Conservation of Our Built Cultural Heritage: From Individual Buildings to Historic Cities

By

Ismail Serageldin

Abstract:

This essay was written for a festschrift in honor of Prof. Saleh Lamei Mostafa. It treats three main themes, which have been part of Dr. Mostafa's distinguished career. First, we should emphasize the importance of conserving our cultural heritage, not because some of it may attract tourists and bring revenues, but because it is part of our identity and the legacy of our ancestors. That legacy includes more than just physical monuments; it also includes the unique "sense of place" that historic cities possess, which delights residents and visitors alike.

The second theme is to properly appreciate the economic value of cultural assets by adding their intangible contributions, and there are many powerful techniques to do so. This should lead to better ways of mobilizing capital for the maintenance of cultural heritage, especially in historic cities.

The third theme is a discussion of different approaches to restoring valuable old monuments that are the key definers of many of the old urban landscapes. Here we review three philosophies for such works of restoration, giving examples of each. This section also includes a discussion of adaptive reuse.

The essay then concludes with a review of one of Dr. Mostafa's award-winning works, namely the Great Omari Mosque in Lebanon.

Keywords:

Cultural heritage, Historic cities, Economics of Valuing Heritage

Restoration of historic monuments

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Outline:

1. Preamble

I am delighted to add this essay to the collection of esteemed works dedicated to honoring Prof. Saleh Lamei Mustapha in a special festschrift. Prof. Mustapha's contributions to the study of historic cities in the Muslim world, as well as his profound insights into the intricate artistry of Muslim and Arab architecture, are truly commendable. His award-winning endeavors serve as a beacon, illustrating how the work of a skilled architect intertwines with living history. Through his exemplary projects, Prof. Mustapha has imparted invaluable lessons on the delicate process of restoring historic edifices, influencing an entire generation of specialists in the field. This essay pays homage to his achievements and hopefully contributes to understanding the architectural and economic complexities of undertaking interventions in historic cities.

I have been involved with the study of such interventions for many years, hence my knowledge and appreciation of the work of Prof. Saleh Lamei Mustafa. Therefore, this essay will draw on many of my previously published ideas, articulated here in a slightly different manner, while reasserting the principles and ideas that I have defended for decades[1].

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[1] See Inter alia: SERAGELDIN, I., *Very Special Places: The Architecture and Economics of Intervening in Historic Cities*; Culture in Sustainable Development. The Word Bank, Washington, May 1999; SERAGELDIN, I., «On the Economic Value of Cultural Assets: Reflections with Special Reference to the Case of Historic Cities in the Less Developed Countries» In *Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei & Inter Academy Partnership (IAP), Proceedings of the International Conference on "Florence 1966-2016: Resilience of Art Cities to Natural Catastrophes: The Role of Academies"*, 11-13 October 2016; Atti Dei Convegni Lincei 315; Roma: Bardi Edizioni, Editore Commerciale, 2017, 65-84, The diagram presented as FIG.1 in this essay also appears there as FIG.1 on page 74.

2. The Importance of Conserving Our Cultural Heritage

Protecting our cultural heritage is an essential part of protecting a sense of identity, a sense of who we are. It emphasizes the present as the link between a well-defined past and a future crafted by our actions, guided – individually and collectively – by our aspirations and our innate abilities.

This cultural heritage encompasses many things: literature, visual arts, music, buildings, customs, rituals, and objects of everyday use. This essay focuses on the built environment, specifically the restoration of historic buildings and the conservation of historic cities. By that, we mean the living historic cities, not the conservation of remote monuments or uninhabited archaeological sites, and especially the cases of the developing world, where the challenge of protecting the heritage is greatest[2].

3. Our Historic Cities and the "Sense of Place"

The concepts of "Urban Character" and the "Sense of Place" arise from the realization that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Therefore, when restoring and reconstructing individual buildings, it becomes essential to respect the distinctive sense of place and urban character of each district and sub-district. In addition to safeguarding particular buildings or monuments, preserving and recapturing the unique urban character arising from the interplay of voids, solids, street layouts, and building mix becomes paramount. Many of these structures may seem unremarkable in their architectural design, but as a whole, they form a heritage worthy of protection that is characterized by their overall character.

Historical districts possess distinct urban morphologies, characterized by a diverse range of building ages, mixed land use with commercial and residential spaces closely intertwined, and a plethora of activities occurring on the streets. These districts typically feature narrow streets with curved alignments, small plazas, and a volumetric pattern created by the interplay of voids and solids. Dealing with historical cities poses various challenges

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[2] Recent scholarship has underlined the importance of protecting that cultural heritage against the depredations of war and terrorism. See CUNO, J. & WEISS, T., (eds) *Cultural Heritage and Mass Atrocities*, Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, 2022. See also: SERAGELDIN, I., «Valuing the Legacy of our Cultural Heritage», 110 – 124.

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in terms of institutions, governance, investment, and taxation, which should be further explored beyond the scope of this discussion.

Historical cities, whether it be old Amsterdam and Venice in the prosperous West or Lahore, Cairo, and Fes in less developed countries, hold a special allure and evoke a sense of enchantment. However, the realities in many of the poorest developing nations often present cities struggling with poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and decaying buildings. Nevertheless, the magic and pride of the inhabitants in their city and its monumental heritage remain. Indeed, these cities are precious parts of world heritage.

Furthermore, the rapid pace of urbanization and population growth adds to the complexity of preserving historical cities. Successfully intervening in these unique places requires a combination of well-crafted policies, active participation, innovative institutional arrangements, and public-private partnerships. Above all, it demands significant investments aimed specifically at rejuvenating these exceptional locations, prompting new and creative approaches to managing urban growth and creating livable cities.

Note that in many of the great cities of the advanced industrial countries of the "Global North" (about the Global South"), these types of measures have all been successfully deployed to protect and conserve the charm of the "Old Town" districts in thriving modern cities. From Geneva to Amsterdam, these districts exude a special "sense of place", thanks to the sensitive treatment of urban morphology.

4. The Fallacy of Tourism Benefits Alone

It is crucial to point out that many benefits of cultural heritage cannot be easily quantified in monetary terms or may not enter traditional markets. A common misconception is that potential tourist revenues solely justify investments in cultural heritage. While tourism revenues are significant, they do not fully capture the complete range of benefits derived from cultural heritage assets.

Some economists in the past century advocated limiting the economic benefit stream of cultural heritage projects solely to their potential tourist benefits. However, such a narrow perspective leads to three flawed conclusions.

One common misconception is that cultural heritage elements not favored by tourists, especially those affluent ones who invest more time and resources, are considered unworthy of preservation. This overlooks the intrinsic value of cultural heritage, which enriches both local communities and the world as a whole, even for those who may never visit the site. Losing such places would be lamentable, even for individuals unable to physically experience them.

The second error stemming from a tourism-centered outlook is the pursuit of maximizing tourist numbers to increase the benefit stream. In reality, such a strategy might harm the site's charm and disrupt activities inherent to the cultural setting. For instance, the overcrowding issue at Mount Everest highlights the negative consequences of an excessive focus on tourism.

The third flaw lies in the implicit implication of valuing cultural heritage solely based on its appeal to tourists. If an alternative investment, like a beachside casino, generates more tourist revenue, abandoning the restoration of the old city for the casino becomes a misguided decision.

Clearly, these conclusions are unjustified and indefensible, and we must recognize the intrinsic value of cultural heritage beyond its potential for generating tourist dollars. A comprehensive evaluation should consider all factors contributing to the full economic value of cultural assets. That full economic value includes direct and indirect benefits, as well as tangible and intangible values.

5. The Economic Value of Cultural Assets

Cultural heritage sites stand apart from others due to their unique aesthetic, historical, and social significance. But to estimate the justified amount of investment in their maintenance and rejuvenation requires the recognition of their intrinsic values. In this, they are not unlike some valuable environmental assets, where a distinctive panorama, an enjoyable recreational area, or the protection of endangered species (e.g. whales, tigers, etc.) all have intrinsic value beyond anything that can be commercially justified by their strict commercial exploitation. Thus, cultural assets, like environmental assets, require the adoption of a comprehensive approach to assessing their value, utilizing the concept of

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total economic value, and recognizing direct and indirect benefits. (see: FIG.1 below).

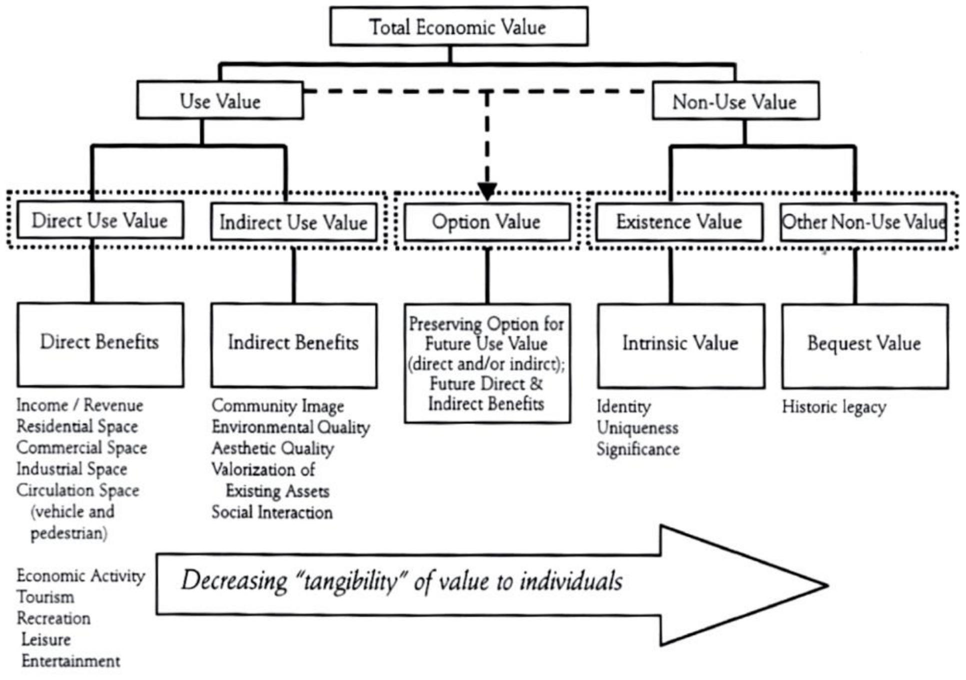

FIG.1 – The Economic Value of Cultural Assets

SERAGELDIN, *Very Special Places*, 74, FIG.1

Total economic value is typically categorized into several components, with minor variations among analysts. These categories generally encompass use value (both direct and indirect), option value, and nonuse value. Use values consist of direct and indirect uses, often further subdivided into additional subcategories. By breaking down the value of a cultural heritage site into these various components, the assessment becomes more understandable and manageable.

Direct use value pertains to goods extracted from the site or its buildings, such as living, trading, renting, or selling spaces within historical buildings. Many of these uses are captured through market transactions. Unlike a forest where cutting the trees for timber depletes the value of the forest through (extreme and unsustainable) use, the historic area's use does not lead to depletion unless the usage is inappropriate or excessive, which could compromise the site's beauty and character.

The indirect use value results from the services provided by the site. For instance, some individuals pass through a city to enjoy its scenery without engaging in economic transactions. It is important to note that the site's value may extend beyond its historical or cultural aspects, as its natural or human-made beauty alone can hold significant worth. Thus, individuals can appreciate the charms of an old medieval town center without necessarily delving into the history of the individual monuments, although for many, the city's heritage evokes both memory and identity.

Measuring indirect use value proves more challenging than direct use value. Aesthetic and recreational values are among the indirect use values relevant to appreciating cultural heritage. The aesthetic value comprises pleasant sensory experiences separate from tangible impacts on the body or possessions. These effects differ from nonuse value as they require a sensory encounter, though they are often closely tied to physical aspects. For example, there's a distinction between actually walking in a historical city and merely observing a picture of it, and this difference can be quantified.

Recreational value is generally considered to be a single source of value and is the result of various services offered by a site. The level of recreational benefits depends on the nature, quantity, and quality of these services. A historical area may offer resting spots, scenic views, meditation spots, shopping bazaars, and, of course, monuments. Visitors' enjoyment of each of these elements relies on factors like the cleanliness of the surroundings. Disaggregating these benefits into components simplifies the valuation process. Additionally, the indirect use values of cultural heritage sites must encompass the "sense of place" and its contribution to local and national identity. This intangible aspect affects behavior and interactions, representing real benefits that are not easily quantifiable but significant.

Between use value and nonuse value, there are additional aspects to consider, namely option value and quasi-option value. Option value pertains to the benefit derived from preserving the possibility of utilizing a site's use value in the future, serving as a form of insurance. Quasi-option value, on the other hand, arises from the prospect that new information received later might lead to a reevaluation of a site's importance.

Non-use value seeks to capture the enrichment obtained from the continued existence of significant components of a cultural heritage site. Even if individuals are unlikely to visit these locations, their loss would evoke a sense of deprivation. This benefit is often referred to as existence value, where people place a value on the knowledge that the site exists,

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even if they have no intention of visiting it. The concept can be likened to valuing the existence of endangered species like tigers and whales, where their potential extinction would result in a tangible sense of loss. Nonuse values can also be expressed through bequest values, wherein individuals desire their children to benefit from the continued existence of these sites after their passing, often formalized through bequests of collections or historical family residences. Estimating nonuse values poses considerable challenges but holds significant relevance for evaluating cultural heritage sites.

Elsewhere I have discussed in detail the techniques of measurement and estimation that can be used to arrive at the tangible and intangible values of a cultural asset[3]. These are important in most cases of restoration of historic districts and monuments, except where it is an absolutely national and global treasure where the work must be done, and the matter becomes choosing the most cost-effective method of doing the requisite tasks. Such national and global treasures include things like the Sphinx next to the pyramids of Giza, the Abu Simbel, and other temples of Nubia (that were likely to be covered by the waters of the reservoir of the High Dam). Elsewhere, the use of Benefit/Cost (B/C) Ratios, Net Present Value (NPV), or Internal Rate of Return (IRR) are and should be used to justify the investment in the restoration or rejuvenation of historic buildings and historic districts.

In addition to assessing the benefits directly provided by the site, adapted environmental economic techniques can also be employed to evaluate the impact of environmental or aesthetic changes at the site. For instance, air pollution or inappropriate constructions like a fourteen-story building in a medieval townscape can adversely affect the enjoyment of visitors and residents whose sense of identity is tied to the urban environment.

6. Mobilizing Capital to Finance the Conservation of Historic Districts

Mobilizing resources necessitates collaboration between the public sector (both national and local) and the private sector (both local and international). Convincing the broader public, not just local inhabitants, of the merits of each case, is crucial to attracting public funding. Additionally, encouraging financial returns on investment is essential to mobilize private

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[3] SERAGELDIN, «On the Economic Value of Cultural Assets», pages

funds. It is also important to be cautious of gentrification, which could result in the involuntary displacement of the current low-income population.

The foundation of the institutional framework for finance and economics relies on bringing together various actors, such as private and public entities, both at international and national levels, as well as formal and informal participants. To ensure success, these actors' investments and efforts must complement each other and are aligned with shared objectives. This requires not only sound finance and economics but also effective political processes that foster collaborative efforts toward conservation and socioeconomic rejuvenation in historical cities.

Many approaches to conservation involve placing restrictions on activities within historical areas. Obvious measures include preserving culturally significant structures and preventing damage through misuse, unsightly additions, inappropriate uses, or pollution in proximity. There are also limitations on buildings that could harm the overall urban character of a historical district, even if they appear financially profitable. Likewise, certain standards of upkeep might be mandated, and limitations on both public and private sector activities in specific locations may be imposed. Encouraging conservation by various actors is equally important, as attempting to conserve all structures directly in an urban context becomes impractical.

The success of conservation efforts relies on establishing an incentive framework that encourages actions supporting conservation programs, both directly and indirectly. Each actor views the rejuvenation of historical city districts in developing countries through a unique lens, considering their factors before investing effort and funds into preserving the area's distinctive character. The incentives required for each actor to act accordingly are interdependent.

Creating an appropriate social environment in historical cities is essential to offer each actor the necessary incentives. This environment aims to foster collaboration and counter the negative downward spiral that could result from uncontrolled commercial exploitation, pollution, and inadequate infrastructure in poor districts surrounding historical areas, all of which would degrade the unique urban character of the city. Although

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challenging, finding a solution is possible, akin to solving a Rubik's cube puzzle.

Striking a balance in the investment framework for historical cities and promoting real public-private partnerships are necessary to safeguard their unique heritage and maintain social cohesion. Overly rigorous taxation for municipalities could discourage private investment, while excessive incentives for private investors could strain municipal finances. Attracting higher-income residents could boost revenues and create economic opportunities, but it might also displace the local population.

Adaptive reuse is crucial to maintain the vitality and functionality of historical districts, but it requires careful attention to the physical restoration and repurposing of buildings. Sensitivity to the community's feelings is vital when determining the type of use for these buildings.

Preservation must be balanced with the flexibility of reuse. Striving for excessive adherence to restoration standards can limit the optimal use of buildings. Reviewing prevalent conservation practices ensures that the pure purpose of preservation doesn't hinder the economic and social revitalization of historical cities through building reuse.

Mobilizing the necessary investment to revitalize the economic base, restore monuments, preserve unique character, and cater to socio-cultural needs requires expertise in various technical aspects, including imaginative reuse of old buildings and effective financing.

Launched in 2019, the Cultural Heritage Financial Alliance (CHiFA), is an intriguing initiative aiming to establish a viable approach to financing cultural heritage while connecting it with expertise. The mobilization of resources demands rigorous economic and financial analysis, justifying public investments, and providing incentives for private action. These methods are not systematically applied to historical cities, whether for maintenance and upkeep programs or for rebuilding and restoring cultural heritage post-destructive events.

Preservation of cultural heritage, including monuments, demands attention and protection beyond just the historical districts of existing cities. Maintenance and protection against various vulnerabilities, such as water damage, and foundation issues, require substantial investments. However, these investments must be justified amidst competing demands for government funding.

Determining the value of protecting cultural "assets" becomes a significant question for societies, especially in poorer countries facing limited resources for essential sectors like education, health, and infrastructure. Deciding how much should be allocated to the protection of cultural heritage raises questions about the responsibilities of different social actors, both public and private, at national and international levels.

The evaluation of tangible and immovable cultural heritage, along with its intangible value, necessitates discussions on techniques for estimating its worth. Cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit approaches are utilized to assess the appropriateness of investments in cultural heritage assets, considering routine maintenance, repair, and reconstruction. Leaving a part of cultural heritage partially destroyed incurs significant costs, affecting the credibility of authorities and the self-esteem of the population.

Accurately calculating costs and benefits, including intangible ones, provides a clear indication for investing in cultural heritage. Tangible and immovable cultural assets possess an economic value that extends beyond direct or indirect uses. Proper methodologies, utilizing revealed and stated preference techniques, can estimate these intangible values and their impact on society.

For conservation efforts to succeed, especially in historical cities, various actors must take numerous actions, some guided by government decisions while others depend on independent choices by private entities. Government decisions should use economic analysis, whereas the private sector relies on financial analysis, except for unique cases where cost-effectiveness is appropriate.

In certain cases, conservation investments are justified a priori, particularly for essential national identity monuments. These cases often use cost-effectiveness analysis to determine the most effective means of achieving the desired results, without questioning the justification of the investment's benefits. However, such instances are rare, and most conservation projects require cost-benefit analysis, considering competing priorities and limited funding.

Therefore, analyses of conservation efforts should encompass both economic and financial perspectives. Economic analysis assesses whether

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the proposed investments are worthwhile for society as a whole, comparing benefits and costs. On the other hand, financial analysis examines specific costs and benefits experienced by individual investors or groups. Subsidies provided by the government, for example, are accounted for in the private investor's financial analysis, while the government considers the full economic cost (shadow pricing) in its analysis.

Cost-benefit analyses play a crucial role in determining the feasibility of investments in cultural heritage, providing a comprehensive evaluation of economic and financial aspects. By considering both societal benefits and individual gains, these analyses help make informed decisions about the allocation of resources for cultural heritage preservation.

But in the end, the protection of the unique “Sense of Place” of historic districts is a complex societal endeavor, requiring appropriate social, political, economic, environmental, and technical policies, all embedded in a robust institutional approach, with clear and inclusive governance.

On the other hand, equally important is the proper restoration and conservation of buildings that are considered to be of historic significance. That work requires talented architects, engineers, and sensitive specialists in the curation of legacies of cultural heritage.

7. Restoring Old Individual Buildings: Three Philosophies

When it comes to restoring old buildings, three distinct philosophies exist, each with its own justification. This assertion is underscored by the fact that the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (AKAA) recognized three projects embodying these philosophies with awards in the same year (1983).

First: Clear, Visible Demarcation between the Old and the New: This was exemplified by the Darb Qirmiz Quarter restoration in old Cairo. Ceramic tiles and inscriptions on walls were all restored and completed, but in a way that unambiguously differentiates between the old and the new (FIGS .2 & 3 below).

FIGS.2 & 3: Darb Qirmiz, Cairo: visible distinctions between the old and the new.

Second: Hidden Clues for Future Restorations. The external appearance of the building and its interior seem to be restored exactly like it would have been in its earlier days, as can be seen in this restoration of the Shah Rukni Alam Tomb in Multan, Pakistan. On the backs of all the new bricks are the dates of their fabrication, so that future restorers will have no difficulty identifying the original parts of the building from the parts added during a more recent restoration (FIG.4 below).

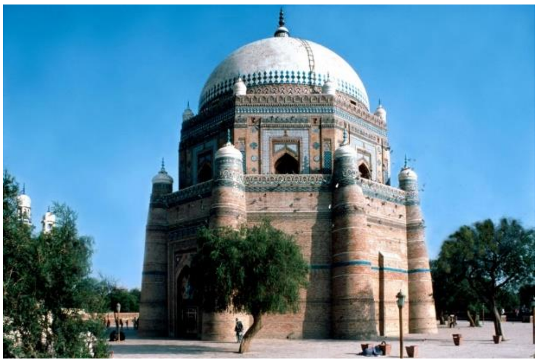

FIG. 4: Shah Rukni Alam Tomb in Multan, Pakistan.

Third: Total Reconstruction: in cases where the destruction of the historic building is extremely severe, bold and innovative architects have actually reconstructed the missing parts, using as much as possible what could have been pieces contemporary to the original building. This was the case of the Azm palace in Damascus which, although very badly damaged, was reconstructed to what would have been its erstwhile magnificence, allowing visitors to appreciate the restored splendor. FIGS. 5–6.

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Figs. 5 & 6: Azm Palace reconstruction:

It is clear that not all projects fall into one or another of these philosophies, and frequently talented architects and restorers must use a combination of these approaches.

But what of the now restored building? In some cases, for example, a mosque can be re-used for its original function. Sometimes, the restored building is converted into a museum showing off the building itself. But not all buildings can be treated as such. New uses, more compatible with the times, can also be deployed in old restored buildings, thus keeping the buildings, and the old districts of historic cities, alive. This is known as "Adaptive Re-Use".

8. Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse is the practice of repurposing historic buildings for new functions, breathing new life into these structures while preserving their architectural and cultural significance. This approach not only helps to conserve historical landmarks but also promotes sustainable development by reducing the need for new construction. There are many excellent examples of adaptive reuse in both the Global South and the Global North. An excellent example from the developing world is the Rüstem Paşa Caravansarai, in Edirne, Turkey, which was converted into a 110-room hotel FIG.7 below.

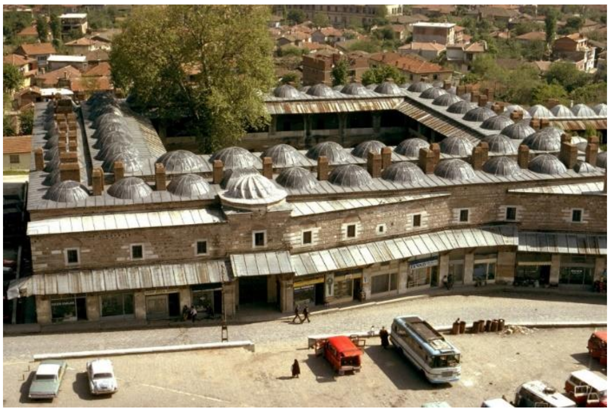

FIG. 7 The Rüstem Paşa Caravansarai, in Edirne, Turkey, which was converted into a 110-room hotel.

Turning to examples from the "Global North", we can cite as an important example of adaptive reuse the High Line in New York City. Once an elevated railway line, it was transformed into a vibrant urban park, creating a unique public space while retaining the original structure's industrial charm. Interestingly, this adaptive reuse of the High Line has revitalized the surrounding area, attracting visitors and contributing to the economic and social vitality of the neighborhood. FIG.8

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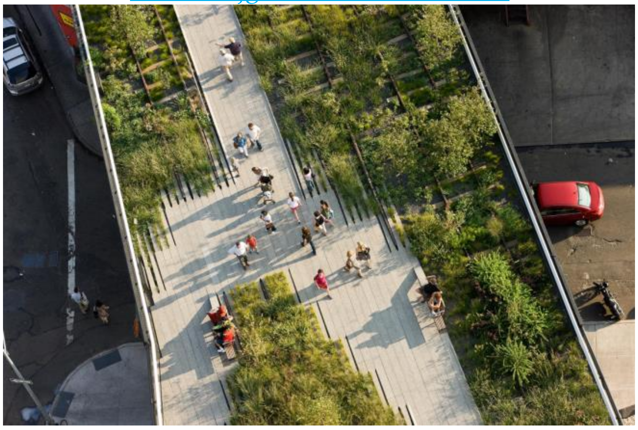

FIG.8 The transformation of the New York City High Line into an urban park

Another notable example is the Tate Modern in London. Housed in a former power station, the renowned art gallery showcases contemporary and modern art. The adaptive reuse of this industrial building has not only preserved its iconic architectural features but has also provided a dynamic setting for artistic expression. The Tate Modern has become a cultural hub, attracting millions of visitors each year and acting as a catalyst for the regeneration of the surrounding neighborhood. FIG.9

FIG.9 The Tate Modern.

In Barcelona, Spain, the Mercat de Sant Antoni is an impressive demonstration of adaptive reuse. Originally a 19th-century marketplace, it has undergone a meticulous restoration and transformation into a multi-purpose space. While preserving the historic facade and structure, the building now houses a combination of market stalls, community facilities, and public spaces. The adaptive reuse of Mercat de Sant Antoni has not only preserved an important historical site but has also created a vibrant gathering place that serves the needs of the local community while, simultaneously, honoring the city's heritage. (see FIG. 10 & 11 below).

FIG. 10 - Mercat de San Antoni in Barcelona (exterior)

FIG.11 - Mercat de San Antoni in Barclona (interior)

Another remarkable example of the adaptive reuse of a historic building in Paris is the transformation of a former hotel into the renowned Musée Picasso. Located in the vibrant Marais district, this cultural institution showcases the remarkable works of the legendary artist, Pablo Picasso. The building itself, originally constructed as the Hôtel Salé in the 17th century, underwent a meticulous renovation to preserve its historic charm while accommodating the needs of a modern museum. The grandeur of the former hotel, with its intricate architectural details and elegant courtyard, now serves as a fitting backdrop for the vibrant collection of Picasso's masterpieces. This successful adaptation not only breathes new life into the heritage structure but also provides visitors with a captivating environment to explore the incredible artistic legacy of one of the world's most influential artists. (FIGS.12 & 13 below)

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FIG.12 The historic Hotel Salé in the Marais district of Paris was converted into a museum to house the huge collection of Picasso artworks.

FIG.13 Paul Smith's 2023 dazzling reinstallation of the works in the Musée Picasso. see Designer Paul Smith's Dazzling Reinstallation of Musée Picasso Paris – ARTnews.com.

These examples highlight the power of adaptive reuse in transforming historic buildings into functional and relevant spaces. By embracing the past and repurposing these structures, we can create sustainable, culturally rich environments that benefit both residents and visitors alike.

9. The Great Omari Mosque

But I cannot complete this essay without returning to the work of Prof. Saleh Lamei Mostafa himself. Here we address his internationally admired work on the restoration of the Great Omari Mosque in Sidon, Lebanon, which was recognized by an Aga Khan Award in 1989.

This was the oldest standing mosque in Sidon dating back to the late 13th century during the Bahri Mamluk period. The minaret, which was added by the Ottomans in the latter half of the 19th century, adds to its historical significance. Unfortunately, the monument suffered severe damage from shellfire during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. However, rather than constructing a new mosque, the community decided to restore their original one, thanks to financial support from a local resident living in Paris. Prof. Saleh Lamei Mostafa's work on this challenging restoration project has been widely and internationally recognized.

The mosque was in very bad condition, and the hillside on which it stood was on the verge of collapsing. The hillside was strengthened to ensure the safety of the building (FIGS.14 & 15). In the restoration of the building as many as possible of the original stones that had fallen, but were available on the site, were re-used (FIG.16). Local stone was used to complete the rest, recreating the space in its original elegance (FIG.17). This historically faithful restoration of the building gave back to the local community their Mosque, and their sense of pride in their heritage. (FIGS.18 & 19).

FIG.14 Restoring the hillside on which the building stands

FIG.15 Exterior – the hillside on which the building stands after strengthening.

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FIG.16 The local stones were re-used in the restoration work.

FIG.17 The courtyard before restoration.

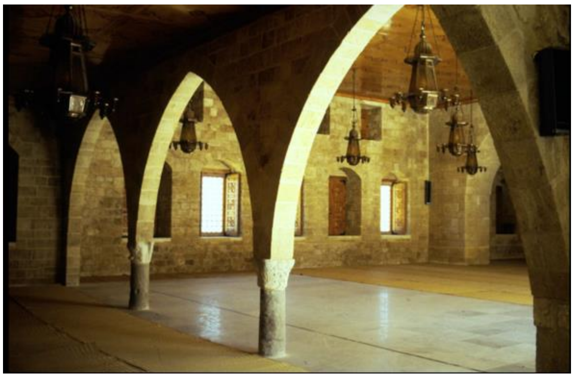

FIG.18 The restored interior .

FIG.19 The restored exterior.

10. Concluding Remarks

All too often, it is daring new forms and bold new structures that capture the imagination of young architects and the public alike. Undoubtedly, these great projects are essential as they mark the best of our current technologies, and contemporary imagination, and are to become our legacy to future generations. But we must also recognize and salute the difficult and meticulous work of those who restore the legacies of past buildings and spaces and adapt their use to the needs of the present. They are maintaining the continuity between our heritage, our present, and our future. And the buildings that they bring to life become much more than silent exemplars of a bygone era; they become the touchstone of our memories and the wellsprings of our imagination as we invent the future in the crucible of our minds.