbanism, not simply as a passive condition reflected in historic buildings and relics; rather as an active process of renewal, restoration and interpretation of the past. The cultivation of heritage assets produces a broad spectrum of value for contemporary society and future generations.

Third, any argument to advance the role of incentive policies has to underscore the importance of governance infrastructure being firmly in place. Systems of governance are an essential means of making public policy incentives work to incentivize private heritage conservation—they also provide a scaffolding and coordinating mechanism for a whole range of public, private and philanthropic actions (including, but not limited to incentives). An infrastructure and culture of governance—taking form in institutions, laws, elections, leadership, and bureaucratic experts—is a precondition for contemplating new policies for regulation, incentives or other conservation-centered innovation.

Public Policy, Value Generation, and Heritage Conservation

Markets, by themselves, tend *not* to fully provide the level of heritage benefits societies demand. So they must be provided as public goods (that is, by governmental and philanthropic sectors). While governmental policies, actions and investments are the principal providers of public goods, they ultimately are intended to guarantee the flow of both *private and public values*. This is the ultimate goal of effective governance as well as good urbanism. In the heritage conservation sector, policies and investments can yield both private and public value if designed and managed well. For the heritage sector, as with all aspects of urbanism, private, philanthropic and public actions do not work alone—they constitute parts of a policy system. Policies are embedded within and supported by governance, consisting not only of the formal aspects of national and local governments (laws, policies, jurisdictions, institutions) but also of the “culture” of governance taking form in less formal rules, habits, expertise, expectations, and so on.

Government actions in heritage conservation provide some values directly and on their own (owning and managing heritage places, for instance), but their role in shaping and catalyzing private and NGO actions warrants just as much attention. Government policies shape decision-making for myriad private-sector and philanthropic actors in the real-estate and tourism markets. Incentives are one kind of policy, but should not be regarded in isolation.

In terms of formal governmental activity, several kinds of public policy contribute to decisions about heritage and specifically urban conservation. Planning scholars Mark Schuster and John de Monchaux have laid out five categories of policy one expects to find applied in any area of cultural policy in any modern state.²

The five categories, with common examples of each type in the heritage sector, are:

1. **Ownership:** government acquisition and possession of a heritage site, including ongoing stewardship;
2. **Regulation:** listing of heritage places on an official register; creation of local laws requiring review of proposals made for listing places;
3. **Incentives:** providing grants or tax forgiveness in exchange for private stewardship or rehabilitation of listed heritage places;
4. **Property rights:** manipulating the different rights in property, for instance in the form of allowing easements to be sold on listed heritage properties (precluding changes to historic fabric while allowing the property to be used and traded);
5. **Information:** generating and promoting best practices for rehabilitation of privately-held heritage properties or for stewardship of philanthropically owned heritage places.

Heritage-specific government policies are not the only relevant governance measures when it comes to heritage conservation. Governmental policies in different (non-heritage) areas of governance also contribute to the management and jurisdiction of heritage assets—these include areas of land-use, tax, ownership/inheritance, economic development, environmental protection, and other policies. And, as pointed out previously, policies, investments and other actions across social sectors—public, private, and NGO/philanthropic—all shape heritage decisions.

What Do We Ask of Incentives?

Government policy incentives in the heritage sector shift the decision-making framework for private investors/owners by making the pro-conservation choices more desirable in financial terms. Incentives create or stimulate markets for conservation goods/outcomes. Paired with regulations—which, broadly, serve to constrain or modify choices of individual actors and firms, or require certain conservation outcomes—incentives stimulate conservation actions by private and NGO actors. In other words, incentives let governments “prime the pump” for non-governmental investment in actions that generate public benefit—or otherwise reduce the barriers for such investment.

Incentives are essential for producing conservation in fast-growing cities, because they work *with* the markets driving growth. By tuning incentives to market conditions—speeding up or slowing down certain kinds of investment, or activities in certain areas of a city, by offering greater financial benefits—governments can manage the flow of private and public benefits.

This brings us to a key point: Incentives by themselves are unlikely to be effective in producing the expected flows of public and private benefit. Incentives must be integrated with other policies, balancing the offer of incentives with the requirements of regulation (which, in the urban heritage field, include listing/registration, zoning, design/land-use reviews, and building codes). Incentives, regulations and other policies are frequently coordinated to enable the production of private values through markets (rehabilitating historic buildings, creating heritage attractions, stimulating business development to capture tourism revenue) as well as the production of public values (interpreting public history, contributing to national and ethnic identity, creating welcoming and functioning public spaces, and providing other social benefits and horizons of opportunity).

Because this paper addresses the most important points of engagement strategically between public and private sectors—urban and real-estate development—a brief aside is warranted on some common myths about land-use and heritage-conservation regulations. First, regulation does not necessarily hinder markets. Though regulations constrain and channel the choices of private owners, they are actually essential for smooth operation and predictability of contemporary markets. Regulations, in other words, make markets work better in many ways by establishing “rules of the game” and guaranteeing public benefits. Regulations can be over-zealous

and over-reaching, of course, but they are not a priori enemies of market-based redevelopment. Second, developers and investors are not daunted by the presence of regulations—what they seek is certainty and transparency about regulations, or rather an accurate view of risk backed by judicial effectiveness (again, alerting us to the necessity for complete systems of governance as a precondition for any particular policy innovation.)

Types of Incentives

Two general types of policy incentives can be offered to stimulate heritage conservation activity by reducing the costs and complexities of conservation transactions: financial incentives and process incentives. Financial incentives are more popular and well-known. Direct financial incentives are granted to property-owning entities in recognition of conservation activities they carry out such as rehabilitating a redundant building for a new use. Incentives can take the form of direct grants or subsidies, tax credits, tax abatements, tax re-assessments, low-interest financing, and access to revolving-loan funds or other special facilities. (The incentives used in a particular jurisdiction depend on the pre-existing public policy framework—i.e., one can only create a property tax abatement if property taxes are substantial and enforced.) In a less-direct manner, development incentives can be granted in the form of density bonuses, transfers of development rights, or exemption from planning or urban-design requirements (such as parking requirements)—all of which amount to increased revenue for private owners in the long run.

A second type of incentive relates to the “red tape” often cited as a disincentive to entering into heritage conservation policies, due to additional layers of regulatory review or bureaucratic processing. Process incentives can take the form of expedited review by regulatory agencies, streamlined application processes, one-desk service for multiple bureaucratic agencies, or even exemption from other regulations (e.g., building code).

Both types of incentives depend on well-functioning and sometimes elaborate public policy infrastructures—legal, political, bureaucratic—as well as viable markets for the products of heritage conservation investment (residential or commercial real-estate, tourism experiences, products and places). In other words, the *preconditions* for effective incentive/regulation regimes include:

- The presence of high-quality, culturally and architecturally significant heritage assets (building-scale or urban-scale);
- Governance capacity to manage the incentives and regulations fairly and transparently (which requires a fairly high level of technical capacity and professional bureaucracy);
- Transparent and fair legal frameworks as an underpinning (land rights, judicial processes); and
- Viable markets (which are fine-tuned or augmented, rather than creating new markets altogether).

Some Examples of Effective Heritage Conservation Incentive Policies

Incentives work best when they are designed and targeted to meet specific goals like façade restoration, open-space protection, affordable housing preservation, etc.—not pitched to general development activity. If and as Yangon authorities organize and build the necessary policy infrastructure to support conservation-revitalization-regeneration incentives, here are some examples of effective, directed incentives used in other urban contexts—mostly to stimulate growth in locations generally well-protected by conservation regulations. Heritage conservation policies suited to overheated economies would be differently structured, though take advantage of similar legal and policy channels.

Center City, Philadelphia property tax abatement

The municipal government of Philadelphia, the sixth-largest US city, instituted a 10-year abatement on the property tax increases that usually result from the higher value of improved properties. In other words, even after conserving and rehabilitating an historic building, the owner continues to pay the old tax—not a new, higher tax on the higher value of the improved property.

The abatement was created around 2000 and was expanded to include adaptive reuse of heritage buildings (factories or office buildings to residential uses). The result has been a large amount of new development and conservation attracted to the Center City area where land values are highest (and therefore tax abatements would be most valuable). The increase of high-quality housing units in Center City has led to an increase in residents, more vibrant street life, more jobs, and a stronger business climate.

Development pressure at first had adverse effects on historic properties (both listed and not listed), by increasing the market value of land and tacitly incentivizing new construction. But fine-tuning of the tax-abatement incentive to include adaptive reuse has been effective—though the balance of new construction vs. conservation activity stimulated continues to be a subject of debate.



FIGURE 33. The thriving Center City, Philadelphia, skyline features newly-developed skyscrapers as well as repurposed heritage factories and office buildings

Federal (national) rehabilitation tax credits

Since the 1970s, the US national government has offered generous tax incentives for owners to rehabilitate historic buildings for commercial and residential rental uses. The “rehab tax credits” yield a direct credit on federal income taxes equal to 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitation (i.e., a million-dollar project creates a \$200,000 credit); in exchange for the credit, owners must have the conservation and design work meet high standards and be carefully reviewed by government experts.

This incentive policy has leveraged billions of dollars of private investment in heritage conservation and made a major positive impact on downtown revitalization across the country.²(Additionally, a secondary market for syndicating and trading the tax credits at a discount provides liquid capital at the beginning of large rehabilitation projects, adding another layer to the incentive).

The rehab tax credits have established adaptive reuse as a real-estate market supported by public-private coordination (incentives and regulations working hand in hand) and have yielded a steady flow of private and public benefits. Of course, the public-private coordination required to administer these policies is complex, sometimes contentious, and sometimes costly. Nevertheless, this incentive policy has effectively created a national real-estate market for adaptive reuse, especially of large, “white-elephant” structures.

Transfers of development rights for New York’s Broadway theaters

The famous stage theaters of Broadway, many built in the early twentieth century, present a preservation problem because very high surrounding land values in Midtown Manhattan create pressure for theater owners to sell to developers who would replace them with large office buildings. Strict preservation regulations, along with a system for transferring development rights (TDR), saved the theaters while also stimulating the Midtown commercial real-estate market.

The theaters are low-scale buildings with relatively little usable space in comparison to the enormous densities allowed under midtown zoning. The difference between existing and potential density (measured by floor-area ratio) creates pressure to demolish and redevelop the his-



FIGURE 34. The federal Post Office in West Philadelphia, next to the main rail station, was renovated in 2010 using the rehabilitation tax credits. The \$252 million project converted the enormous building (center) to commercial offices



FIGURE 35. New York’s Broadway theaters, such as the Belasco, are protected by strict preservation regulations as well as transfer-of-development-rights policies allowing unused air rights to be realized elsewhere in Manhattan

toric building. Theoretically, the theaters have unused development rights—“air rights”—that can never be realized because landmark listing and regulation prohibits large additions on top of the theaters. The TDR policy allows theater owners to sell their unrealized development rights to owners of other plots of land (elsewhere in Midtown), who can buy the rights and develop new buildings denser than they would as-of-right according to zoning. The transfer of air rights between properties thus allows densification and redevelopment while protecting heritage resources. Economic benefits are realized by owners of heritage properties, while the downtown area (and the public) can benefit from continuing development of large commercial structures.

TDR programs such as New York Theater District’s are very difficult to administer: the exact geography of sending zones and receiving sites must be negotiated, designed and controlled; and the pricing of air rights and financing of the transactions present complex technical challenges.

Conclusion

There are myriad ways to fine-tune policies that shape decision-making to favor pro-conservation outcomes and guarantee flows of private and public value. Incentives, regulations and other public policies can be creatively molded to the purposes of different cities—slow-growth and fast-growth, not to mention different parts of cities—though all such policies require a solid, underlying capacity for governance.

Notes

- 1 “Good” urbanism is elusive to define, but a number of tests underpin its use here: consisting of urban places, institutions and ways of life that feature vibrant public spaces, thriving markets, good mobility, aesthetic quality and distinctiveness, sustainable ecological systems, well-conserved heritage places, creative and open cultural life, and just and equitable social life.
- 2 J. Mark Schuster with John de Monchaux and Charles A. Reilly II, eds. *Preserving the Built Heritage: Tools for Implementation*. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997.
- 3 The Historic Tax Credit Coalition/National Trust Community Investment Corporation. *First Annual Report on the Economic Impact of the Federal Historic Tax Credit*, March 2010.

Working Together: International Agencies in the Conservation of the Urban Heritage

Eduardo Rojas

International Cooperation

A variety of international institutions are interested and actively cooperating with cities in the conservation of their urban heritage. They range from research universities actively investigating conservation methods for historical buildings and landscapes to bi-lateral development cooperation agencies transferring knowledge and good heritage conservation practices developed in their countries. Very significant for their influence in the practice of conservation are specialized international non-governmental organizations like ICOMOS, ICCROM or DOCOMOMO that adopt charters and codes of ethics that guide the activities of conservators. UNESCO is the international organization with the most visible contribution with the adoption by its member states of the World Heritage Convention that provides international sanction to the conservation of pieces of heritage considered mankind's legacy. National and international foundations exclusively or primarily devoted to the conservation of heritage proliferate. In the last 20 years the multilateral banks joined the effort, providing governments with financing and technical assistance to step up the conservation of urban heritage areas.

The different institutions have their own agendas, institutional cultures, and internal politics. They usually face volatility in the volume of resources that they devote to the task and, as their agendas shift, they often subject their beneficiary cities to changing procedures and criteria to allocate resources. From the perspective of a city, the knowledge, skills and resources provided by international institutions are more often than not:

- Partial, as they address some but not all the problems confronted by the cities in conserving their urban heritage.
- Limited, as the resources provided do not cover all the needs; and
- Their commitment to the topic may not be constant as it is subject to changes in their agenda and resources.



FIGURE 36. In Quito, Ecuador, public and private interests have worked to sustain the economic value of heritage assets in the historic center



FIGURE 37. Salvador de Bahia, Brazil, has had limited success in promoting the economic value, as well as the heritage values, of its historic center

Experience shows that for a city to fully benefit from international cooperation it requires strong institutional structures to channel their contributions. A good institutional structure would include:

- An agency capable of handling knowledge (urban institute or university);
- A planning agency with a team devoted to planning the conservation of the urban heritage area providing a long-term perspective to the effort; and securing the financial resources needed; and
- An implementing agency to implement the conservation activities with the cooperation of private stakeholders.

Knowledge

The results of research and evaluation of conservation experiences provide validated knowledge for the design and implementation of urban heritage conservation programs. The most significant recommendations emerging from these studies include:

- The intangible heritage lodged in the communities living in an urban heritage area is an integral component of the heritage and it is central for the sustainability of the conservation process. Of particular importance are the social capital of the resident or user communities and the institutional arrangements fostering cooperation among the stakeholders.
- The material heritage has socio-cultural and economic values providing communities with flows of social and cultural services and as inputs for production and exchange. These values mobilize communities to devote resources for its conservation and upkeep.
- Urban heritage areas lose heritage values as the result of: functional decay and physical obsolescence; over-utilization of their physical structures; or destruction by predatory real estate development. These trends can be modified by effective government interventions.
- Successful experiences of conservation simultaneously intervene to: revitalize the economic activities of the area; rehabilitate the physical fabric to equilibrate uses with the carrying capacity of the structures; and implement integrated urban development planning to manage new developments in consonance with the heritage conservation objectives of the community.



FIGURE 38. The historic center of Edinburgh, Scotland, is an example of preservation sustained by engaging a variety of users and a range of socio-economic values

It is now known that the traditional approaches to the conservation of urban heritage based on the enactment of conservation ordinances and the expenditure of public funds—do not attain the objective. The major drawbacks of this approach are that the designation of the heritage area and the enforcement of the ensuing regulations are done with no involvement of the community. They place the burden of the conservation on the owners, introduce rigid rules for the use of buildings and public spaces, restrict their adaptation and development, and rely heavily on the use of public funds to conserve monuments and subsidize private owners. This approach turns the urban heritage into an urban and fiscal *liability* for the communities.

There is a better understanding of the contribution of the urban heritage to development. It provides:

- Socio-cultural benefits—historic, aesthetic, spiritual, symbolic, social, scientific—that are critical for the formation and upholding of the social capital of the communities, and for the transmission of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are central for the formation and maintenance of the human capital of its members.
- Economic benefits in the form of use values, essentially as inputs for production and trade; and mobilizing the allocation of resources to ensure the bequest of heritage to future generations.

When the conservation effort allows the use of heritage buildings and public spaces to accommodate contemporary uses with solvent demand in society—that is, uses required by members or groups of the community with capacity to support them or with demand in the real estate markets—and they are adapted to the new uses respecting their carrying capacity—meaning without losing the attributes that give them their heritage values—the urban heritage turns into an *asset* for the development of the city.

Allowing the adaptive rehabilitation of buildings and public spaces attracts and retains a variety of users and investors to the heritage area. On the contrary, allowing the urban heritage to disappear and be replaced by mono-functional modern structures reduces the variety of users and investors in the area.

Skills

The adaptive rehabilitation of urban heritage requires the use of the analytical methods and intervention instruments of the historic preservation and urban planning disciplines.

From the historic preservation discipline it requires flexible regulations approved and enforced with the concurrence of the community. They should differentiate the components of the urban heritage according to the type of conservation that would retain the attributes that confer them their heritage value:

- Strict conservation: mostly monuments of great socio-cultural value that can only be fully conserved.
- Rigorous conservation: emblematic monuments and public spaces with multiple socio-cultural values whose characteristics allow minor adaptations to accommodate contemporary uses without losing their heritage character.
- Typological conservation: buildings whose spatial configuration, bulk, form, structure, and aesthetic characteristics are of heritage interests but that can be adapted to new uses while retaining the physical characteristic of its typology. These usually make up the majority of the buildings in an urban heritage area.
- Contextual conservation: for buildings whose contribution to the heritage values of the area are in their façades, height, and bulk features that contribute to the character of the public spaces and streets where they are located. They can take new construction and significant interior transformations as long as they retain the characteristics that contribute to the cityscape's heritage values.
- Contextual new constructions in empty lots whose façades, bulk, and shape should be consistent with the characteristics of the heritage cityscape.

From the urban planning discipline, the adaptive rehabilitation of the urban heritage areas requires interventions capable of attracting new users and investors to the area, and regulations and public and private investments directed to equilibrate the intensity and variety of uses to the carrying capacity of the area and its component buildings. The analysis of successful urban rehabilitation experiences indicates that effective interventions follow a sequence, including:

- Rehabilitation and improvement of the infrastructure and public spaces of the area.
- Conservation and the sustained use of monuments in the hands of the public sector.
- Adaptive rehabilitation and conservation of monuments and buildings of typological significance in private hands using public-private partnerships.
- Promotion of the adaptive rehabilitation of other private buildings.

This sequence of interventions leads to the sustainable conservation of the urban heritage area where the process is mostly driven by social and market demand for the use of the heritage assets and where the public sector intervenes to provide infrastructure and public urban services, and to regulate the interventions of the private sector.



FIGURE 39. Valparaíso, Chile, has faced challenges in promoting economic vitality while also preserving historic fabric

The regulations imposed on the public and private interventions are mostly oriented to conserve the attributes that give the heritage buildings and public spaces their heritage values. That is, allowing their adaptive rehabilitation within their carrying capacity. The attributes of buildings and public spaces that define their carrying capacity are: the weight bearing structure, which determines the capacity to sustain the forces of nature (weather, earthquakes and hurricanes); the spatial configuration of rooms, corridors, accesses, yards, which determines the type of uses that can be accommodated in the building; and the aesthetics, which determine its artistic, symbolic or social values. The concurrence of the community and other stakeholders in defining these regulations ensures that they represent an acceptable compromise among them, an essential condition to ensure the long-term sustainability of the conservation effort.

Successful experiences in the rehabilitation of deteriorated urban areas undergo gentrification: the gradual expulsion of low-income residents and producers and their replacement by new users as the area is rehabilitated. This is generally considered a sign of success as it proves that the heritage area is attracting new residents, producers and users. However, the process generates losses to vulnerable groups that no longer have access to the low-cost houses and workplaces provided by the deteriorated heritage area. The stakeholders that lose the most are low-income dwellers, and low-productivity and semi-informal productive activities renting space and enjoying the low rents and good location of the area. The international experience indicates that gentrification is unavoidable but measures exist that can mitigate its ill effects. The most effective is the provision of low-cost rental housing and workspaces in the area in quantities consistent with the needs of existing residents and producers willing to stay in the area. Real estate markets rarely provide this type of accommodation and need government encouragement and support. Furthermore, low-income property owners may need assistance in negotiating their involvement in the adaptive rehabilitation process so that they can obtain the maximum possible benefits. The government must also prevent, or at least reduce the land price speculation that occurs in areas undergoing rehabilitation, as this process not only fuels gentrification but ultimately stalls the conservation process by making adaptive rehabilitation financially unviable.



FIGURE 40. The loss of population and central functions in the historic core of Oporto, Portugal, have impacted its vitality



FIGURE 41. Despite its remarkable economic success, Marrakesh, Morocco, faces challenges in preserving its authenticity in the face of urban change

Resources

The planning and implementation of interventions towards the sustainable conservation of urban heritage—using the adaptive rehabilitation approach to allow contemporary use—require significant resources, including:

- Skilled manpower to design and manage flexible regulations allowing the adaptation of urban heritage assets to contemporary uses.
- Strong institutions to allow effective involvement of all the stakeholders in the definition and enforcement of the conservation regulations, and in the implementation of rehabilitation activities.
- Social capital to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders in the conservation effort and to facilitate the involvement of new users and investors in the area.
- Long-term financing for public and private interventions in the heritage area.
- Institutions to promote public-private cooperation.

Attaining the right combination of public interventions and stimuli to private investment, while also mitigating gentrification, pose a significant governance problem. Cities fare better in this effort when they have the institutions mentioned in the first section so that they can effectively: manage knowledge, plan and secure financing for the conservation effort, and implement it in cooperation with the private sector.

Contrary to the common understanding, financing for the conservation of the urban heritage is mostly provided by the private sector. The private sector pays the taxes that finance the public investments in conservation. However, public funds are scarce and demanded by a variety of other programs so they cannot finance and support the full conservation of vast and complex urban heritage areas. On the other hand, private property owners and users take on most of the regulation costs associated with conservation in the form of loss of development opportunities and potentially higher prices than in non-heritage areas with less restrictive urban development regulations. Sophisticated planning tools, like the transfer of development rights, can partially compensate for these losses but they are complex to implement.

It makes little financial and social sense to use public funds to fully finance interventions that generate significant private gains that benefit investors, owners and users. The most effective approach is to devote public funds to the activities that provide public goods (like good quality public spaces, streets, safety, etc.), finance public utilities, and promote pioneering investments in association with private partners. Public involvement in the latter activities make sense in that there is an element of public good in pioneering, a condition that discourages pure private investments. Public funds are also profitably used to subsidize private investors that conserve their properties according to the approved regulations. The subsidy compensates, in part, the higher costs of maintenance of heritage properties but more significantly recognizes the contribution made by the private investors to the provision of a public good.

Most of the financing for the conservation effort is local. International cooperation is not a significant source of funds. Private donations by philanthropic institutions are scarce, small and unreliable, and international donations are even more so. International agencies and non-governmental organizations provide advice but not financing. Multilateral financial institutions lend to central governments and only under strict conditions including: proof of the social and economic benefits of conservation for the whole of society and not only for the residents or future users; strict standard procurement rules to ensure transparency, probity and competition; and evaluation of the effectiveness of the actions implemented. Loans from these entities are commonly used for investments falling under the responsibility of public entities: infrastructure, public spaces and streets, and urban amenities.

The conservation process also demands institutional resources, particularly those leading to the good governance of the effort including: the use of finances, institutions, structures of authority and collaboration among stakeholders to attain the sustained conservation of urban heritage.

The adaptive rehabilitation of urban heritage greatly expands the variety of stakeholders interested in the socio-cultural and economic use values of heritage. Reaching agreement about what to conserve, how much conservation is desirable, and how to finance the conservation of heritage is a complex undertaking. It requires that the stakeholders agree to enter into a form of “social contract” regulating their activities and guiding the allocation of their resources. This process is facilitated when:

- The powers of regulation and intervention in the urban heritage area are consolidated in one entity avoiding the ambiguities, inconsistencies and conflicts that emerge when these powers are diffused in a variety of national, regional and local institutions concerned with culture, urban development, tourism, environments, parks and recreation.
- The city and the local community that bear most of the costs and are the direct beneficiaries of the conservation effort decide the regulations and interventions. International, national, and regional sector institutions can assist but not supplant the local stakeholders.
- The urban heritage conservation regulations and investments are part and parcel of the urban development plan and investment program.
- The institutional structure is capable of coordinating in time and space the interventions of the variety of stakeholders.

Cities with weak structures of authority and institutions need to adopt special measures to ensure the effective conservation of the urban heritage in spite of their shortcomings. Declaring the urban heritage areas as special districts and subjecting them to the control of special purpose entities may work. No matter how unadvisable from the point of view of the adequate management of the city this may be, it can be a good solution if it prevents the disappearance of heritage assets that cannot be replaced once lost.



FIGURE 42. The influx of cars makes transportation a primary concern in Yangon's sustainable development

Urbanization in Myanmar

U Win Myint

Urbanization in Myanmar is a challenge as well as an opportunity. Its rapid growth rate can overtake development of basic infrastructures and the availability of resources. But it also offers better economic resources that can serve both the city and rural areas in terms of social and support services.

There is a concentration of heritage buildings in Yangon. Kyaukhada Township is the commercial and important business hub of Yangon. The vicinity around Pansodan Street has a wealth of nineteenth century historic resources. Immediate action is needed to build knowledge about heritage conservation policies and practices, as well as experiences from other cities, to enable Regional and City level officials to make better decisions. Capacity building of urban planners and conservation engineers is urgently needed, along with comprehensive plans to upgrade and improve the urban infrastructure through public private partnerships. Actions are also needed to create a sense of place that:

Helps to implement a civic vision and plan

- Encourages new development that adds value to the city
- Establishes a process that can be sustained into the future
- Provides recreational and educational opportunities
- Creates a platform through which to meet the needs of sustainable tourism development and tie it with a comprehensive tourism strategy

There are many challenges to achieving this. Most buildings are reaching 100 years old, having miraculously survived Japanese and Allied Forces bombing in World War II. There is a need for urgent repairs and structural strengthening. Immediate attention is also needed to formulate a strategy for long term conservation of the buildings that integrates with urban regeneration initiatives. Specific recommendations include:

- Formulating investment action plans through foreign direct investment to make use of these heritage assets.
- Identifying a pilot study area that can gradually expand to the whole township.
- Enlisting support from international institutions.
- Engaging stakeholders from civil society, academics, and various departments.

Heritage Revitalization for a Vibrant and Viable Urban Future in Yangon

Ester van Steekelenburg

Short Window of Opportunity to Safeguard Yangon's Unique Heritage

Yangon is the only city in Asia with its historic core largely intact, because of a period of political and economic isolation. Yangon has an estimated 2,000 properties that date back to pre-1950. The city's historic heart reflects the unique rich and cosmopolitan past of the city: pre-colonial structures like Pagodas and temples, and grand mansions and administrative buildings dating back to the colonial period.

The historic core is also the commercial center and location of choice for the many international businesses and brands establishing a presence in Yangon. The economic forces unleashed since the opening up of the country bring investors and developers from Asia to Yangon. In a long denied strive for modernization; many of the original properties are being demolished to make way for new buildings. Almost invariably this means that original three to four storey historic properties are being replaced by modern 8 to 12 storey structures transforming the cityscape at a rapid pace and thus putting pressure on the public infrastructure. Appreciation of the economic value of historic buildings is largely absent, there is little awareness about heritage conservation among the resident population and businesses, local construction companies lack knowledge and technical skills to modernize with respect to the historic streetscape, and investment capacity among residents appears limited. Local livelihood is changing, developers move in, original residents move out and the cityscape is changing drastically. Given the speed of developments, there is only a short window of opportunity before the unique character of Yangon's city center will be lost forever.

Yangon's Development Challenge

Because of decades of negligence the basic public infrastructure is insufficient to cater to the needs of the residents, resulting in frequent flooding, serious waste problems and traffic congestion. The influx of new urban migrants and more cars has increased the pressure on existing services. The local authorities (Yangon City Development Committee) and Yangon Heritage



FIGURE 43. Fast changing urban street scape in Yangon's main commercial boulevard, Pansodan

Trust (YHT) have been quick to recognize this; YCDC's objective for development of the historic core is to upgrade infrastructure and improve living conditions within the following parameters:

- Not to increase the density (population, traffic congestion, etc.)
- Maintain the residential function and livelihood including current residents
- Keep the historic identity, unique character and streetscape

YCDC has already started to improve public leisure spaces downtown, distribute funds to local constituencies to improve streetscapes and infrastructure and, jointly with YHT, a zoning plan is being identified that includes a conservation zone for the historic core.

However, they are up for a challenge. Existing planning tools and instruments and a limited budget for urban infrastructure investment do not sufficiently capacitate the local government to guide development, let alone create conducive conditions for property investors for respectful urban upgrading. YCDC needs additional investment incentives and tools to help unlock the investment potential of residents and other parties to economically carry the required capacity for investment in renovation of publicly and privately owned properties in the historic center.

The new master plan for the development of Yangon states “*to be a multiethnic city of heritage, culture and tourism*” as one of the five key development priorities for the city but it does not include detailed studies nor does it come with financial support for implementation, which fuels fears that development will continue to precede planning and the threat of losing one of the last intact unique urban heritage areas in Asia becomes very real. The YCDC and YHT agree that a planning strategy for preservation and investment in the downtown area is a priority issue.

Unlocking Investment Potential for Heritage Preservation

Luckily some recognize the economic potential of heritage buildings. Indeed, already a number of public and private buildings are being renovated and given a new lease of life, which is slowly changing the mindset of people about historic buildings for modern use. There is a notable increase in visible renovation activities of privately owned properties in downtown Yangon. However for current residents access to capital is limited. Until recently no mortgage financing was available in Myanmar. Capacity of residents to economically carry the required capacity for investment in renovation of their properties appears limited; although on paper they may own valuable land or property, still no mechanisms exist to unlock positive equity.

In addition the question remains whether renovated historic properties would be marketable; in other words whether tenants would be able to pay rents that would justify investing in the renovation of the buildings. Because of the immaturity of the property market, solid market analysis is largely absent, but anecdotal evidence suggests that in the current economic climate there is very limited supply and sufficient demand for residential and commercial occupancy.

Quite a number of outside investors and developers are eyeing the Yangon property market including its historic buildings. Yet, for external parties to invest other constraints apply, the most important ones being the lack of clear title and complex procedures to get funds in and out of the country. A clean property title in Yangon's historic core seems to be a contradiction in terms. Because of the turbulent history of the country, “ownership” (in the form of a 90 year

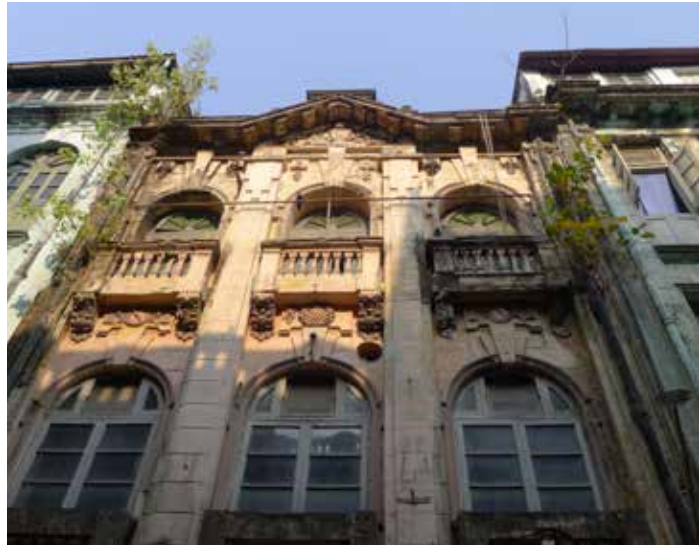


FIGURE 44: Early twentieth-century façades on 26th street

lease) of land and buildings cannot always be traced back to a clear title holder. That said, real estate is being sold and purchased on a daily basis also in the historic quarter. This typically refers only to the title of a property not the land on which it is built. Properties are traded based on “proof of inheritance” through a registered household list.

Finally, in the historic core there could be additional complicating factors because this part of town has great ethnic diversity, and in the past not all ethnic groups enjoyed similar residential status, which in many cases has led to contested ownership of title.

CDIA Funded Heritage-led Urban Upgrading Project

Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA) is a Manila-based international partnership initiative, established in 2007 by the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Germany, with additional core funding support from the governments of Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, and the Shanghai Municipal Government. CDIA provides assistance to medium-sized Asian cities bridging the gap between development plans and the implementation of infrastructure investments. It also supports identification and development of urban investment projects and links them with potential financiers. In short, the mandate is to make plans a reality and guide projects to implementation. In Yangon, CDIA will assist YCDC and YHT to define an investment program for an area-based comprehensive heritage-led regeneration initiative in three pilot areas that details the opportunities and constraints for development of and investment in:

- Infrastructure improvements
- Upgrading and renovation of individual properties

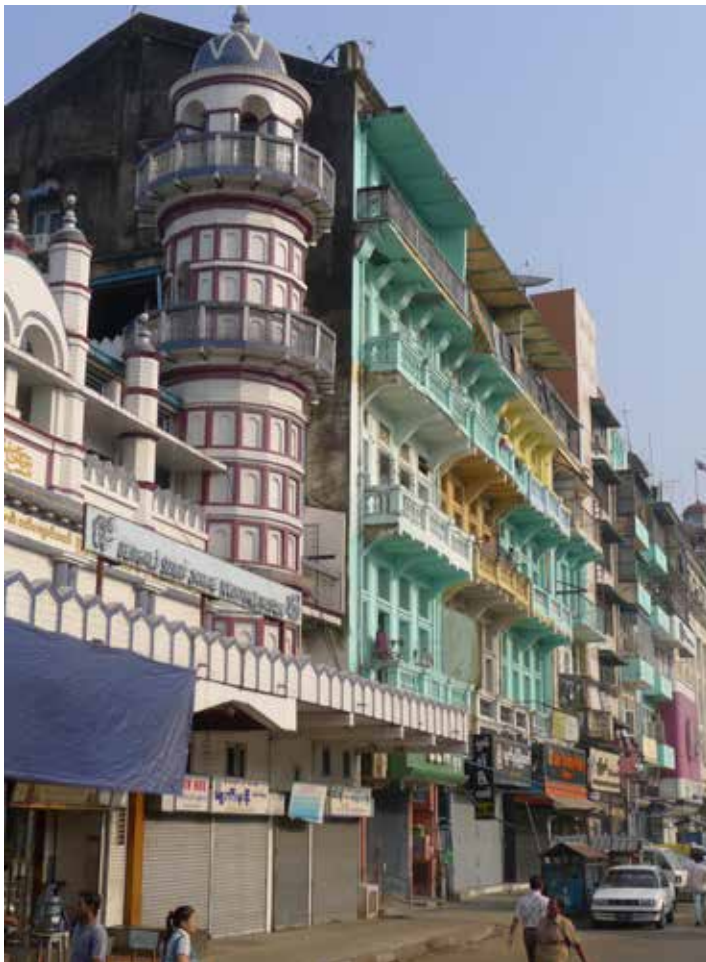


FIGURE 45. Yangon's built heritage reflects the city's ethnic and multicultural diversity

The aim is to provide a feasible development alternative that is *more respectful to the historic fabric* and also provides *more acceptable and affordable alternatives* to residents compared to the current practice of real estate development. The investment program should provide the ammunition to make this a convincing alternative: providing the technical, financial, economic and legal parameters. This is all in conjunction with exploring alternatives with home-owners associations and models that can generate investment beyond individual buildings, leading to an upgrade in the urban environment in downtown Yangon.

The purpose of this project is to show how heritage conservation, development and investment can catalyze urban regeneration and improve city livability. The approach of the project will be to conserve and revitalize both infrastructure and properties that would perhaps not qualify individually for protection but taken collectively have enough character to be recognizable features that give to each city its uniqueness. *Integrated conservation* will underpin the work of this project.

For more information on CDIA please visit <http://cdia.asia/>

Heritage and Sustainable Tourism in Yangon

Dörte Kasüske and Nicole Häusler

Introduction

In a fast-growing and dynamic economic sector such as tourism, uniqueness and competitive advantage are key factors in ensuring growth and success. The main assets of tourism are bound to a specific destination: its culture, its architecture, its people, its festivals, and its heritage.

Myanmar's rapidly growing tourism industry has had an increasingly strong influence on the country's attractions and visitors' destinations. This paper examines cultural heritage tourism in the city of Yangon, the major gateway to the country. Definitions of "heritage tourism" and "sustainable tourism" are included below and followed by a description of tourism development in Myanmar, including its framework, guiding policy, and planning documents. In addition, the potential for heritage tourism in Yangon is discussed, along with recommendations for interventions in the areas of research, tourism governance, and product development.

Cultural Tourism and Heritage Tourism

Cultural tourism encompasses a wide variety of activities and attractions, such as visits to historic and heritage sites, architectural features, cathedrals, museums, theaters, music and art festivals, and distinctive cultural landscapes. It may also include leisure travel to urban and rural areas. The forms of cultural tourism, as well as tourists' reasons for cultural travel, are diverse. However, "some common themes include the desire to experience an 'authentic' cultural landscape, interest in other cultures, and an interest in scenery that fosters an engagement with the past" (Adams 208, 201).

Heritage tourism can be defined as a subset of cultural tourism; it is a form of tourism oriented toward understanding and appreciating both the tangible and the intangible heritage of a destination. Because it comprises a large number of activities, heritage tourism is difficult to define (UNESCO 2002, 24). In recent years, approaches to the management of heritage sites have changed. Conservation is no longer the sole aim of such tourism; instead, economic, scientific, and cultural goals have become increasingly important (UNESCO et al. 2013, 18), and cultural heritage tourism is now more closely linked to sustainable development.

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

Sustainable tourism refers to the application of the principles of sustainable development to tourism. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as "tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities" (UNWTO 2015). Sustainable tourism is not limited to a specific form of tourism or specific goods and services; rather, all forms of tourism have the ability to promote sustainable development.

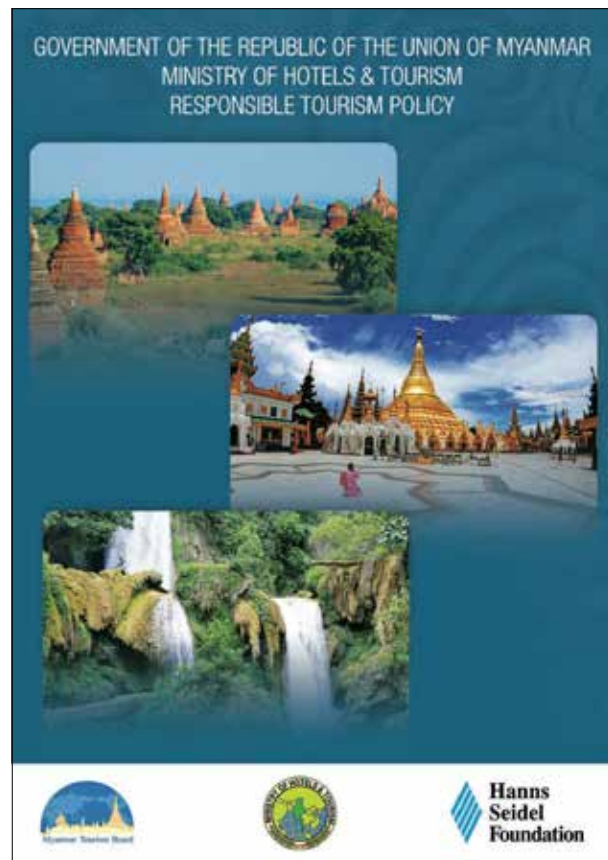


FIGURE 46. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism's 2012 Responsible Tourism Policy

The concept of *responsible tourism* adds an operational dimension to the concept of sustainable tourism. Although it emphasizes the roles and duties of every stakeholder, responsible tourism follows the same core principles as sustainable tourism, namely:

1. Minimizing negative economic, environmental, and social impacts;
2. Generating greater economic benefits for local people and enhancing the well-being of host communities, as well as improving working conditions in and access to the tourism industry;
3. Involving local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances;
4. Making positive contributions toward conserving a country's natural and cultural heritage and maintaining global diversity;
5. Providing more enjoyable experiences for tourists through meaningful connections with local people and a better understanding of local cultural, social, and environmental issues;
6. Assuring access for physically challenged people;
7. Being culturally sensitive, engendering respect between tourists and hosts, and building local pride and confidence.

Tourism Development in Myanmar

Since 2011, with the first wave of political reforms and economic expansion, Myanmar's tourism industry has been developing rapidly and the number of visitors has grown apace. According to tourism statistics published by the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar (MoHT), the average number of tourists arriving grew by 44 percent annually from 2010 to 2014 (MoHT

2015). This number includes overnight guests as well as border tourists who do not stay overnight in Myanmar.

Compared with the number of international tourists who visit neighboring countries—the rest of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—the number of visitors to Myanmar continues to be small. In 2011, Myanmar's share of all international tourist arrivals in the ASEAN region was about 1 percent. Although destinations such as Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore are much more developed and their tourism sectors are more mature, these countries must also confront the negative impacts of such mass tourism.

The growth in tourism can also be viewed from the supply side. For example, on average, the number of hotels has increased by 13 percent each year between 2011 and 2014. The rise in the number of tour companies is even higher—759 tour companies were operating in 2011, compared with 1,623 in 2014 (MoHT 2015)—and accounted for 26 percent of Myanmar's annual growth over this same period.

These recent and significant increases in both demand and supply in Myanmar's tourism industry have led to various challenges and opportunities for the sector and thus require coordinated tourism planning and policy activities.

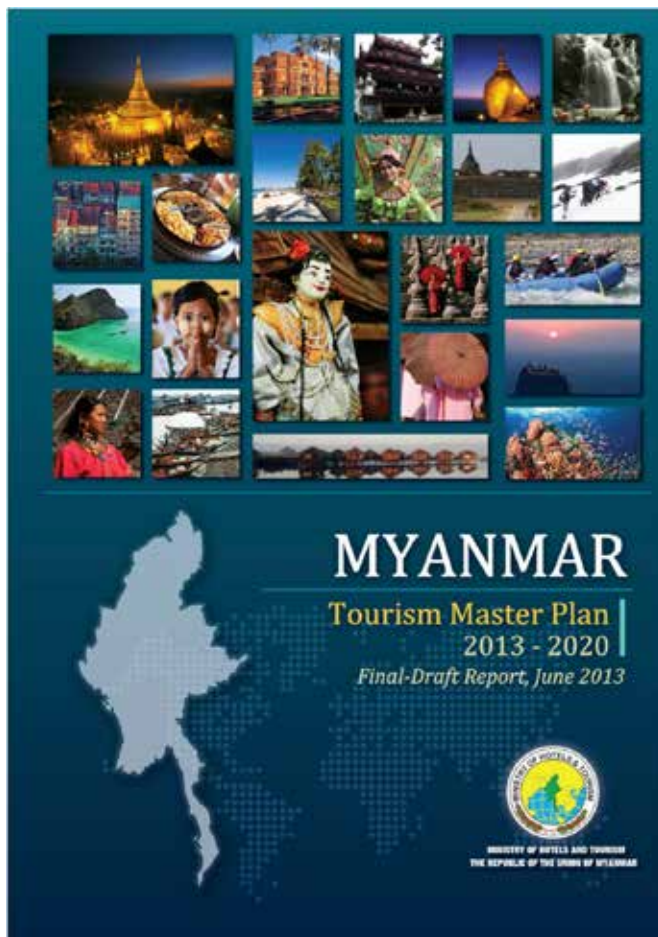


FIGURE 47. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism's 2013 Myanmar Tourism Master Plan

Tourism Policies and Their Linkage to Heritage Tourism in Yangon

The stakeholders in Myanmar's tourism sector recognize the need to promote tourism that will support sustainable development. In light of this, MoHT of Myanmar, in cooperation with domestic and international industry and development partners, has established three policy and planning documents designed to lead tourism development in Myanmar in a more responsible direction. In 2012, the Responsible Tourism Policy (RTP) was launched, followed by the Myanmar Tourism Master Plan 2013–2020 (MoHT 2013a) and the Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism in Myanmar (CIT) (MoHT 2013b).

The strategic vision underlying the RTP and the Tourism Master Plan takes into account several factors: the improvement of living standards, the economic empowerment of local communities, the conservation of cultural and natural resources, and the responsible behavior of all tourism stakeholders:

We intend to use tourism to make Myanmar a better place to live in—to provide more employment and greater business opportunities for all our people, to contribute to the conservation of our natural and cultural heritage and to share with us our rich cultural diversity. We warmly welcome those who appreciate and enjoy our heritage, our way of life, and who travel with respect (MoHT 2012, 6).

This vision is supported by nine aims for achieving responsible tourism in Myanmar:

1. Make tourism a national priority sector;
2. Achieve broad-based local socio-economic development;
3. Maintain cultural diversity and authenticity;
4. Conserve and enhance the environment;
5. Compete successfully in terms of product richness, diversity, and quality, not just price;
6. Ensure the health, safety, and security of our visitors;
7. Strengthen institutions that manage tourism;
8. Provide a well-trained, well-rewarded workforce;
9. Minimize unethical practices.

Two of the policy documents mentioned above refer to the importance of cultural heritage in Myanmar tourism. This is particularly true in the following areas:

- Socio-economic development, local entrepreneurship, and diversified local economies (RTP Aim 2 and CIT Objectives 4 and 5);
- Quality product development in tourism (RTP Aim 5 and CIT Objective 5);
- Maintenance of Myanmar's cultural identity, diversity, and authenticity (RTP Aim 3).

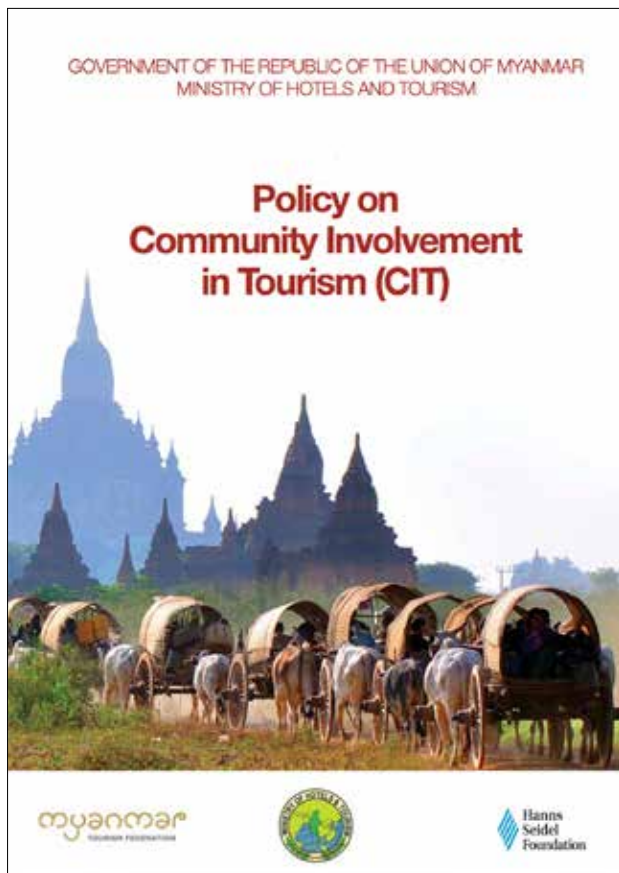


FIGURE 48. The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism's 2013 Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism

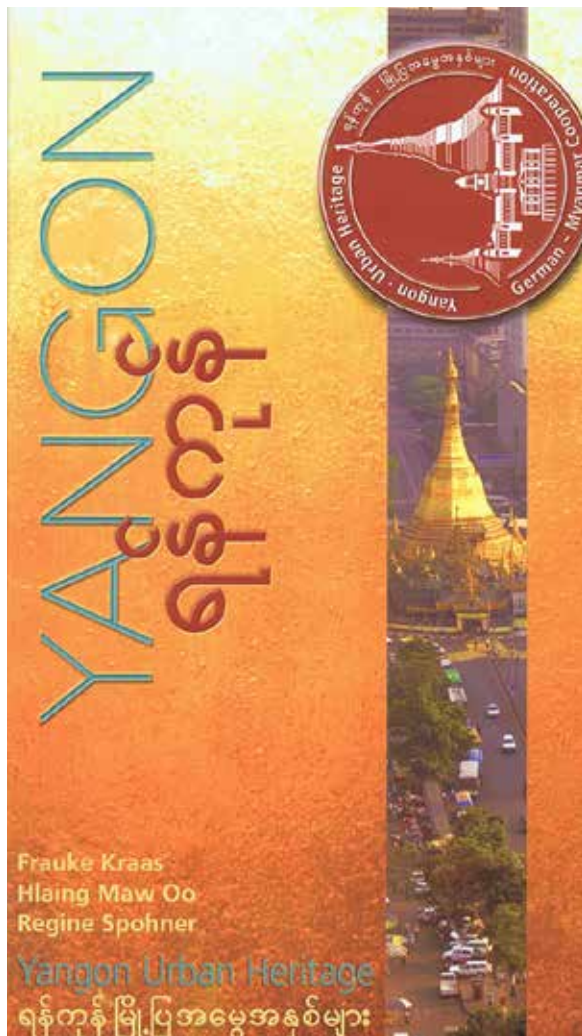


FIGURE 49. 2014 Yangon Urban Heritage map

Drivers of socio-economic development and diversification include support for handicraft development and local artisans and the promotion of handicraft shops and related small and micro enterprises.

In addition, the Myanmar Tourism Master Plan 2013–2020 identifies heritage tourism as one form of tourism, among many others, that can “help spread the benefits of tourism and relieve pressure on established sites” (MoHT 2013a, 9) in Myanmar. This document thus prioritizes heritage and cultural tourism for immediate development.

Product development is seen not only as a means of increasing economic benefits from tourism but also as a way to empower local communities and improve mutual understanding between hosts and visitors. The Master Plan adds tourist infrastructure development to this and mentions efforts by MoHT and the Myanmar Tourism Federation (MTF) to convert existing structures into hotels in order to alleviate capacity shortages. This also includes the “restoration and adaptive use of Yangon’s exceptional heritage buildings” (MoHT 2013a, 15).

With regard to cultural identity, diversity, and authenticity, the RTP emphasizes the training of local guides in the living cultures of ethnic groups so that guides can offer tourists meaningful insights into Yangon’s heritage and history.

Responsible tourism in general and Myanmar’s living culture and cultural heritage in particular are recognized and greatly promoted by these tourism policy documents and the Tourism Master Plan of Myanmar.

Potential of Heritage Tourism in Yangon

Yangon is the major gateway to Myanmar. From 2010 to 2014, an average of 41 percent of all international tourists entered the country via Yangon (MoHT 2015). When looking at tourist arrivals by air alone, Yangon’s importance for international tourism to Myanmar is even more apparent: as of 2014, 90 percent of all tourist arrivals by air were recorded in Yangon (MoHT 2015).

Some statistically significant data have been collected on the travel behavior of international tourists in Yangon. About 30 percent were independent travelers and about 20 percent booked packaged tours in 2014. Business travelers accounted for approximately 20 percent. On average, tourists to Myanmar in 2014 were between 21 and 50 years old (60 percent). Almost two thirds of all visitors were male (MoHT 2015). Yangon hosts international guests only for short periods of time, with the average length of stay ranging from one to two nights.

To experience Myanmar’s culture is a central travel motivation for international tourists to the country and to Yangon. According to a visitor survey conducted during the preparation of the Tourism Master Plan, the main motivation for traveling was to learn more about Myanmar’s culture and history (98 percent), followed by an interest in Myanmar’s cuisine (90 percent) and in visiting a protected area (83 percent).

The main groups targeted for current and potential heritage tourism products and services in Yangon include not only international tourists but also the increasing number of international expatriates who work in the city, as well as Myanmar expatriates living abroad.

Yangon's major attraction is Shwedagon Pagoda, believed to be one of the oldest pagodas in the world (MTF 2015: 9). Other attractions include the city's ensemble of colonial buildings from the time of the British occupation (between 1824 and 1948), which are the largest collection of their kind in Southeast Asia, as well as the various marketplaces, parks, museums, and boulevards. Current offers and services that focus on Yangon's rich heritage include guided tours of the main attractions and walking tours through downtown Yangon.

Efforts to spread the economic benefits of tourism manifest themselves in the establishment of fair-trade souvenir shops that sell creative new products linked to Myanmar's heritage, culture, and history. Specialized restaurants, teashops, and other facilities that combine arts, food, and creative industries can be seen as a way to strengthen and diversify local economies. However, there is still a need for some of these efforts to mature in quantity and quality (service, food hygiene, and the like).

Recommendations for Next Steps

Heritage tourism can be a useful mechanism for increasing conservation and sustainable tourism in Yangon. To reach the full potential of such tourism, interventions are needed in three areas in particular: research, tourism governance, and product development.

1. Research

- *Setting the context:* Define heritage tourism in Yangon by assessing the city's tangible and intangible heritage assets and creative arts and by identifying the potential benefits, risks, and costs involved.
- *Analyzing the situation:* Identify the markets, suppliers, typologies of demand, and market gatekeepers for heritage tourism.
- *Operationalizing the plan:* Understand what is needed to establish a successful tourist attraction and apply the appropriate planning and management frameworks.

2. Tourism Governance

- *Tourism planning:* Add value to the country's cultural and architectural heritage by putting urban heritage tourism on the agenda of tourism development in Myanmar. This requires the inclusion of urban heritage tourism in the forthcoming updates of Myanmar's tourism policies and planning documents.
- *Establishing a Yangon tourism development committee:* Include representatives from the municipality, MoHT, governmental organizations, MTF, universities, nongovernmental organizations, and tour operators. Tasks should include policy development at the city level, product development, and capacity building for sustainable urban heritage tourism in Yangon.
- *Fostering cooperation:* Encourage partnerships between tourism and cultural and heritage organizations in the public and private sectors to increase the efficiency of interventions, avoid duplications, and combine efforts, expertise, and funding.

3. Product Development

- *Authentic heritage tours:* Special tours based on the city's history can be developed. Such tours should include elements that enhance the visitor's experience and introduce new elements (such as films) to guide the experience. In addition, the integration of sustainable energy-friendly transport (rickshaw) into the tours is recommended, as are other elements that allow visitors to experience the local culture and lifestyle.
- *Yangon heritage map:* The Yangon Urban Heritage Map (2015) can serve to introduce visitors and even residents to areas beyond the already well-known tourism hot spots and increase awareness and understanding of Yangon's unique heritage.

The implementation of these recommendations and activities will be successful only if the relevant actors are committed to working together in a transparent and structured way and to defining a work plan and allocating specific responsibilities to be carried out in the near future.

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FIGURE 50. The streets of Yangon exemplify a strong sense of community

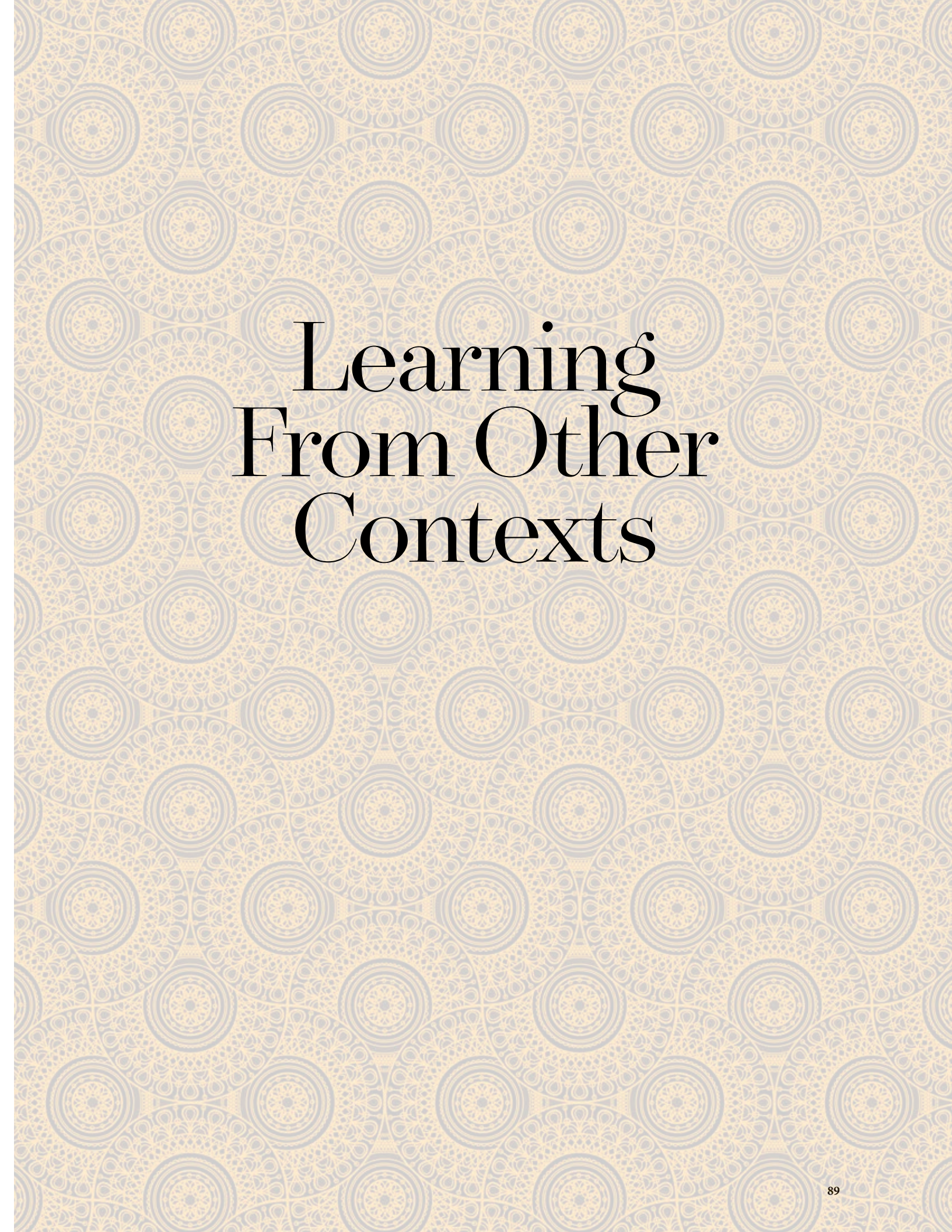
Building on Local Networks

Michael Slingsby

In addressing heritage in Yangon, our focus is often on large, monumental buildings. However, it is the small streets and their variety of buildings and economic activities that retain the character, vibrancy, and attractiveness of downtown Yangon. Streets still have their dominant and subsidiary trades, with specialized operations to buy everything from clothes for a monk to a bicycle to construction materials, and maintain strong links to the large Theingyizay Market to the north and to the harbor in the south.

These streets represent a sense of community that is demonstrated by people's willingness to provide for others and decorate their storefronts and sidewalks. They engage a wide spectrum of society, from the elderly to small children, with notable areas of gathering. For example, shops near schools are important places for social exchange after mothers drop off their children.

Elsewhere in Yangon, beyond downtown, there have been important efforts to capitalize on these social bonds and opportunities for dialogue, including partnerships between communities, heads of 100 households, Ward level officials, Townships and YCDC Departments. In Shwepyitar Township, community meetings with heads of 100 households, Ward level officials, and YCDC Departments have led to improvements in roads, drains and street lights, with each contributing funds. In Hlaingtaryar Township, roads, drains, and street lights were paid for by the community and constructed by the Township and the community. Such collaborations build upon the social capital that thrives within Yangon. They provide a useful model for engaging local residents and business owners in heritage conservation efforts, and also as a vital lens for understanding what constitutes heritage in the context of Yangon.



Learning From Other Contexts

Urban Conservation in Asia: Changing Motivations, Patterns, and Achievements

H. Detlef Kammeier

Introduction

Being a latecomer in urban conservation (as part of overall urban development), Yangon can learn from the experiences in other countries to protect its rich historic resources. The search for models should include the neighboring Asian countries (India, China, and Thailand) where urban conservation has made considerable progress. This is in contrast to Europe where urban conservation has generally become part of the mainstream of urban development policies, after decades of controversies over the principles of integrating new development with conservation programs.

It may be stated that urban development through history tends to follow broad stages that are associated with the stages of socio-economic and political development. Similarly, society's interest in, and support for urban conservation and its integration in urban development policies, moves through certain stages. They reflect the more general conditions of urban management: In times of fast economic growth, the emphasis tends to be more on re-building and hence, neglect of older city fabric, whereas in times of slow socio-economic development, the principles of conservation, i.e. integrating old and new fabric tend to become much stronger. The experience of Europe shows that the economic boom after World War II destroyed more historic fabric than the bombing during the war.

The paper is structured into the three sections—continuity and change in urban development and management; urban conservation as a specific field of conservation policies; some reference cases from Asian countries; followed by concluding remarks.

Urban Development and Management

Urbanization constitutes the most radical transformation of social and economic structures all over the world, and with it, the dramatic and rapid transformation of landscapes and cityscapes that used to grow and change much more slowly and gradually. However, it is not appropriate to compare urbanization effects in the East and West directly because the industrialized, i.e. often post-industrial, part of the world is at a very different stage of the urbanization processes than the newly urbanizing one, notably China. All of Southeast Asia is now part of these fast growth and transformation processes, not quite at the same pace and scale as in China, but not much slower either. Myanmar as a newly reformed economy is beginning to catch up rapidly, against the odds.

In present Europe, 70 percent of the city is already there, with buildings and infrastructure of 50 to 100 years of age; in addition, urban growth is often stagnating, and there are shrinking cities but only few fast growing centers of economic innovation. The style of urban planning and management has moved from emphasis on new structures and re-building to managing and improving the existing cityscape—and that includes conservation. In contrast, the newly urbanizing countries display fast growth and change, so cities mostly consist of new fabric. In such cities, the understanding of older structures and the respect for older fashions tends to be much lower than in countries at the end of the urbanization process. Therefore, in most Asian countries, conservation is only beginning to take root in the public discourse.

Cycles of continuity and change: Urban development and management have always been subject to a cycle of building, destruction, redevelopment and reuse as the needs of society changed, along with the changes in political power and its physical representation in the city. The city and its quarters undergo almost natural aging processes related to materials, but more so, to societal



FIGURE 51. Baron Haussmann's grand transformation of Paris (1853–1870) was widely praised

values attached to the built form. Such values are determined by political power, religion, and functional use (such as the role of the city and its fortified walls). History is replete with dramatic cases of the changing “use values” of previously grand structures, and re-defining urban space. Three examples:

1. After its heyday as the center of the ancient Greek democracy, the Acropolis of Athens lost its significance. During the Ottoman occupation of Greece, Athens was a dusty provincial town, and the Acropolis was used as a gunpowder magazine which then became the target for a destructive attack by the Venetian army (1687). It took another 150 years for the Acropolis to be re-valued as a symbol of the newly independent Greek kingdom.
2. In the sixth century AD, after the Forum Romanum had lost its dignity as the center of the most powerful empire of the ancient world, it became a quarry for building houses and streets. Some of the marble was recycled to build the largest Christian church, St. Peter's Cathedral.
3. After the Siamese capital of Ayutthaya had been sacked by the Burmese troops in 1767, a new capital had to be founded in a safer location. What had been left of the proud capital was the memory, and the bricks, and they were shipped down the river to be used in erecting the new capital, Bangkok, after the image of Ayutthaya.

Another example may be added for contrast—the two plans for Paris: Baron Haussmann's grand transformation of Paris (1853–1870) was widely praised even though it amounted to drastic changes in “cutting up the belly of Paris.” In contrast, Le Corbusier's modernist destructive fantasy (1930) for demolishing the entire core area of Paris and re-building it in the form of 18 giant skyscrapers was luckily never considered for implementation.

The role of World Heritage: Soon after its launch in 1972, the World Heritage system became the most visible and prestigious framework of conservation worldwide, daunting as a model but in essence, full of good ideas for guiding national policy formation. It is important for each country to come to grips with the regional and national issues of each locality where the difficult integration of conservation and development must be achieved—often amounting to the

proverbial squaring of a circle. There are hundreds of sites in need of effective protection by national legislation and local management.

The World Heritage system has grown in complexity and international competence in heritage protection, reflecting the changes in knowledge and perception in many disciplines. So there are many shifts in defining heritage values and their translation into protection policies (UNESCO Operational Guidelines, 2008).

Focus on Urban Conservation

A general classification of heritage types and their values is outlined in Figure 52. Quite obviously, most heritage conservation projects have more dimensions than just the physical structures that need repairs and maintenance. This cannot be separated from the intangible dimensions of meaning and use of a building, and generally, from the social and cultural issues that are involved.

Heritage objects, tangible or intangible, man-made or natural, movable or immovable, come in different sizes—ranging from the familiar single building (or part of a building complex like a sacred shrine) to larger areas like an entire monastery, or a historic city center, or even a whole region of historic relevance (cultural landscape). Figure 53 illustrates the increasing size and complexity of heritage sites over the past 30 years.

Larger areas such as city quarters and historic centers include ordinary city fabric that would hardly be worth conserving as such but it is now important in the context of the more outstanding buildings, streets and public spaces and their overall historic values.

The World Heritage system constitutes the most diversified collection of expertise in heritage conservation with contributions on all kinds of heritage sites that are under examination. It could serve as a model for legislation at the national level which in many countries is far behind the demand for adequate consideration and treatment of heritage resources (Kammeier, 2013).

There is considerable progress in implementing projects where development and conservation principles are effectively integrated in some kind of win-win solution. It must be said, however, that it remains to be difficult—not only in the developing countries where this is beginning to be tested but also in countries where there are decades of experience with this approach. Multiple interests and conflicts include the land owners’ profit expectations, poor tenants’ needs for staying on, and cities’ interest in modernization which is often stronger than that in conser-

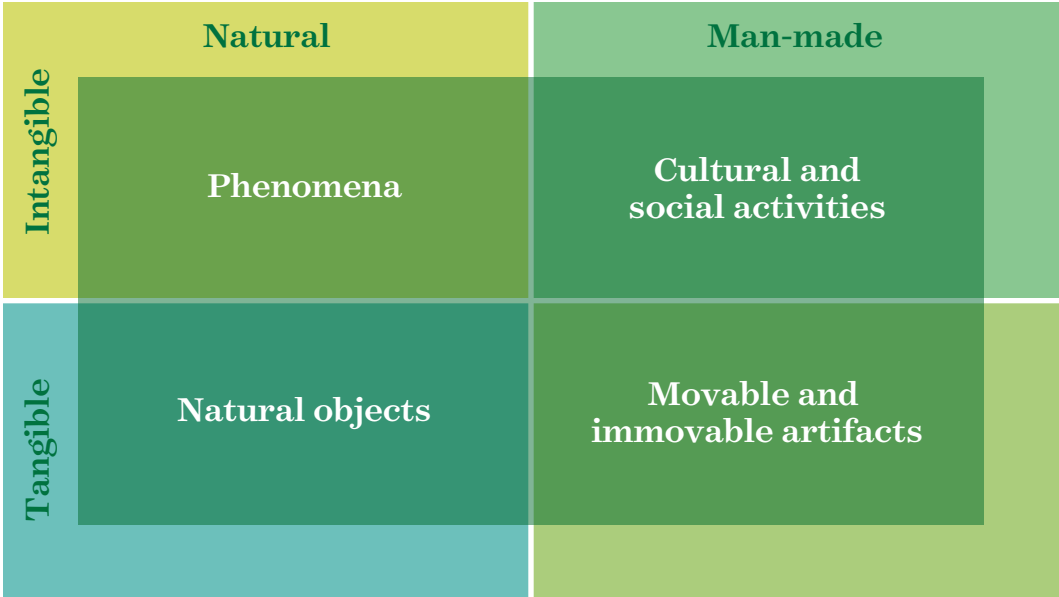


FIGURE 52: A comprehensive classification of heritage resources

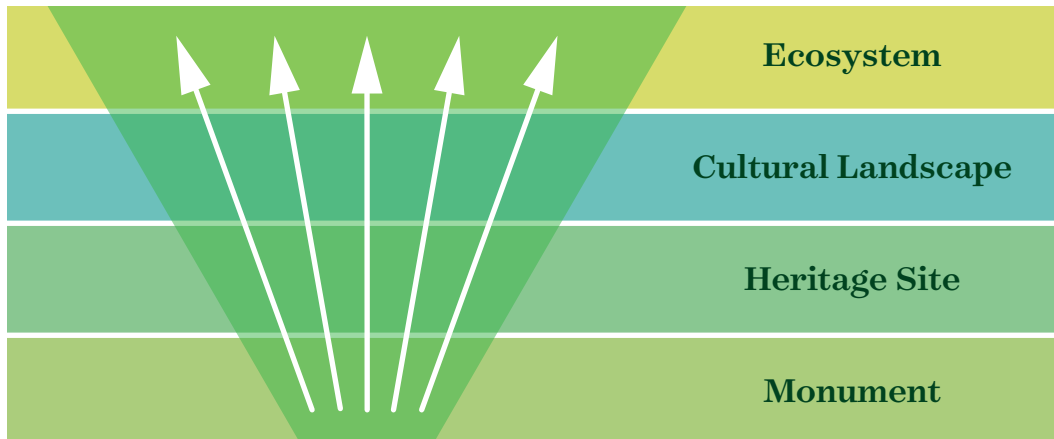


FIGURE 53. Expanding the scope of “heritage resources” and “heritage sites” implies growing community involvement as well as increasingly complex institutional arrangements

vation. Therefore, rehabilitation projects are usually more demanding and time consuming than ordinary development projects. It is true that public investments in urban conservation projects usually triggers private investments but in many countries, the necessary incentive schemes do not exist yet and banks are therefore not interested in supporting property owners.

From its beginnings in the nineteenth century, cultural conservation was conceived as a movement against growing large-scale industrial development, while modernity was seen as too fast and incompatible with traditions in society, settlement design, and handicraft. During the early phases of the European conservation movement, the restoration of cathedrals, castles, and entire historic towns sought to “clean” the historic substance from alterations that had been added over the centuries. Thus the aim was to re-create an “ideal” and pure stage against the reality of multiple layers of developments and modifications. The work of the famous French architect and conservationist Eugene Viollet-le-Duc is full of arbitrary interpretations and additions of historic substance. Some decades later, the ideals had shifted to carefully reading and visualizing the “palimpsest” of historic buildings and city quarters, and on authenticity in materials and style. The Charter of Venice (1964) emphasizes such principles, in conjunction with growing concerns about the non-physical aspects of conservation, i.e. gentrification and protection of poor tenants in old quarters.

Purely material authenticity was impossible to hold up against the earlier forms of maintaining the spirit and meaning of a historic place which was still more important in Asia (hence the Nara Document on Authenticity, 1994 which was promoted by UNESCO and its World Heritage organization). Ten years later, ICOMOS similarly promoted the so-called China Principles (2004) to support the growing conservation movement in China.

Some Reference Cases from Asian Countries

Considerable differences exist between the most advanced economies such as Japan and Singapore and the latecomers in development, for example, Laos and Cambodia. Singapore embraced heritage conservation only in the early 1980s, after having re-developed most of its former shop-house fabric. Within less than 20 years, China probably achieved the greatest progress in catching up on state-of-the-art conservation methodology with many interesting results, including some last-minute decisions for active conservation in Tibet, after most of the extant buildings had been demolished. Cambodia and Laos have not had enough time and opportunity for updating their heritage legislation but there are some modest projects of urban conservation, apart from the special case of Angkor where large-scale historic preservation meets an increasingly unmanageable influx of tourists.



FIGURE 54. Cheonggyecheon Stream in Seoul

In 2005, the city of Seoul surprised the conservation world with the signal case of demolishing an elevated expressway which had been built over an inner-city stream (Chogye Cheon). The reversal of traffic policy is a most visible sign of taking the Agenda 21 seriously (and it made Lee Myong Bak, the mayor, so popular that he became president in 2008).

Thailand has its share of successes and failures all over the country with regard to historic substance rescued, long-term policies established, and some intelligent projects completed. One of the most successful long-range programs must be that of Rattanakosin Island which was launched at the 200th anniversary of Bangkok. When the program began in 1982 very few observers would have believed it could become the success it is today, showing what a consolidated and continuously refined policy can achieve over a longer period of time. To some extent, the mixed success of Bangkok could serve as a positive example for Yangon although the colonial commercial center of the city is obviously different and probably more difficult to handle than the historic center of Bangkok which is less important commercially than the newly developed downtown areas east and south of the historic Rattanakosin area. Although the recognized scope of “heritage” in Thailand now includes much more than the traditional temples and palaces, architecture of the early modernist period from the 1930s onward does not quite fit into the definition of heritage yet (Bangkok Post Spectrum, February 2015).

The Asia-Pacific Awards for Heritage Conservation: The director of the cultural office of UNESCO Bangkok launched a program of best conservation practices in 1999. The idea is to award privately funded cultural heritage projects in the Asia-Pacific Region (which includes Australia and New Zealand), avoiding any inappropriate competition with government sponsored programs. Typically sponsored by individual property owners or by non-government agencies and often managed by communities, the projects represent an extraordinary range of interesting and competently managed cases of heritage conservation. The annual competition has been running successfully for nearly 15 years, with very encouraging results. It can be stated with confidence, and that is a very important message particularly for the poorer countries in Asia, that privately sponsored and competently executed conservation projects are the most effective promotion of broad based heritage management [publications edited by Engelhardt, 2007; and Chapman, 2013; and UNESCO (Bangkok) Website, 2011].

Concluding remarks

Conservation activities have grown more over the past 40 years than any earlier conservation movements with their nineteenth-century roots. The reason for this is that the speed of change in recent decades has been much faster than in the past. There are serious threats, losses to finite heritage resources (natural and cultural), and broad sectors of society are worried by vanishing cultural identity which is being substituted by the levelling effects of economic and cultural globalization.

The growing conservation movement all over the world is, in fact, a counter movement to the widespread, naively unreflective faith in unlimited economic progress. This may however only apply to the post-industrial countries of the West with their much longer experience with that kind of progress. The scope of conservation has been broadened considerably, linking the formerly unconnected fields of cultural conservation, urban development, and environmental protection with the common goal of protecting fragile and finite resources, both natural and cultural.

The tasks of urban conservation in Yangon are extremely challenging but there are great opportunities for a wise and able administration, and it appears to be realistic to expect considerable international support.

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Place, Community, Continuity, and Change: Embedding Place and Community in the Production of the Future

Laurence Loh

Introduction

Aspects of place, community, continuity and change are key conservation concepts that have been touched upon by various speakers in one form or another. My professional philosophy and teaching approach radiates around these four keywords. My aim is to turn the spotlight onto what has guided the strategic thinking behind the directions of heritage advocacy, professional commitment, community service and enterprise that I have taken in my home country, Malaysia. These directions have always been framed and subsequently geared up as action-outcome strategies to promote urban conservation as an agent for managing change. Three initiatives that embody the concepts are presented here:

4. Integrated Urban Conservation Planning
5. Best Practice in Building Conservation
6. The George Town Grants Programme

The Starting Point

In Malaysia, institutionalized urban planning in its present form as a function of local government has unwittingly led to the loss and destruction of heritage settings and values, tangible and intangible. Compliance with statutory planning requirements kick-starts the spatial development process as any professional planner or architect will tell you. It begins with reference to and conformity with government master plans and policies that mainly use physical planning tools like zoning, plot ratios and densities to guide development control. These tools are two-dimensional and broad-brush. Urban conservation planning has to be site and context specific.

Until lately, urban conservation has not been given serious consideration in the preparation and legal endorsement of these planning documents. This has resulted in large-scale urban redevelopment of heritage sites, the demolition of heritage buildings and the dispersal of traditional communities, trades and other intangible assets, all of which form the life of a place or city. In turn, this has led to the creation of spaces that are inappropriate for local cultural use and devoid of spirit of place. There are countless examples that prove the case. Every country has its own horror stories.

When vested in private hands, the development is invariably about stimulating consumption, as opposed to empowerment and freedom in the case of people and community. Inevitably, planners become willing or unwilling partners in the politics and process of social change. The questions that arise are “whose version of social change is being considered?” and “whose interests are being safeguarded?”

Integrated Urban Conservation Planning

Increasingly, the planning profession has come to recognize that urban conservation planning should be valued as a critical driver of sustainable development and be incorporated into the planning regulatory framework. In order to increase awareness of the idea, the Getty Conservation Institute in partnership with Think City Sdn. Bhd.¹ and Badan Warisan Malaysia, or the Heritage of Malaysia Trust, has over the last three years promoted an educational course on Urban Conservation Planning for mid-career planners which integrates cultural mapping and heritage conservation theory and practice into mainstream planning, thus giving weight and attention to the concept of Integrated Urban Conservation Planning (IUCP).

The mission is to convey to practitioners “a sensitive and sustainable perspective on urban planning that responds to the culturally distinctive assets and resources of a locality as well as to local needs, aspirations and perceptions of a place” and to encourage policy makers “to think strategically about applying the culturally distinctive resources of the locality to economic and urban planning.”² IUCP contextualizes development by promoting continuous and active processes of regeneration and embeds unique characteristics (attributes and values) and patterns within a spatial-cultural planning matrix. Such a matrix celebrates the continuity of existing layers of history, architecture, economy, society and environment.

IUCP examines all aspects of the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits accrued to a place in order to determine the most appropriate urban planning options and to propose a suitable course of action. Designs and spatial configurations are viewed as expressions of the people for whom they are planned. It ensures the participation of all stakeholders and affected sectors in joint planning. IUCP as a consequence promotes mutual respect and inclusivity, and strengthens the bonds between different communities and faiths, reinforces sustainable development and ensures stable economic growth.

Planning for Sustainability

The planning process as recommended (Figure 55) consists broadly of seven components or stages of work, centered on principles of cultural heritage conservation and management and application of their respective methodologies to activate and actualize the process.

The second stage of work is cultural mapping, which in many instances is a critical action/sector that is missing from the statutory planning process. To fill this gap, it is imperative that in any given project cultural mapping is undertaken. The corollary is that if it is not carried out, decision-makers and politicians will not be in a position to know what their constituents stand to lose in terms of their cultural assets and resources, both tangible and intangible. Very often they find out too late that a traditional community has to make way for a new development project or that a traditional skill is being displaced or lost.

Cultural-mapping is defined by Janet Pillai as “a systematic approach to identifying, recording and classifying specific tangible and intangible assets, resources, knowledge, expressions, ways of thinking, beliefs and values that emerge from a human settlement as an out-

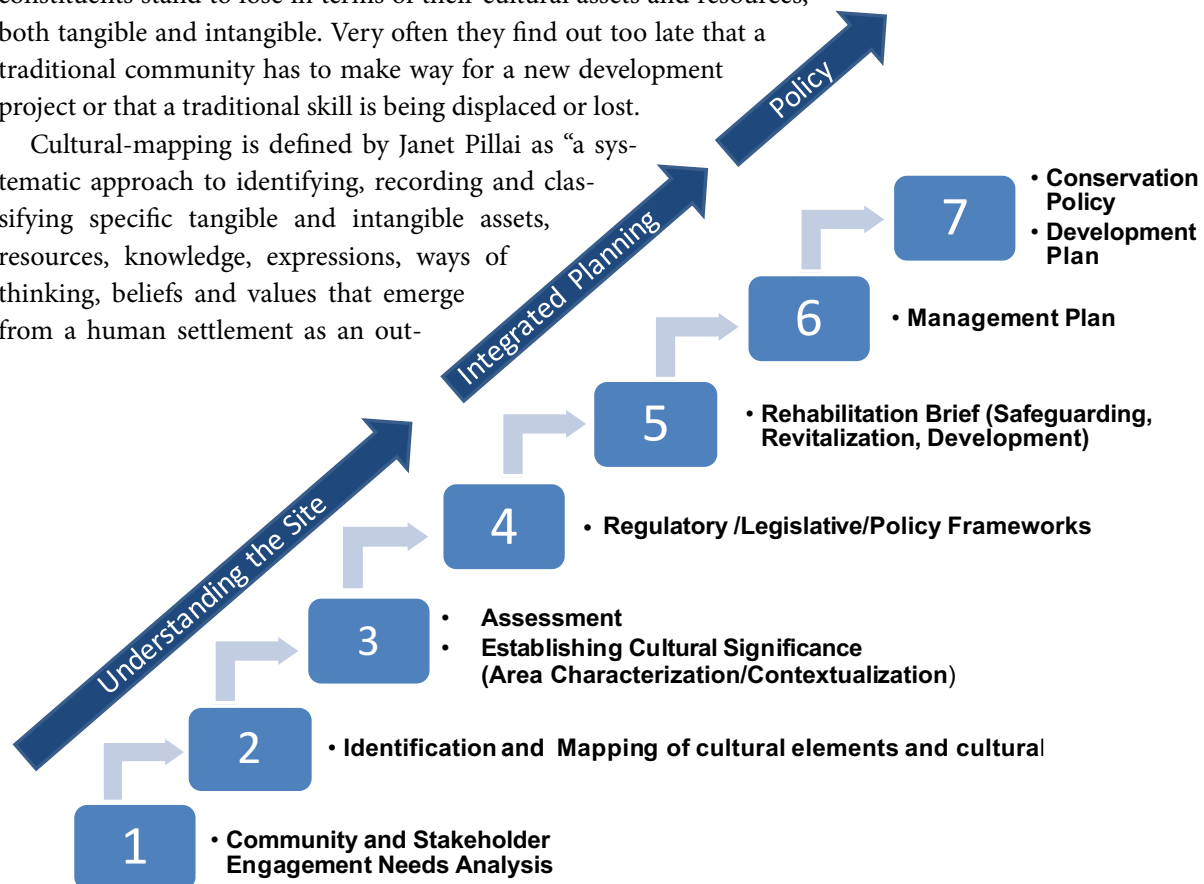


FIGURE 55. Components of Integrated Urban Conservation Process

come of the place-making process.” The successful application of cultural mapping requires a paradigm shift from the supremacy of bureaucratic decision-making to a process of active participation by local players whose cultural energy and cultural creativity have been central to the evolution of the local human settlement.

In the interest of social order and the management of change in the context of a nation’s heritage, it is critical that Integrated Urban Conservation Planning be adopted as a statutory planning tool. We must be fully aware that plans and policies implemented today will account for changes that will take place tomorrow. How does one safeguard the future for the next generation? By ensuring that solutions are culturally sensitive and sustainable.

Best Practice in Building Conservation

In order to generate interest in the subject of building conservation and to create a best practice exemplar, the author in 1990 arranged for the purchase of a dilapidated Chinese courtyard house in the historic core of George Town and embarked on a benchmark restoration and adaptive reuse project that has become synonymous with heritage in Penang. It became known as the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion or the Blue Mansion (www.cheongfattzemansion.com). After completion of the restoration it won the top UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award for Culture Heritage Conservation in 2000. The award citation reads as follows:

The restoration of the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion is an exceptional achievement in conserving the historical and cultural heritage of the George Town community. History was preserved by meticulously applying extensive research on the architecture, traditional artisan skills and materials to the restoration. Imported materials to match the original as well as skilled artisans ensured the authenticity of the methodology of construction. When unattainable, necessary skills were revitalized based on research coupled with scientific analysis. The mansion’s restoration has had enormous impact and influence on the preservation movement in Penang by prompting the local government to enact strong heritage preservation measures. It has stimulated restoration and adaptive re-use of structures in its immediate vicinity and serves as a model for restoration projects throughout the city of George Town, and indeed the broader region.

The numerous accolades accrued by the project, supported by an endless stream of articles by international travel writers, films and television features, testify to how a well-conserved historic building or site with its spirit of place intact, in the right place at the right time, can become the catalyst for area regeneration and influence conservation policy locally, nationally and internationally. The fact that it was private sector driven without any financial help and technical assistance from the government, happening at a moment in time when there were no conservation guidelines or policies, scant public awareness, no local expertise or artisans available is in itself a remarkable feat. The gap was waiting to be filled by a seminal project. This undertaking broke the boundaries of ignorance and skepticism and helped to hold back the tide of destructive re-development of historic sites in George Town. It was a project waiting to happen, a catalyst for change.

Today, the Blue Mansion is a successful five-star heritage hotel with a special story to tell. Guided tours are conducted three times a day where an interpretation of the life and times of Cheong Fatt Tze and lessons learned about conservation are shared with visitors. The public spaces are continually being activated by designer events and private celebrations. Thus the cycle of life is continually revived and maintained, an important facet of successful adaptive reuse. Lonely Planet has named it as one of the ten World’s Greatest Mansions and Grand Houses.



FIGURE 56. Courtyard in the Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion

The George Town Grants Programme (GTGP)

In 2008, the historic core in the City of George Town, Penang, was jointly inscribed, together with Melaka, as a World Heritage Site.³ The Outstanding Universal Value is described as follows:

Melaka and George Town, Malaysia, are remarkable examples of historic colonial towns on the Straits of Malacca that demonstrate a succession of historical and cultural influences arising from their former function as trading ports linking East and West. These are the most complete surviving historic city centres on the Straits of Malacca with a multi-cultural living heritage originating from the trade routes from Great Britain and Europe through the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and the Malay Archipelago to China. Both towns bear testimony to a living multi-cultural heritage and tradition of Asia, where the many religions and cultures met and coexisted. They reflect the coming together of cultural elements from the Malay Archipelago, India and China with those of Europe, to create a unique architecture, culture and townscape.

Subsequent to the inscription, a small grants scheme called the George Town Grants Programme was set up to facilitate private sector conservation and culture-based initiatives in the World Heritage Site of George Town. This was an idea that had been mooted as early as in 1998, but it only became a reality in 2009, when the Prime Minister of Malaysia approved a sum of USD 6.5 million for the purpose. The money was parked with Khazanah Nasional Bhd. who in turn created a limited company called Think City Sdn. Bhd., as mentioned earlier, to administer and disperse the monies. In an unusual move, Loh was one of three non-government directors appointed to steer the course with the following objectives in mind:

- Kick-start the urban rejuvenation of the George Town World Heritage Site.
- Build on the momentum of civil society-driven activities and private sector initiatives thus spurring private-public partnerships.
- Build local capacity and capability for the protection and development of living heritage, culture and architecture.
- Encourage sustainable development and the creation of a livable environment.

A small grants system, based on an earlier idea called FAST (the acronym for “Facilitate, Accelerate, Support, Transform”) was seen as a quick win scenario which would be inclusive and catalytic, have visibility and public impact, build awareness and have greater outreach. The program could be rolled out at a faster pace in comparison to normal government processes where often the bureaucratic burden can be heavy. In Malaysia, the government does not usually hand out money to private bodies or individuals to improve their own buildings. This paradigm shift would prove to be visionary.

In three years, Think City has financed over 220 projects in four broad categories related to urban regeneration, namely physical conservation, cultural mapping, capacity building and technical assistance and the enhancement of shared spaces. From day one, it was very clear to the directors and management team that they had to take a bottom-up approach which parallels the civil society’s mindset in Penang, a question of speaking the same language, operating with the same expectations and creating empathetic experiences. In a short time, this approach has successfully built relevant know-how and credibility to manage change and urbanization.

Operating Principles

The art of building credibility and success as mentioned above is predicated on the fact that Think City has been true to its operating principles, which are to:

- Develop community-level strategies and implement programs that enhance George Town’s Outstanding Universal Values over time;
- Gather lessons from community-level experience and initiate the sharing of successful strategies and innovations among stakeholders;
- Build partnerships and networks of stakeholders to support and strengthen the community, particularly promoting sustainable development;
- Ensure that conservation and sustainable development strategies and projects that protect the WHS are understood and practiced by communities and other key stakeholders;
- Stimulate public-private partnerships especially in heritage-related projects;
- Provide incentives to property owners to adopt heritage conservation as a way of life.

Types of Grants

Below are the types of grants that were created:

- Project and Booster Grants: one-off grants for projects that have very specific targets and objectives, which are non-conservation type activities.
- Physical Realm (Restoration, Conservation and Upgrading)
 - Repayable Grants: aimed at private property owners as an incentive for them to apply best practices in heritage conservation. Proposals that include buildings of special historic significance and that will have a major public outcome will be given priority.
 - Matching Grants: usually involve projects with multiple stakeholders and that has multiple funding agencies (matching grant applicants are given priority).
- Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Grants: special grants allocated for technical expertise (for conservation) and capacity building (for public programs) to fulfill GTGP objectives.

The following criteria are used to help assess and prioritize applications:

- Catalytic effect towards a sustainable city
- Contribution to George Town's Outstanding Universal Values
- Public realm work of historic significance
- Improvements to economic and social conditions
- Overall financial viability
- Financial need for grant demonstrated
- Encouragement of intercultural networking
- Documentation
- Sustainability of development

Objectives Met

After three years, it has proven that the grants initiative has been able to:

- Empower the public to take the initiative and share the responsibility of safeguarding the World Heritage Site by organizing activities that strengthen George Town's Outstanding Universal Values;
- Build local capacity to preserve and promote George Town's living heritage;
- Make sustainability a shared objective;
- Encourage private property owners to use proper heritage conservation methods and practices.

The team at Think City believes that the GTGP has contributed greatly to the rejuvenation of George Town as evidenced by the excellent state of conservation of the place. The lessons learned are now being applied throughout Malaysia.

Conclusion—Contextualizing Yangon's Development

The initiatives just described are ongoing, live projects whose main mission is to catalyze conservation consciousness and success. They are best practice exemplars that can be adapted to promote conservation and urban sustainability with Yangon characteristics (attributes and values) and patterns within a spatial-cultural planning matrix that celebrates the continuity of existing layers of history, architecture, economy, environment and society. Yangon's historic core is still relatively intact. There is a critical mass that can absorb appropriate development successfully. The city has the opportunity to broker strong action-outcomes on the back of its latecomer advantage, a relatively early start, and assistance from ever-willing international partners.

Notes

1 Think City is a special project vehicle set up by Khazanah Nasional Berhad, the investment holding arm of the Malaysian Government, to administer the George Town Grants Programme.

2 Pillai, J. (2013), *Cultural Mapping, A Guide to Understanding Place, Community and Continuity*, Pg. 1, Strategic Information and Research Development Centre.

3 The World Heritage Site's official title is "Melaka and George Town, the Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca".

Sustainable Preservation

Jean Wee

The fine balance required in considering preservation of architectural heritage and urban development is a contentious one, continuously being altered and refined. Many questions abound:

Whose decision is it?

- How much public consultation is required?
- Who “owns” and who should protect these heritage values?
- How much can we accept as an argument for commercialization and development?

In 1971 when the Preservation of Sites and Monuments was established (then known as the Preservation of Monuments Board), swathes of historic Singapore were demolished to make room for development. There was a need to establish a fledgling nation with a sustainable economy and an image that would attract investment. There was a rush for progress and the incidental cost was that anything perceived to be non-progressive—buildings that no longer suited modernized functions, or traditions that were outmoded—should be done away with or somehow improved upon.

Forty years on, the same public that had limited engagement with these changes, has come to have an opinion of its own. There have been expressions of what it means to be Singaporean, and what it means to have sites of memory with which to connect—or even of which to be proud, as a contrast to our humble beginnings.

On the brink of Singapore’s Jubilee Year there will be a plethora of events to celebrate this coming of age. It will be a celebration of what our heritage is, in particular, buildings that testify to diverse communities planting their roots in a new home country, or to pioneers who had labored in their early contributions.

What place has heritage in a modernizing mode? What values can we sufficiently accrue to it, to ensure its existence is not eroded, but in fact more firmly implanted in our modern landscape?



FIGURE 57. Singapore Supreme Court and City Hall



FIGURE 58. Atrium, connecting the Supreme Court and City Hall

There is visible evidence of a reasonable co-existence of the past and the present in our streetscape. For the sake of discussion, there are views that this co-existence is not so comfortable in that only façadism is practiced, not preservation in its purist mode. Every society makes its choices and its values, and how these values are manifested and preserved.

Preservation in Singapore is differentiated by the legal protection of buildings of high national significance under the Preservation of Monuments Act and of unique architecture conserved and bound by the Conservation Act. Both statutes of law are administered by the Preservation of Sites and Monuments of the National Heritage Board (Ministry of Community, Culture, Youth) and by the Conservation Department of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (Ministry of National Development).

Tales of Two Cities

TK Quek

Taking the inspiration from Charles Dickens' 1859 novel, *Tale of Two Cities*, I wish to compare two Asian cities, Singapore and Yangon. There are similarities between the two cities, both having been British colonies and having a population of approximately 5 million inhabitants.

Singapore was founded by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1819. It was a small town with a mixture of different races. However, it grew very quickly into an important trade center. Singapore ceased to exist as a British colony in 1963. The country was amalgamated into Malaysia (along with Sarawak and Sabah). However this was short-lived and this arrangement was dissolved primarily due differences in racial and political ideology. In 1965, Singapore gained independence.

Under British rule, Rangoon (as it was then called) was established in 1852. Like Singapore, it grew into a significant commercial and political hub of British Burma. In the case of Yangon, independence was gained after three bitter wars against the British, the first (1824-1826), second (1852-1853) and third Anglo-Burmese war (1885-1886). Myanmar became the Union of Burma from 1848 to 1924 followed by the Republic of the Union of Burma from 1924 to 1988 and then the Union of Burma from 1988 to 2010. In 1948, the nation became an independent republic with Sao Shwe Taik as its first President and U Nu as the first Prime Minister. In 2010, the country emerged as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. With this, the name Rangoon was replaced with Yangon.

It is generally acknowledged that some of the positive legacies from the British in their colonies were good administration, education and infrastructure. In both cities the colonial master established educational institutions: Raffles College in 1928 in Singapore and the Rangoon College in 1878 in Rangoon. Raffles College became the University of Singapore in 1962 and later became the National University of Singapore in 1980. In the case of Myanmar, Rangoon College became the University of Rangoon in 1920 and it had reputable Law and Medical Schools. However the path of the two universities differed. Singapore is named one of the best universities in Asia and the world while the University of Rangoon has yet to attain such recognition.

When Raffles arrived in Singapore as Lieutenant-Governor, a planner called Philip Jackson created a master plan for the city in 1822. Jackson laid out the city into a grid pattern and separated the various components generally under racial separation. The colonial buildings were located at the most prominent part of the city and the ethnic areas (Chinatown, Little India, etc.) were located in separate designated neighborhoods.

In Yangon, the grid pattern was laid out on Delta land by British military engineers Alexander Fraser and William Montgomerie in 1852. The Engineers' corps merged with the government's Public Works Department, which was established in India. The department was responsible for all state construction of roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, etc. The early buildings tended to be Victorian or eclectic in style and displayed limited attempts to adapt to the climate and cultural settings.

Upon attaining self-government, Singapore immediately sought the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme. The study led to state and city planning (SCP), which was a long-term plan to guide the country's physical development. Recognizing the importance of many colonial and local buildings, the Preservation Monuments Board (PMB) was established in 1971 and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) in 1974. The PMB was charged with the preservation of important old buildings and URA's role was the overall planning of the city. The Conservation Department was formed under the ambit of URA. The department was specifically charged with identifying buildings, providing guidelines, and authorizing the approval of conservation.

The first group of buildings to be designated by the PMB as National monuments included churches, mosques, temples, and markets. In 1989, 10 conservation areas in historic districts

were identified and 3200 were gazetted for conservation. Conservation status has been given to over 700 buildings in more than 100 areas. The URA Architectural Heritage Award was launched in 1995. The award honors owners, insightful developers, and professionals in the field who have used the highest standards in conserving and restoring heritage buildings. Although the conservation program has been successful, significant buildings like the Ocean Building and the Central Police Station were unfortunately destroyed. In these cases, high-rise commercial buildings replaced the old iconic buildings. Conservation can be successful by creating partnerships between the authorities and the public sector. Larger and more expensive projects can be undertaken by the authorities while the public sector can execute smaller projects.

National Gallery Singapore

In the public sector, the construction of the National Gallery of Singapore is incorporating two important buildings, the High Court and City Hall. An open design competition was held and the winner was studio Milou, an architecture firm in France. The new institution will have six stories and a surface area approximately 64,000 square meters, with a budget of around 425 million Singapore dollars. The two historic buildings are joined via a new glass roof structure that will filter away glare, yet allow natural sunlight between the spaces. It is an ambitious architectural project creating new entry points and roof top piazzas under a complex and sophisticated glass structure, but the intervention is also very respectful to the two existing historical buildings as the new institution is still recognizable to the people of Singapore.

The Victoria Memorial Hall

Victoria Memorial Hall is the oldest performing arts venue in Singapore. It was recently upgraded to meet modern day expectations. The \$158 million refurbishment was undertaken by W Architects, a local leading architecture firm in Singapore who sought to restore the flow of movement in the building. Although the capacity of the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall were both reduced to 614 seats and 673 seats respectively, due to the new internal layout, the opportunity to reconstruct the theater allowed its roof level to be raised to match that of the concert hall. The additional volume under the theater roof now houses a new dance studio.



FIGURE 59. Perspectives of the recently refurbished Victoria Memorial Hall

House at 50 Emerald Hill

In 1901, 13.2 hectares of land was subdivided into 38 plots of different sizes and sold to individuals who, in turn, carried out subdivisions and built shop houses. In August 1981, the URA designated part of the Emerald Hill area as Singapore's first conservation area. This prevented owners from altering the early twentieth century facades and allowed Emerald Hill to retain much of its historic quality, as houses have been renovated in a sympathetic manner to their age and character.

Much of the existing structure and materials of 50 Emerald Hill were retained and reused in RT+Q's design intervention so that both the exterior and interior character of the house could be preserved. All of the original exposed timber joists and floors had to be replaced but the original detailing was retained.

House at 2 Cable Road

The focus for House at 2 Cable Road was to conserve the heritage house following URA Conservation Guidelines and Design Addition and Alteration Regulations for a family of four. The main house was to be restored for the parents and two new extensions were to be apartments for each of their children. The design included classical strategies to incorporate the new low-rise additions to preserve the spirit of the main heritage house. Simple black and white tones were used to ensure that the new additions were complementary to the main house.

Farquhar Heritage House

The Farquhar Heritage House is a historically rich building that formerly housed the Saint George Girls' School in Penang. It is an ongoing project by RT+Q Architects. Externally, the architects seek to conserve the façade by repairing the carvings and windows to their original condition. Plaster finish is stripped on the interior to reveal the texture and materiality of the old brick walls. History and memory can be experienced through old materials in a new space. Insertion of materials such as Corten steel and timber adds a modern emphasis to the raw aesthetics of the place. A dining bridge spans across the main hall as a feature within the space.

Singapore took some 30 years of consistent effort in conservation. It will be useful if Myanmar looks to other Asian countries, like Singapore, when preserving their iconic and important colonial buildings.



FIGURE 60. Perspectives of House at 2 Cable Road



FIGURE 61. Hong Kong

Ten Principles for a Sustainable Approach to New Development

John Fitzgerald

The Urban Land Institute provides leadership and guidance in the responsible use of land, and aims to help create sustainable and thriving communities worldwide. As part of its efforts to advocate for sustainable and integrated large-scale developments in Hong Kong, the ULI developed a set of guidelines, *Ten Principles for Sustainable Approach to new Development* in 2010:

- Build on Your Strengths—Rethink the strategic vision and policy framework;
- Create Great Places—Adopt a place-making approach;
- Extend the Urban Grid—Develop to an appropriate scale and density;
- Open up Public Space—Provide accessible public open space;
- Integrate Infrastructure—Ensure transport and infrastructure integration;
- Activate the streets—Enhance street level interface and continuity;
- Keep it Flexible—Facilitate good urban design and flexible zoning;
- Promote Sustainability—Go beyond sustainable building design;
- Engage People Early On—Enable upfront public engagement;
- Manage, Control and Coordinate—Implement coordinated management control.

Subsequently, ULI began focusing on creating implementable strategies that can be used to educate and influence government and professionals in regards to the planning and development of integrated large-scale developments in Hong Kong and the region. ULI hosted a workshop in 2012 with approximately 50 stakeholders from the private and public sectors which explored the opportunities and challenges of implementing aspects of the 10 principles within the existing planning framework. Since then ULI has continued to review building regulations and the planning framework in light of the *Ten Principles*; has been sharing the report with various stakeholders, including the community, government officials, developers and professionals; and has continued working toward launching the *Ten Principles* in other Asian cities.

Conservation, Craft, Community: An Approach to Sustainable Cultural Heritage Preservation

Thomas Wide

This paper seeks to use the case of Turquoise Mountain in Afghanistan as a comparative study for Myanmar.

Turquoise Mountain is a British non-governmental organization founded in 2006 under the patronage of H.R.H. Prince Charles and H.E. the former President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai. Since that time, Turquoise Mountain has been active in the Old City district of Murad Khani in Kabul, working to regenerate the area and spur the sustainable development of the Afghan craft industry. Since late 2014, in partnership with the Yangon Heritage Trust, we are undertaking heritage-led regeneration in the Downtown area of Yangon.

In 2008, Murad Khani was included on the World Monuments Watch to draw attention to the risks facing its built heritage. Since that time, Turquoise Mountain, in partnership with the Murad Khani community, has restored or rebuilt over 110 historic and contemporary structures. We have cleared 30,000 small trucks of garbage from the streets and employed thousands. We have set up the National Institute for Afghan Arts and Architecture, which is training 140 students at any one time in a three-year program of calligraphy, ceramics, woodworking, or jewelry. After students graduate, we have supported them in establishing independent businesses. To this end, we have sold over USD3 million of Afghan crafts around the world. Our products are sold on Fifth Avenue in New York City, throughout the United Kingdom in the high-street retailer Monsoon, and have been used in prestigious interior design projects in London and Saudi Arabia. Alongside our vocational training and business development arms, we have worked in partnership with the community to provide primary healthcare and education to the Old City's residents. Our family health center treats over 20,000 patients a year, while our education center provides free education to over 150 boys and girls. Most fundamentally, the project has provided jobs, skills, and a renewed sense of national pride to Afghan men and women.



FIGURE 62. Old city of Kabul



FIGURE 63. Murad Khani

Turquoise Mountain's project illustrates the economic and social impact of investing in the intangible heritage of historic areas. Firstly, in terms of the economic impact, the project has shown that the creative industries and 'intangible heritage' offer a real opportunity for income generation for those who live in historic buildings and communities. Alongside creating jobs and incomes, the creative industries also allow us to keep more of the value chain of production inside the country. A good example and comparator for Yangon is the jewelry industry. In Afghanistan, over 90% of the country's mined gemstones are exported as raw stones. This means that all the later steps of the value chain—from cutting and polishing to design and marketing—take place *outside* Afghanistan, and their value is lost for Afghans and the Afghan economy. By training Afghans in gem-cutting and jewelry making, and helping develop market linkages both inside and outside the country, Afghanistan's natural resources can become a source of income for many types of business and skill-sets.

Alongside the economic impact, the social impact of intangible heritage in historic areas has been clear in the work of Turquoise Mountain in Murad Khani. On the personal level, the training of thousands of unskilled laborers and young students in earth construction and contemporary craftsmanship has provided a sense of self-worth to many Afghans, traumatized by over 30 years of warfare. On the community level, the project has allowed Murad Khani residents to take pride in their own community; as one resident put it, "Murad Khani has become Murad Khani once again." The project has also provided a space for civic self-expression; our annual Afghan Contemporary Art Prize has offered Afghans the chance to reflect on their own society—where Afghanistan has come from and where it is heading. Such projects have provided crucial spaces for debate and dialogue. Finally, the creative industries provided a great opportunity for two particularly vulnerable groups in Afghanistan, women and unemployed youth. For women, the creative industries can provide an income which is both culturally sanctioned and which can largely be earned at home.

In terms of potential "lessons learnt" for Myanmar, a caveat should be introduced immediately: Turquoise Mountain's successes in Afghanistan are not necessarily replicable elsewhere. A particular culture, community, geo-political moment, and sheer good luck enabled the project

to succeed; but this does not mean there is a simple recipe for success which is in our power to control. The following notes are thus meant as points for discussion, rather than “lessons learnt” that should be applied elsewhere.

- **Reviving and transmitting traditional skills should be central to the heritage projects themselves.** Our experience in Afghanistan illustrates the value of training people in traditional skills and using those skills in the restoration projects. This training means that local community members are able to gain a skill, an income, and an ability to maintain those buildings in the future.
- **A perception shift is needed from “handicrafts” to “creative industries.”** There is a general bias against the crafts as cheap trinkets or holiday souvenirs. But in fact, craft industries have been and can be essential parts of local economies, particularly in the developing world. Morocco is a fascinating example, in which the craft industry has become a multi-billion dollar industry, employing millions of people. We believe that it can be so in other parts of the world, be it Afghanistan or Myanmar.
- **Need for a market-oriented approach to the creative industries.** Too many projects connected to the creative industries focus on the supply side—on production, design work, equipment upgrading—rather than on the market side. Without a market for products, there is no chance of these crafts providing jobs and incomes. Research should be carried out to identify specific markets and potential customers for any creative skill that is being taught.

A final question is the role of the government or non-governmental organizations in regenerating and reviving traditional areas and craft businesses. While countries like Morocco and India have seen significant investment from government bodies, countries like Afghanistan have largely relied on international money and non-governmental organizations as implementing partners. As many in Myanmar see the value and potential of its creative industries, it must be decided what, if any, is to be the role of the government in this process.



FIGURE 64. A perception shift is needed from “handicrafts” to “creative industries.”



FIGURE 65. Midtown Manhattan's Hudson River waterfront.

New York City's Waterfront: An Asset Once Lost but not Forgotten

Michael L. Marrella

New York City is recognizable for its iconic sites: Wall Street, Times Square, and its dramatic skyline, to name but a few. But for much of the twentieth century, few thought of its waterfronts as places for anything other than trade. When Robert Moses re-shaped mid-twentieth century New York City with his sweeping urban planning ideas, the car represented a Utopian ideal and major highways were built along the city's waterfronts. Although traffic had previously been routed similarly, these major construction projects formalized the precedence of the car over the pedestrian and firmly established a physical and psychological barrier between the city and its waterfront. In the 1970s, 80s and 90s, in tandem with the city's severe fiscal difficulties and the shift of manufacturing outside the city, its shoreline edges fell further into decline and disuse.

In 2010, the Department of City Planning of New York was tasked with the creation of a new waterfront plan. Entitled *Vision 2020: New York City Comprehensive Waterfront Plan*, the plan was carefully crafted with community and stakeholder involvement to generate big ideas for turning the city's waterfront from a liability into an asset. Through the course of the process, eight major goals were identified:

- Expand public access;
- Enliven the waterfront;
- Support the working waterfront;
- Improve water quality;
- Restore the natural waterfront;
- Enhance the Blue Network (the waterways that surround New York);
- Improve government oversight;
- Increase climate resilience.

Looking toward international precedents, the overarching aim was to enliven the waterfront with a range of attractive uses that would be integrated into neighboring communities. Development was to be driven by over \$150M in anticipated new waterfront development projects; but planners recognized the need to reintegrate the city's historic sites and cultural heritage along the waterfront into new development, as well as to include the city's maritime narrative and commercial legacy as a key feature. The plan set the stage for the expanded use of the city's waterfront for parks, housing and economic development; and use of the waterways for transportation, recreation and natural habitats. New York City's waterfront areas are now thriving success stories, paving the way for new icons in a nevertheless ever-evolving city.



FIGURE 66. Roma Termini railway station was renovated as part of urban revitalization efforts leading up to the Rome Jubilee in 2000

Conservation and Transformations in Contemporary Cities

Francesco Rutelli

Many cities have undergone major transformations in recent years, providing rich examples of the successes—and failures—of urban development and decline. From the shrinking city of Detroit, Michigan, in the United States, to the tourist-crowded historic center of Venice, Italy, to the highly densified hubs developing in Asia, such as Busan, Hong Kong, and Tientsin, cities face new and increasing challenges to house growing urban populations, ensure quality of life, and maintain economic vitality.

As the Mayor of Rome in the approach to the new millennium, I confronted similar challenges in the implementation of major urban improvements that were part of the Public Program of the Rome Jubilee of the Year 2000. Despite the typical risks of delays, corruption, and lack of work site security in such large-scale endeavors, major accomplishments were achieved:

- 97% of works were completed on time (December 31, 1999) out of the 733 projects and work sites (411 of which were under the direct responsibility of the Mayor/Special Commissioner).
- There was not a single case of corruption out of 1.8 billion euros of public investment thanks to a tight system of public control and independent monitoring.
- Not a single person died in a work-related accident during the four years of the city's transformation.

A special incentive for private buildings owners was provided to restore facades, improve common spaces, and provide underground parking, while modernizing TV and internet connections. Owners were also given the opportunity to display advertisements on scaffoldings as an added incentive. These efforts were funded through 44 billion lire of public financing and 700 billion of private financing. In the end, 3,300 buildings were renovated.

While the challenges of Yangon may seem overwhelming, and infrastructure too aged to upgrade, Rome provides a striking example for the capacity to transform while also protecting heritage, even in the oldest cities.

Closing Remarks

U Soe Thane, Union Minister, President's Office

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen:

It is with great pleasure that I am here with you today. I am very grateful to World Monuments Fund and to Ms. Bonnie Burnham for hosting this conference together with the Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT). I am delighted to see here the former Mayor of Rome and Italian Minister of Culture as well as so many distinguished urban planners, architects, and other friends of Yangon from around the world.

I believe you are here today because you believe in the work of the Yangon Heritage Trust, and also because you believe in Yangon and in the great potential of Yangon. I also care about Yangon. It is our biggest city. Yangon's future is critical for the future of Myanmar. I know this city; I know its problems. I also know that we can overcome these problems and make this city a great city, a beautiful city, and an economically vibrant city.

I have had the privilege to travel to many countries in Asia, America, and Europe. What I want is for Yangon to learn the lessons of those cities, avoid the mistakes they have made, and take from them their best practices. I believe this conference is about helping the Myanmar government, the Regional government of Yangon, YCDC, and YHT learn from experiences elsewhere.

I first discussed Yangon heritage with Dr. Thant Myint-U three years ago. Since then I have been a supporter of YHT and its aims of protecting Yangon's heritage. Like YHT, I believe that we must connect Yangon's heritage to Yangon's future. Like YHT, I believe that we can create a dynamic, modern Yangon that integrates Yangon's heritage.

I have learned over the past years that we should not only think of the old colonial era buildings. We should think about protecting the views of the Shwedagon, the lakes and parks, and the many historically important sites around the city. We should think about streets and landscapes, about neighborhoods and communities.

My President is committed to a people-centered approach to development. We want to see a more democratic and inclusive government at all levels. What we need is to connect heritage protection to a more people-centered approach. Yangon is a city rich in history and tradition, with people of many cultures and religions.

YHT is working on a new Special Development Plan for the downtown conservation area, and I look forward to discussing it with them. I understand that ADB/CDIA program will be helping, together with the Prince's Foundation from the UK and other organizations. I know that World Monuments Fund has been a major supporter, and I am thankful for this. Most of all, I want to say that we welcome maximum international cooperation and investment in making Yangon, including the historic downtown of Yangon as great place, for residents and visitors.

Please continue your important work. And please count on the Myanmar government to help as much as it can. Thank you.



Conclusions and Recommendations

Erica Avrami

The conference brought together a wide range participants engaged in heritage conservation, urban planning, and sustainable development from Myanmar, its Asian neighbors, and other regions of the world. Both local and international speakers highlighted the tremendous strengths of the built and social fabric of Yangon and the opportunities they present.

- There is a wealth of heritage within Yangon—tangible and intangible—including a diversity of building types, special uses, and cultural practices. The burgeoning interest in heritage also makes for a community of stakeholders ripe for engagement in conservation activities.
- The overall human scale of the city and the walkability within downtown blocks foster social interaction. The small-scale mixed-residential/commercial architecture has largely maintained its functionality and environmental appropriateness.
- The expansive waterfront presents an important opportunity for visioning the future of the city, banking land assets, enhancing access and mobility, and forging strong and balanced connections between new development and the historic downtown.
- A vibrant street life is integrally linked to the older architecture and provides an engine of growth for small businesses. This helps to support a self-sustaining and bustling local micro-economy that uniquely characterizes the city.
- There is a strong sense of security and social cohesion within Yangon's neighborhoods, which are characterized by multi-generational and culturally diverse community demographics. These help to create a notable capacity for community self-organization and collective action.
- A growing tourism industry and economy, in which heritage products (places and experiences) are important elements, can generate local benefits. Likewise the growing creative industry is forging important connections between contemporary art, heritage, and identity and developing new experiences and destinations within the city.
- Many lessons can be learned from cities in the region and around the world, positive and negative, regarding heritage management and projects. Yangon is uniquely positioned to draw upon other experiences while also using local knowledge to create a new vision for integrating heritage within sustainable development.

At the same time, there are considerable challenges to ensuring protection of Yangon's heritage resources and traditions while also improving quality of life and modernizing the city.

- The growing interest in heritage has yet to translate into clear government policy, and there is a lack of coordination among relevant government agencies on urban heritage-related issues. There is a limited institutional framework to facilitate heritage research and activities (NGOs, universities, etc.) and limited government mandate and funds. There are also limited technical and professional capacities for heritage conservation, urban planning, and tourism development.
- There is a lack of regulatory policy for the built environment (including ownership property rights and laws, property acquisition and improvement processes, heritage protection, zoning, etc.) and limited enforcement of those that exist, resulting in a pervasive lack of building maintenance and basic services. Transparency is needed in order to reduce risk for investors and develop trust with the community. Likewise, there is a need to balance normative legal frameworks and policies with the informality that characterizes Yangon culture and daily life, so that safety and health are regulated without destroying cultural values and practices or displacing communities.
- There is no taxation policy or viable market through which to incentivize property



FIGURE 67. New high rise construction threatens architectural traditions and street life in Yangon, which are integral to its heritage and touristic appeal

investment and improvements. This lack of financial policy and limited access to capital runs the risk of placing the burden of heritage conservation on owners, thereby turning it into a liability.

- A number of factors have contributed to a declining quality of environment and quality of life in the downtown area, including real estate speculation and land value inflation, rapid and unmanaged development, overcrowding and rising rents, insufficient infrastructure and services (electricity, transit, water treatment, etc.), the exponential increase in car ownership and traffic, water and air pollution, vacant former government buildings, etc.
- While heritage can serve as a vital tool in sustainable development, there are not enough spaces in the city in which the heritage enterprise and creative industries can develop and generate public value, such as museums, archives, cultural centers, theaters, galleries, etc. While tourism can be an effective partner in creating such resources and spaces, Yangon's tourism infrastructure is still underdeveloped and tourism is still seasonal. Also, production chains and product quality of local crafts, on the whole, are not yet meeting international standards and are impeding the potential for market entry and competition.
- While heritage is an important asset for Yangon's future, sustainable development cannot only focus on heritage. It must also address other societal needs in order to create the conditions for a heritage-rich future that balances the economic demands of development with public interest, especially on the waterfront.

Despite these challenges, the overall outlook for Yangon is one of tremendous hope. The city, and the nation as a whole, is uniquely positioned to combine the best of local knowledge and lessons learned from around the world to forge an innovative approach to visioning a sustainable future built on its diverse heritage. Its rich cultural history, assets, and traditions form a pathway to development and good urbanism, and can serve as a critical tool for promoting civil society and cohesion. The existing conditions in Yangon mean that collective action can happen through a variety of vehicles—neighborhood communities, business coalitions, etc.—by capitalizing on the informal relationships and interactions that define the culture of Yangon’s communities, as well as on more formal vehicles.

There is a large real estate portfolio of state-owned property that can anchor an urban revitalization agenda, and its diversity provides a rich basis for high-quality tourism products that incorporate more than just the major sites. And large-scale planning and infrastructure projects (electricity, transit, water treatment, etc.) provide the opportunity to integrate heritage concerns within these broader enterprises and into a comprehensive urban heritage plan, one that creates important connective ties to the downtown and along the waterfront.

The growing interest in heritage means there is the potential to incentivize conservation through policies that encourage public-private cooperation and revitalize creative expression and a collective identity for Myanmar. Heritage can also unlock opportunities for jobs, income creation, and value chain development through related commercial enterprises, such as handicrafts and creative industries, tourism and hospitality, food services and restaurants, etc.

Myanmar is a focus of international interest. The government has the opportunity to create a legacy that extends well beyond the current term. By capitalizing on this interest in Yangon’s heritage as a driver of responsible and sustainable revitalization, it can attract visitors and investors, while also protecting its most precious assets.

The conference concluded with the following recommendations for action and top priorities.

Defining Heritage and Conservation

- Define heritage in Yangon to include not only colonial buildings, but entire streetscapes, neighborhoods, and open spaces, as well as the social interactions and uses that add cultural value to the urban environment (such as small businesses, street vendors, walkability, street-balcony exchanges, neighborhood events, etc.)
- Identify and map heritage through iterative processes that fully engage local communities in analysis and decision-making, and create a shared vision for conservation. These processes should seek to identify not only the tangible resources, but also the more intangible values, histories, and daily activities that are an inextricable part of heritage and identity.
- Communicate a collective vision for heritage conservation that underscores shared principles of: protecting people and places, ensuring local benefits, balancing modernization and heritage stewardship, and integrating heritage within a broader vision of sustainable development and urbanism.

Protecting Heritage Communities

- Develop and implement zoning and other regulatory measures that incorporate the protection of heritage buildings, contexts, streetscapes, open spaces, viewsheds, and communities, but also allow for adaptation.
- Develop and implement government policies for the protection of vulnerable communities in heritage processes to ensure engagement, prevent displacement, and provide compensation/relocation assistance when necessary.

- Develop and implement a building code that protects community scale, heritage assets, and traditional construction typologies.
- Clarify and register ownership, rights, and responsibilities regarding heritage properties.
- Make housing and property laws and policies transparent and publicly accessible.

Facilitating and Managing Heritage Processes

- Establish a government focal point for the reuse of state-owned buildings in Yangon.
- Institute and authorize a government focal point for heritage conservation to streamline acquisition and leasing, assessment, permitting, and rehabilitation processes and to provide an interface between communities and heritage developers and investors.
- Develop a committee for Yangon tourism that involves government agencies, NGOs, universities, tour operators, hotel owners, etc. to coordinate tourism research and product development, and ensure the integration of heritage within a framework of responsible tourism development at the city level.

Promoting Heritage Investment

- Undertake pilot projects to create models that integrate social, economic, and environmental concerns and benefits into heritage revitalization and to demonstrate different approaches to different types of projects (e.g. private vs. public, vacant vs. occupied, etc.)
- Integrate heritage protection in infrastructure and service improvements, especially public transportation development, walkability enhancements, and policies to manage cars and reduce traffic in the downtown.
- Develop a waterfront plan that ensures connectivity to the downtown and elsewhere in the city, public access, protection of heritage viewsheds and assets, and balanced development.

Supporting Heritage Conservation

- Revise taxation policies to support urban conservation and change incentive-disincentive dynamics.
- Create new financial incentives for investment in heritage conservation (large- and small-scale), possibly linked to existing property transfer taxes, foreign investment and CSR policies, and micro-financing schemes.
- Undertake professional, technical, and institutional capacity building to help build a foundation for long-term heritage stewardship.
- Undertake training and public education—of tour operators, hospitality workers, schoolteachers, and others—to raise heritage awareness and ensure that heritage becomes a part of business operations and everyday life.

Priorities

- Formal recognition of Yangon downtown conservation area and city zoning plan
- Creation of a government focal point to facilitate conservation and heritage investment
- Development of downtown infrastructure to improve quality of life, especially walkability and open space
- Fast-track government approval of YHT-identified pilot projects
- Engagement of key stakeholders and local community in heritage processes
- Waterfront plan for public access and balanced development

Appendix A: Conference Program

Building the Future:

The Role of Heritage in the Sustainable Development of Yangon

Strand Ballroom, Strand Hotel

JANUARY 15, 2015

9:00–10:00 AM **OPENING SESSION**

OPENING SPEECH

H. E. U Hla Myint, Mayor of Yangon, on behalf of

H. E. U Myint Swe, Chief Minister of Yangon Region

INTRODUCTION

Bonnie Burnham, President, World Monuments Fund

U Thant Myint-U, Chairman, Yangon Heritage Trust

Day One: Building a Framework for Conservation

Chair: Vicky Bowman, Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

10:15–11:15 AM **ECONOMIC INCENTIVES**

Randall Mason, University of Pennsylvania

Michael Slingsby, Consultant and Project Advisor in Yangon

11:45 AM–1:00 PM **DRIVERS FOR INVESTMENT**

U Win Khaing, Myanmar Investment Commission

Daw Khin Sanda Win, Inle Lake View Resort

U Htet Oo, Rangoon Tea House

2:30–3:30 PM **WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES**

Eva Ringhof and Ester Van Steekelenburg, Cities Development Initiative for Asia

Eduardo Rojas, formerly with Inter-American Development Bank

JANUARY 16, 2015

Day Two: Strategies for Shaping the Historic Urban Center

Chair: Bonnie Burnham, World Monuments Fund

9:00–10:45 AM **HERITAGE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

Dr. Tin Shwe, Deputy Minister of Hotels and Tourism

Daw Yin Myo Su, Inle Princess Co., Ltd

Nicole Häusler, Myanmar Tourism Federation

11:00–12:30 PM **CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND NEW USES**

Ivan Pun, Pun Projects and TS1

U Aung Soe Min, Pansodan Gallery

TK Quek, Singapore Architect

Thomas Wide, Turquoise Mountain Foundation

- 2:00–3:45 PM** **LIVABILITY AND COMMUNITY**
Andrew Scherer, Columbia University
Jayde Roberts, University of Tasmania
Naoko Kumada, Independent Scholar and Consultant
- 4:00–5:15 PM** **WATERFRONT OPPORTUNITIES**
Dr. Ko Ko Gyi, Capital Diamond Star Group
Michael Marrella, New York City Department of Urban Planning
- 7:00–9:00 PM** **KEYNOTE SPEECHES**
H. E. Derek Mitchell, United States Ambassador to Myanmar
Francesco Rutelli, Former Mayor of Rome and Italian Minister of Culture

JANUARY 17, 2015

Day Three: Integrating Heritage and Urban Planning

Chair: Thant Myint-U, Yangon Heritage Trust

- 9:00–10:30 AM** **CONSERVATION AND URBAN SUSTAINABILITY**
Jean Wee, Preservation of Sites and Monuments, National Heritage Board, Singapore
Frauke Kraas, University of Cologne and University of Yangon
H. Detlef Kammeier, Consultant and Professor Emeritus, Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Bangkok
Laurence Loh, Heritage of Malaysia Trust
- 10:45AM–12 NOON** **PLANNING FOR HERITAGE CONSERVATION IN YANGON**
Daw Hlaing Maw Oo, Ministry of Construction
U Win Myint, Yangon Technological University
U Toe Aung, Yangon City Development Committee
Masahiko Suzuki, Japan International Cooperation Agency
John Fitzgerald, Urban Land Institute
- 1:30–3:00PM** **CLOSING SESSION**
- RAPPORTEUR REPORT AND DISCUSSION**
Erica Avrami, Word Monuments Fund
- KEYNOTE SPEECH**
U Soe Thane, Union Minister, President's Office
- CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS**
- CLOSING REMARKS**
U Thant Myint-U

Appendix B: Speaker Biographies

U TOE AUNG is the Director of the Urban Planning Division (UPD) of Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC). UPD was established in 2011 in order for YCDC to maximize its ability to provide better public services for the citizens while planning for Yangon's urban and regional development. U Toe Aung worked on the *Strategic Urban Development Plan for Greater Yangon* with JICA, and has worked closely with stakeholders to formulate planning strategies that will best serve Yangon.

ERICA AVRAMI is an Assistant Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University. Dr. Avrami formerly served as the Director of Research and Education at World Monuments Fund and as a Project Specialist at the Getty Conservation Institute, and has also taught in the preservation programs at the University of Pennsylvania and Pratt Institute.

VICKY BOWMAN has been the Director of Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) since July 2013. Prior to that she led global mining company Rio Tinto's policy approach to transparency, human rights, and resource issues; was Director of Global and Economic Issues for the United Kingdom from 2008-2011; and Head of the Southern Africa Department in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the UK Government from 2006 to 2007. Ms. Bowman served as ambassador of the UK to Myanmar from 2002 to 2006 and as second secretary in the Embassy from 1990 to 1993.

BONNIE BURNHAM is President of World Monuments Fund and has led its international historic preservation work since 1985, when she joined the organization as Executive Director. Previously she served from 1975 to 1985 as Executive Director of the International Foundation for Art Research. Ms. Burnham is an expert in the protection and preservation of cultural heritage. She holds degrees in the history of art from the University of Florida and the Université de Paris-Sorbonne. Ms. Burnham has been honored as a Chevalier of the French Order of Arts and Letters, is a Distinguished Alumna of the College of Fine Arts of the University of Florida, and is the first recipient of its Beinecke-Reeves Distinguished Achievement Award in Historic Preservation. She received the Founders Award for Civic Leadership from Partners for Livable Communities in 2013. She holds an honorary doctorate from Florida Southern College.

JOHN FITZGERALD is Chief Executive, Asia Pacific, of the Urban Land Institute. Mr. Fitzgerald opened the Urban Land Institute's (ULI) Asia Pacific office in Hong Kong in 2007. As Chief Executive of ULI Asia Pacific he is the Institute's lead executive in the region responsible for ULI's strategy, initiatives, and operations across Asia Pacific. John and his team in Asia Pacific engage the region's public and private sectors leaders on issues of land use

and real estate development with a focus on improving sustainability, affordability, mobility, and infrastructure. John is responsible for key ULI initiatives such as: ULI Asia Pacific Summit, ULI/PwC *Emerging Trends in Real Estate® Asia Pacific* report, Awards for Excellence, Professional Development, Advisory Services, and strategic partnerships.

DR. KO KO GYI is the Group MD of Capital Diamond Star Group, chosen by the World Economic Forum as a Global Growth Company, one of the first in Myanmar. The company strives to build a strong local enterprise and a responsible business model, and currently operates along Yangon's waterfront. Between 1999 and 2005, Dr. Ko Ko Gyi served as a Central Executive Committee member of The Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. He was also a member of ASEAN Business Advisory Council between 2002 and 2004. He is a member of National Economic and Social Advisory Council (NESAC) which advises the President of Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

NICOLE HÄUSLER is a Senior Advisor for Responsible Tourism at the Myanmar Tourism Federation (co-founded by the German International Cooperation/GIZ). She has been working for 15 years on issues of corporate social responsibility, tourism, and poverty alleviation in Asia and South America. In Myanmar she has been involved in formulating policies for responsible tourism and community involvement in the development of a tourism master plan.

H. DETLEF KAMMEIER is an independent researcher and consultant in Urban and Regional Planning, Infrastructure and Environmental Management, apart from serving as visiting professor in several universities. He is based in Bangkok, was a full-time faculty member of the Asian Institute of Technology (Bangkok) for 25 years (1976–2000), and for many years, has been a consultant for several UN agencies, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and other major bilateral agencies. Dr. Kammeier has worked in nearly 25 countries for over 40 years, and is part of the Yangon Heritage Trust's International Advisory Group.

U WIN KHAING serves as a member in several government bodies, including the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC). He is the President of Myanmar Engineering Society (MES) and Vice-Chairman of the Myanmar Engineering Council. U Win Khaing, P.E., a mechanical engineer worked with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) in pipeline, onshore and offshore EandP and later with Dowell Schlumberger International Inc. in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, UAE and Singapore. He formed United Engineering Group in 1990, and currently the company is engaged in oil and gas related engineering, construction, logistics, and renewable energy services.

FRAUKE KRAAS is a professor and Chair, Institute of Geography, at the University of Cologne. Dr. Kraas has been working in Yangon since 1996. Her fields of research include urban heritage, governance, network systems, health, resource economics and disaster prevention. She has also been a visiting professor at the University of Yangon since 2012.

NAOKO KUMADA, or Nu Nu Lwin, as she is known in Myanmar, is anthropologist of Myanmar society and culture. Her doctoral dissertation on Myanmar society, religion and economy in the context of daily life and practice was one of the first anthropological studies by a foreign scholar to rely on fluency in the Burmese language. Dr. Kumada combines an understanding of Myanmar culture and society with knowledge of the nature and functioning of law in Myanmar, Japan, and the US. Between 2002 and 2009, she was a Fellow at Stanford University's Center for Buddhist Studies.

LAURENCE LOH KWONG YU is a leading conservation architect and cultural heritage expert based in Malaysia. He advocates for the revitalization of heritage sites through an integrated approach that incorporates urban planning, building conservation, cultural-mapping, consensus building, transportation, universal access and environmental sustainability. Currently, he is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Hong Kong, the President of the Heritage of Malaysia Trust, an adviser to the Hong Kong Institute of Architectural Conservationists, and a director of Think City Sdn. Bhd., a company responsible for the dispersal of financial grants to catalyze neighborhood regeneration and to facilitate cultural-mapping in the World Heritage Site of George Town, Penang.

MICHAEL L. MARRELLA is the Director of Waterfront and Open Space Planning for New York City's Planning Division. Mr. Marella led the creation of the department's *Vision 2020*, New York City's Comprehensive Waterfront Plan that presents a sustainable blueprint for the city's waterfront and waterways and is in the process of implementation. He is responsible for directing land use policy related to protecting New York's waterfront, waterways, and open space areas for maximum public benefit.

RANDALL MASON is Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning at University of Pennsylvania's School of Design and Chair of its Graduate Program in Historic Preservation. During his ten years at Penn he has taught a wide range of subjects spanning historic preservation, city planning and landscape fields, and managed a diverse program of research projects. His current research focuses on urban conservation strategies in the U.S. and abroad, socio-economic impacts of conservation policies, and the design and meaning of contemporary memorials.

U AUNG SOE MIN is the founder of the Pansodan Gallery, which opened in 2008, as well as Pansodan Scene, which opened in 2013. Both galleries showcase the work of Burmese artists, and are purposefully housed in colonial-era buildings.

DEREK MITCHELL was confirmed as the U.S. Ambassador to the Union of Burma on June 29, 2012 by the U.S. Senate, and arrived in Burma on July 11, 2012. From August 2011 to June 2012, Ambassador Mitchell served as the first Special Representative and Policy Coordinator for Burma, with the rank of ambassador. Prior to this appointment, Ambassador Mitchell was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Asian and Pacific Security Affairs, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, from April 2009 until August 2011. From 2001 to 2009, Ambassador Mitchell served as senior fellow and director of the Asia Division of the International Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Ambassador Mitchell was special assistant for Asian and Pacific affairs in the Office of the Secretary of Defense from 1997 to 2001.

DAW HLAING MAW OO is the Deputy Chief Architect of Architect Section, Public Works, Ministry of Construction, as well as a Senior Urban Planner / Director of the Department of Human Settlements and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction. Daw Hlaing Maw Oo has been actively involved in promoting conservation strategies for Yangon's urban heritage and is currently undertaking the research on people perceptions towards Yangon Downtown Urban Heritage.

U HLA MYINT is the Mayor of Yangon. He was also a former brigadier general in the Myanmar Army and a former diplomat. He studied at the Defense Services Academy from 1967 to 1971. He retired as brigadier general in 2002. After military service, he was appointed ambassador to Argentina and Brazil from 2002 to 2005, and ambassador to Japan from 2005 to 2010.

U THANT MYINT-U is the founder and Chairman the Yangon Heritage Trust. He is also a historian and author of multiple books on Myanmar. Educated at Harvard and Cambridge Universities, he taught history for several years as Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. He served on three United Nations peacekeeping operations and with the United Nations Secretariat in New York, including as the Chief of Policy Planning in the Department of Political Affairs. In addition to his work with the Yangon Heritage Trust, he is also a Special Advisor to the Myanmar Peace Centre, and a member of the (Myanmar) National Economic and Social Advisory Board. He was named by Foreign Policy Magazine as one of the "100 Leading Global Thinkers" of 2013, and by Prospect Magazine as one of 50 "World Thinkers" of 2014.

U WIN MYINT is an architect and consultant urban planner running an advisory service Win2Win Advisory Group. Prior to his retirement from the government service in 2005, he served as Deputy Director General at the Department of Human Settlements and Housing Development under the Ministry of Construction and actively involved in design, plan formulation and implementation of the new capital, PPPs in real estate development and setting up industrial zones in and around Yangon city. He is a Patron of the Association of Myanmar Architects and a member of the Myanmar Board of Architects and also a visiting professor at the Yangon Technological University.

U HTET MYET OO is the owner and manager of the Rangoon Tea House, a modern take on a traditional Burmese tea shop, and formerly served as the public relations officer for the Yangon Heritage Trust. He was born in Myanmar but spent the majority of his life in the UK, returning after completing his studies in Economics from City University London.

IVAN PUN was born in Hong Kong to a Myanmar father and a Hong Kong Chinese mother, and grew up between Asia and England, where he was educated at Cranleigh School and Oxford University. He has lived in Yangon since 2011, and founded Pun + Projects in 2013, a firm focused on developing art and retail projects in the city. He is the founder of TS1 Yangon, an multi-faceted space that highlights the visual arts, cuisine, and craftsmanship of Myanmar, which was created as a platform to connect the country with the global creative community and encourage an ongoing dialogue about the regeneration of downtown Yangon.

TK QUEK is an architect based in Singapore with extensive experience in adaptive reuse projects. His office RT+Q Architects have completed projects all over the region, as well as the conservation and adaptive re-use on Singapore's iconic shop houses, one of the studio's many award-winning conservation projects.

JAYDE ROBERTS is an interdisciplinary scholar of the built environment who focuses on the influence of diasporic communities on the physical and social structures of Asian cities. Dr. Roberts completed her Fulbright-funded fieldwork in 2009 and her dissertation, *Tracing the Ethos of the Sino-Burmese in the Urban Fabric of Yangon, Myanmar*, in 2011. Since 2012, she has broadened her research in Yangon to include the city as a whole with a particular focus on everyday urbanism and informal urban systems.

EDUARDO ROJAS is an independent consultant on urban development and a lecturer on historic preservation at the School of Design of the University of Pennsylvania, USA. He works regularly with the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy of Cambridge, United States, and the World Bank Institute.

FRANCESCO RUTELLI is an Italian politician, currently serving as President of Associazione Priorita' Cultura and Honorary President of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (Berlin). He is co-Chairman of the European Democratic Party. He is the founder and President of the Centre for a Sustainable Future (a nonpartisan think tank on Climate change and Environmental issues). He is co-chairman of the Steering Committee of "Alliance of Silk Road Cities" (a multilateral forum aimed at fostering cultural and economic cooperation along the historical Silk Roads from China). He was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Culture and Tourism of Italy (2001–2008) and the first Mayor of Rome (1993–2001) directly elected by the citizens.

ANDREW SCHERER is an Adjunct Professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation and Policy Director of the Impact Center for Public Interest Law at New York Law School. He is also the principal of Andrew Scherer Consulting and serves as a consultant and expert witness with respect to housing, landlord-tenant, property, land use, access to justice, delivery of legal services and economic rights matters, in the United States and internationally. In addition, he was a Senior Fellow at the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy at NYU Law School from 2011 to 2014.

U TIN SHWE is the Deputy Minister of Hotels and Tourism in Myanmar. He has been working for nearly two years at the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism. Before he was appointed as the Deputy Minister, Dr. Tin Shwe served as a member of National Parliament from 30 January 2011 to 5 February 2013. Now he is actively engaged with initiatives for sustainable tourism development in Myanmar.

MICHAEL SLINGSBY is a Consultant and Project Advisor to the EU-funded project "Capacity Building for the Urban Planning Division, YCDC." He is the UN-Habitat's Urban Development and Poverty Advisor, working on city development strategies in Myanmar, and the Senior Technical Advisor to WFP's Asia Regional Bureau in Bangkok. He has 35 years of experience in urban development, poverty reduction, capacity building and community development in the urban sector.

ESTER VAN STEEKELENBURG lives in Hong Kong where she heads Urban Discovery, a Hong Kong based social enterprise that works with NGOs, city governments and developers to capitalize on the economic value of heritage in Asian cities. Ms. van Steekelenburg has worked as an advisor, trainer and facilitator for a variety of agencies including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the United Nations.

DAW YIN MYO SU, CEO of Inle Princess Ltc, a chain of successful hotels in Myanmar, was selected by Goldman Sachs and *Fortune* to receive their prestigious Global Women Leaders Award in 2013. A well-known local busi-

ness leader with a strong interest in community development, Daw Yin Myo Su has also been recognized for her advocacy work to preserve the cultural heritage of the Inle Lake region.

MASAHIKO SUZUKI is Senior Advisor, Urban and Regional Development, Japan International Cooperation Agency. He has been currently assigned to YCDC as an advisor for Greater Yangon Urban Development Program, which has been implemented after the Strategic Urban Development Program, SUDP was formulated by YCDC with assistance from JICA. Mr. SUZUKI has various experiences working in urban sector of Asian and African countries for more than 20 years since he joined to JICA as a senior advisor.

U MYINT SWE is the Chief Minister of Yangon Region Government, nominated after a general election by President Thein Sein. He graduated from the Defence Services Academy in 1971, and became a Brigadier General and commander of Light Infantry Division 11 in 1997. He was appointed as Commander of Southeastern Command and member of State Peace and Development Council in 2001, was later promoted from Commander of Yangon Command to Major General. He also acted as Chairman of Yangon Division Peace and Development Council, and later became the Chief of Military Security Affairs. In 2006, he became Chief of Bureau of Special Operations, and in 2009 was promoted to Quartermaster General.

U SOE THANE is the incumbent Minister of the President's Office of Myanmar and a former Minister for Industry-2 of Myanmar. He previously served as the Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Navy and is a retired Vice Admiral. He also served as the Chairman of Myanmar Investment Commission from 2010-2013.

DAW MIE MIE TIN has been the Director for Project Planning and Implementation of Department of Human Settlements and Housing Development, Ministry of Construction, Myanmar since March 2013. Prior to that she was Deputy Director for the Urban and Regional Planning division since 2008, and has worked on various urban development projects, town planning, and housing project developments. Daw Mie Mie Tin started her career in Department of Human Settlement and Housing Development as an Architect/Planner soon after her graduation from Yangon Institute of Technology in 1984 in Architecture. She holds Masters in Infrastructure Management from Yokohama National University and a postgraduate diploma in Inner City Renewal and Urban Heritage from International Housing Studies, Rotterdam, in the Netherlands.

JEAN WEE has been the Director of the Preservation of Sites and Monuments Board in Singapore since 2009. Part of the National Heritage Board, the PSM prepared Singapore's first UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination. Ms.

Wee sits on several committees related to urban planning heritage, and is committed to education and outreach to encourage a better understanding of preservation's many meanings.

THOMAS WIDE is the Managing Director of Turquoise Mountain, a foundation established by HRH the Prince of Wales in 2006 to revive Afghanistan's traditional crafts, and to regenerate Murad Khani, a historic area of Kabul known for its rich cultural heritage.

DAW KHIN SANDA WIN is the Managing Director of Sanda Hotel and Services. She initially joined the tourism industry in 1992, and by 1998 had built her first resort. Today Sanda Hotel maintains two international standard boutique hotels: The Loft Yangon and Inle Lake View Resort and Spa. Most recently, she won the building tender for the Myanmar Export Import Corporation (MEIC) in downtown Yangon. Khin Sanda Win received a BS from University of Yangon, attended the tour guide training conducted by Ministry of Hotel and Tourism, and got a diploma in Tourism from Shatec Tourism School, Singapore. She also received an MBA in Hospitality with Glion University of Switzerland. In 2013, she was chosen to be participate in an International Visitor Leadership Program in the U.S., and is currently a member of the Global Women Network.

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