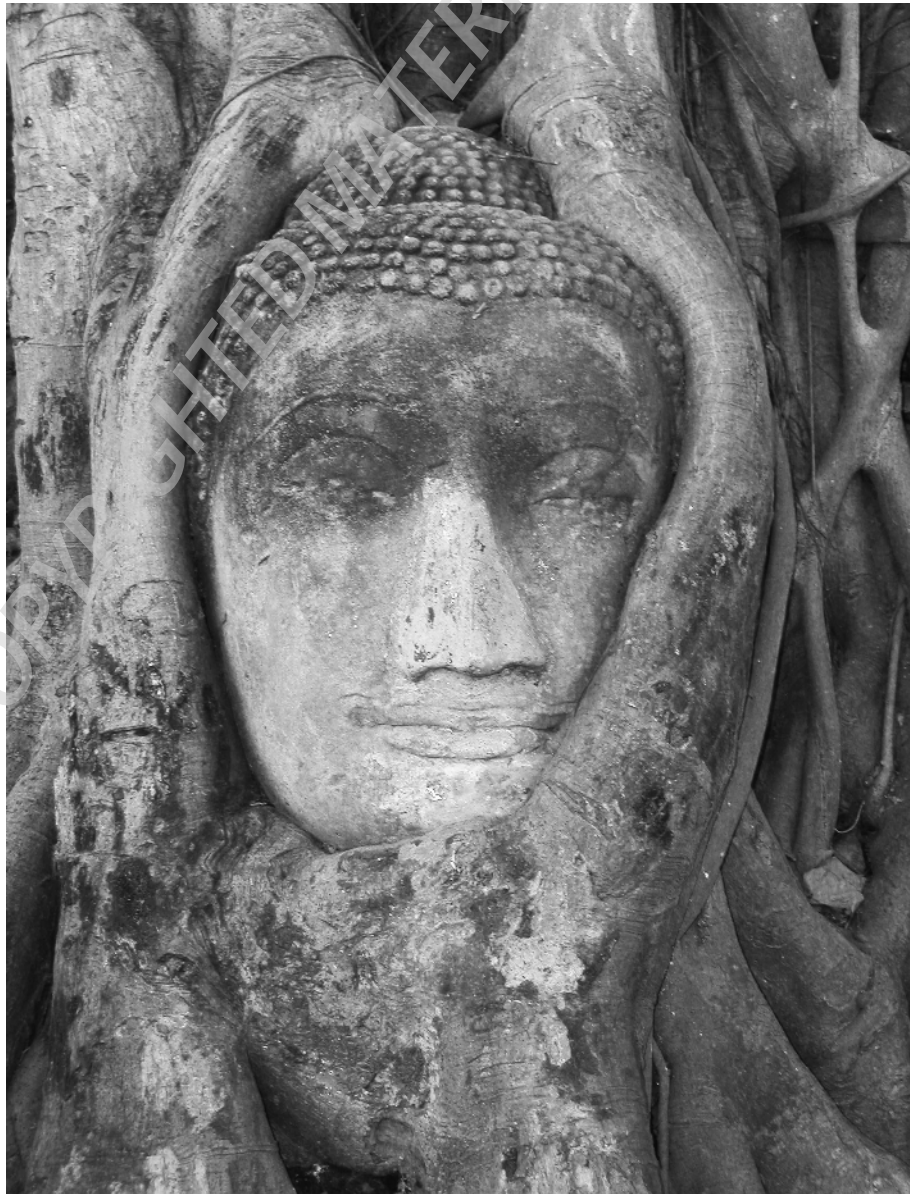

PART I

Conserving History in Changing Contexts





Machu Picchu (c. 1460 CE), southeastern Peru.

Introduction

How would the lives of the world's population be different if there were no great *historic buildings* or sites? What if the Parthenon, Pompeii, or Hagia Sophia no longer existed? Imagine Paris without Notre Dame, Florence without the Duomo, and Jerusalem without the Wailing Wall or the Dome of the Rock. What if St. Petersburg had no palaces, if Jordan had no Petra? What if China had no Great Wall or Forbidden City, if India had no Taj Mahal? What would Chicago be without its early skyscrapers, Peru without Machu Picchu, or Easter Island without its mysterious stone *moai*? Apart from these iconic historic buildings and places, what if the more ordinary historic buildings that we encounter in our daily lives were also gone? Imagine if everything was new and undistinguished by change and invention over time, that there was nothing in the *built environment* to remind us of what came before us. How would today's world be different?

The answer to these questions is that civilization as we know it today would not exist. The cultures that inherited these cultural legacies would lack their distinctiveness and their sense of accomplishment. Individuals would have a diminished sense of history and memory of the places they live in and visit. People would lack the variety and reassurance that preceding historic events and places provide.

The sense of one's physical position and place in time is in large part based on historic places, whether they are individual buildings, or entire cities, or the countries in which they are situated. Just thinking of the *historic monuments*¹ and cultures of Rome, London, Egypt, and China helps each individual who knows of these places understand his or her position in space and time. Local landmarks, both cultural and natural, can provide similar orientation. The river, the steeple, the square, the *maison de ville* all help individuals know where they are. The sequences and patterns these objects occupy in a particular location form an environmental context that has meaning for those who experience them.

Many of the buildings, monuments, and places cited above have influenced history. All offer lessons about our forebears and inspire wonder, pride, and additional works of art and architecture.² The historic architecture around us enriches human existence and makes our knowledge of the past more comprehensible. Our identity as human beings, both individually and collectively, would be less sure and less meaningful with-

out their presence. It has been convincingly argued that notions of shared history and identity have fostered improved human relations by highlighting a common sense of belonging. Just beginning a list of reasons to preserve artistic and architectural legacies demonstrates that without such tangible reminders, life today would not be as colorful, interesting, or inspiring.

A Russian architectural historian expressed it well: “Historic buildings are a concrete expression of a people’s *cultural heritage*. They are products of human activity that reflect sociological trends, national character and ‘the spirit of the time.’ They provide the means of studying the development of relations among peoples, the mutual influence of their cultures, and the mutual enrichment that has resulted. As an incarnation of the creative activity of mankind, historical monuments are the *heritage* of the whole of humanity.”³

At the practical level, a continually used historic site adds tangible economic value to its locale on several different levels. The restoration, rehabilitation, and *preservation*—that is, the *conservation* of an old building—embodies an expenditure of time and materials that has usually been repaid many times over, especially considering the indirect financial benefits that can accrue in locales where historic buildings are conserved.

Each component of the world’s architectural patrimony, whether it is a site recognized as having “outstanding *universal value*” and included on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO’s) World Heritage List or simply an old building that we pass in the course of our daily lives, connects us to the past more effectively than does any other human creation. Without memories in the form of physical evidence of who and what preceded us, life today would be less structured and peaceful than it is.

But any structure made by humans, irrespective of the length of time and care it took to create, can easily be taken away, as the destruction of New York’s World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, dramatically demonstrated. A secure future for the world’s cultural patrimony—of which historic buildings, sites, and *cultural landscapes* are its most tangible and visible manifestations—is by no means assured no matter how valuable it may be.

Fortunately, there is a growing awareness of the fragility of both the world’s natural and its cultural heritage. A parallel interest in the conservation of both types of heritage is developing worldwide. Helping to facilitate the protection of both cultural and natural environments are a host of sophisticated heritage management models and systems situated within both the public and the private spheres. Likewise, many new professional specialties are developing within the fields of cultural and natural heritage protection. Each seeks to maintain irreplaceable natural and cultural resources for use and enjoyment both now and in the future. The cultural heritage conservation movement—most noticeably the component that addresses architectural conservation—speaks to an issue of fundamental importance: integrating the past into the future.

But even with the current technical sophistication of the field of architectural conservation, the likelihood of saving all that could or should be saved is not great. It has been estimated that some 50 percent of the world’s historic architecture has disappeared during the twentieth century.⁴ Given this statistic, one might ask why are people drawn to the practice of architectural conservation. Is it not, in the end, a hopeless task? Some reassurance lies in the hard-earned successes that have been achieved by those who have helped pass architectural legacies on to the present generation. Another assurance lies in the remarkable “rightness” of the activity. The eminent American economist John Kenneth Galbraith commented in 1980, when there were far fewer examples of architectural conservation to see: “The preservation movement has one great curiosity. There is never any retrospective controversy or regret. Preservationists are the only people in the world who are invariably confirmed in their wisdom after the fact.”⁵

This book takes on the task of sharing the knowledge gained through the cumulative experiences of over two centuries of organized efforts to conserve architecture—especially as they relate to professional best practices developed in different locales around the world. At this point there are numerous notable examples of conserving historic buildings and sites in most countries. Together, these form a foundation for qualitative and quantitative improvements in contemporary conservation practices elsewhere for both the present and future.

Today's ethos of conserving historic buildings and sites reflects both a maturation of a relatively new discipline and a profession within the practice of architecture. The related specialties of art, archaeological, urban, historic landscape, and architectural conservation attempt to satisfy the important and unavoidable need to maintain and present humanity's physical creations through a variety of conservation-minded actions. These actions together were labeled by the eminent American preservation educator and pioneer in the field, James Marston Fitch, as “curatorial management of the built world.”⁶

Today's cultural heritage conservation field faces a daunting and multifaceted challenge driven by difficult questions: What do we want to conserve from the present for the future? What do we value highly? For whom are we maintaining this heritage? Who owns the past? How exactly should we intervene? Adding to the complexity is that approaches to conserving cultural heritage—as well as views about past approaches—also change. Another noted American historic preservation expert and educator described the problem well: “Our answers will not be the same answers we have grown used to... Each passing day gives new meaning to old places and new character to the nation.”⁷

The challenges in architectural conservation faced by every country are the result of certain patterns of cause and effect. As complicated and seemingly overwhelming as these challenges may be at times, there are a finite number of problems that can be met by a finite number of solutions. The accomplishments of the architectural conservation field over the past two centuries—combined with the present local, national, and global interconnectedness of interested agencies, institutions, and individuals—offer today's practitioners great hope for even bolder and more effective cultural heritage conservation schemes. In fact, heritage conservationists of the twenty-first century have certain advantages: No previous generation has possessed more technical tools and means to address conservation challenges.

INEVITABLE CHANGE

The experiences of the twentieth century alone prove that destruction of the built environment by both humans and nature forever alters the character of a place. The variety of possible natural disasters—storms, fires, earthquakes, and floods—is exceeded only by the number of possible man-made threats, which range from benign neglect and poor planning to willful destruction and war. Recently, these traditional human threats have been joined by a number of more modern ones, such as air pollution, tourist wear, vast redevelopment schemes, and increasingly sophisticated and powerful weapons of war.

The cataclysmic changes brought on by the twentieth century's two world wars and the full extent of destruction of the built environment and its inhabitants are almost inconceivable. In the postwar years, changes to cityscapes in Europe, Asia, and the Americas have been unprecedented, exceeding in many cases even the scale of wartime destruction. In his seminal book *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, American urban planner and preservationist Anthony M. Tung writes, “Half a century after World War II numerous planners throughout Europe, including Germany, have concluded that far more architectural history was destroyed in the urban redevelopment that followed the fighting than by the tens of millions of bombs themselves.”⁸



Figure 1-1 Dresden, Germany, after the aerial bombing on February 13 and 14, 1945, exemplifies the most powerful and immediate threat to the world's architectural heritage posed by humans: the calculated destruction of war. (*akg-images Ltd., London*)

The built environment has always been created to accommodate human populations; it is therefore helpful to review a few facts regarding patterns of world population growth and movement to illustrate the subsequent enormous pressures on towns, urban areas, and remaining habitable open land. The first concerns population growth: In 1800 the world population was estimated at 978 million; in 1900 it was 1.65 billion; in 2000 it was 6.07 billion, a figure that is expected to double by the year 2200.⁹ The second concerns population distribution: By the early twenty-first century, for the first time in history, more people will live inside cities than outside of them. The United Nations predicts that by 2025 about 61 percent of the global population, or 5.2 billion people, will reside in urban areas.¹⁰

The last century also saw developments in telecommunications, transportation systems, industrial processes, data management, and everyday conveniences that were unimaginable in previous eras. These developments were largely the creations of the so-called first- and second-world industrialized nations, where change and growth were viewed as synonymous with progress. An undeniable result of this trend has been increasing global affluence, although progress has not eradicated the significant imbalances in wealth and well-being, especially for those who live in the developing world. Previously, growth patterns of affluence have been uneven; in modern times, however, demands on the world's natural and cultural resources have consistently increased.

The power and the ruthlessness of change to the built environment, particularly when that change has had a negative impact on large numbers of people, have been increasingly questioned in recent decades. The cumulative reaction to the wholesale loss of cultural patrimony over the past five hundred years has generated the current global concern, or movement, to *safeguard* both our significant and surviving built and natural environments.

Taking a static snapshot of the world's dynamic historic built environment at any given time is not possible. The countless numbers of historic buildings that exist, plus the exponential growth of new construction that will in time become historic, make any attempt at such a precise quantitative survey pointless.¹¹ But two similarities among all human-made structures make the task of characterizing the present global phenomenon of the architectural conservation movement conceptually manageable. First, the uses and construction methods and materials of all structures are definable and typologically limited. This means that even when considering all the variables the number of physical, material, and construction problems that can be encountered are finite, as are the number of possible remedies. As a result, lessons, however approximate, can be inferred by quantitative and qualitative analyses of existing building stocks.

Second, most human-made creations serve, or served, a purpose, and each represents an expenditure of time, energy, materials, and economic resources. Thus, most physical creations by humans contain some degree of value, whether it is material, artistic, symbolic, economic, or due simply to age. The simplest way to appreciate the value of any creation, either handmade or natural, is by attempting to reproduce it.

In places where historic buildings exist, there are usually also a finite variety of time-tested building traditions. For example, for residential structures, there are functional similarities between the traditional wooden houses of the Baltic region and the mud-brick domestic architecture of the Middle East. There are often amazing general similarities in certain building types across time, as can be seen by comparing the first-century multistory apartment houses of ancient Ostia near Rome with those of nineteenth-century London or New York. Basic functional similarities can also be observed between the ruined atrium houses of ancient Pompeii; the empty stone and adobe Native American habitations at Chaco Canyon, New Mexico; and the fast-disappearing courtyard houses within Beijing's *hutong* neighborhoods.¹²

In the broadest sense, the conservation of architecture is all about managing change. Change is an inevitable life process with which every living creature contends. Anticipating and managing change, whether personal or collective, has always been a human concern. Failure to do so would mean extinction. But buildings have lives, too; they were created under dynamic conditions and will be in a dynamic state when considered for refurbishment. Remember, too, that the field of architectural conservation is itself constantly changing. Accommodating change is at the heart of cultural resources management, and the tools for handling it begin with innate common sense based on observation and experience.

Recent developments in computer modeling can provide highly realistic simulations of almost any imaginable scenario. Examples range from likely growth predictions for towns, states, and entire countries to analyzing structural failure points in Gothic cathedrals and impact studies for potential ecological disasters. Such tools, however, have their limitations, because it is unlikely that virtually every potential cause-and-effect scenario in the built environment is predictable. This is because certain combinations or sequences of variables may not be anticipated, although they may be individually predictable.

Consequently, the cumulative experience of the relatively young field of architectural conservation offers the best basis on which to predict what may happen when change occurs and, perhaps more importantly, *why* change occurs. A working knowledge of the cause-and-effect aspects of managing change in the built environment is essential

Figure 1-2 Destruction of a traditional *hutong* block, Beijing, China, 2007. Such superblocks, consisting of dozens of courtyard houses, represent a time-tempered architectural form suitable to Beijing's climate; they reflected the capital city's grand plan dating from the early fifteenth century. Despite the fact that en masse they helped make Beijing one of the most beautiful cities in the world, only a few *hutongs* have survived the city's recent modernization.



for those engaged in the field if effective remedies are to be applied. Such knowledge, enhanced by an ability to appraise historical value and significance objectively, is what distinguishes those who are trained and experienced in architectural conservation from those who are not. Such an understanding can be crucial given the importance of “doing the right thing” with a historical resource—and there are rarely second chances.

The sizable losses of the world's significant architectural patrimony in modern times have, in turn, provided a major impetus for today's burgeoning heritage conservation field. Saving historic buildings and sites was once an esoteric interest of a few antiquarians and advocates, but in thousands of communities throughout the world it has evolved into a widespread movement involving millions. The sound logic of the obvious returns that can be derived from conserving cultural heritage is its greatest appeal. After all, everyone cares, at least to some degree, about the place in which he lives.

Most preservation-minded individuals probably developed their interest in the subject by witnessing the loss of cultural heritage sites in their own communities. The cumulative effect of the loss of landmarks, familiar environments, and treasured works of art has fueled a widespread and growing interest around the world in organizing efforts to protect cultural heritage sites. This was especially true in the last three decades of the twentieth century. Those who are thus involved find themselves part of a widespread human activity—a new culture, so to speak. Proof of the existence of this phenomenon lies in the fact that the language, procedures, and purposes of architectural conservation are remarkably similar wherever it occurs. Proof of it also comes to light when valued sites are imminently threatened.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the *architectural heritage* conservation movement had matured. Today, it is fast coalescing into an increasingly global concern that is well-served by a growing number of international participants who are adding to local and national efforts; their primary aim is conserving and presenting tangible

examples from history as useful and vital necessities for both individuals and for the world's population in general.

Although the integration of the world's economy can be said to have begun with European exploratory and colonial missions in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it was standardized and codified much more recently, beginning with the removal of international trade barriers after World War II.¹³ Certain coinciding factors in the late twentieth century, including the development of the Internet and the end of the Cold War, have accelerated this process dramatically by allowing both communications and markets to become truly global.

GLOBALIZATION AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Globalization is fundamentally an economic process enabled by political and technological change and characterized by increasing international trade and harmonizing world financial systems. British sociologist Roland Robertson, an early proponent of a social theory of globalization, offers a broader definition, suggesting this concept "refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole."¹⁴

The internationalization of the world economy has meant that developing countries are both positively and negatively affected by the involvement of foreign governments, transnational corporations, and major international financial institutions. These major financial institutions, which both regulate world trade and promote global economic development, include the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Funds have been channeled into local communities and the living conditions of local populations have been improved, but simultaneously the self-sufficiency of local economies has been challenged and local sociocultural patterns have been changed. Examples in the case of the World Bank include city center infrastructure and revitalization efforts in Fez, Morocco, and Stone Town, Zanzibar, Tanzania, and the restoration of Constantin Brancusi's Endless Column monumental sculpture complex in Tîrgu Jiu, Romania. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) likewise made low-interest, long-term loans in support of several historic centers. Notable EBRD project sites are Zagreb, Croatia, and Moscow, Russia; for the IADB, Cartagena, Colombia, and Quito, Ecuador, deserve mention. Somewhat similar government-to-government grants, often with fewer conditions, can be seen in German government support for the conservation of Durbar Square at Baktapur in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, and significant aid from China to restore structures in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, and at Angkor in Cambodia. Often, such grants incorporate technical and training assistance and are joined to a parallel goal of improving trade relations.

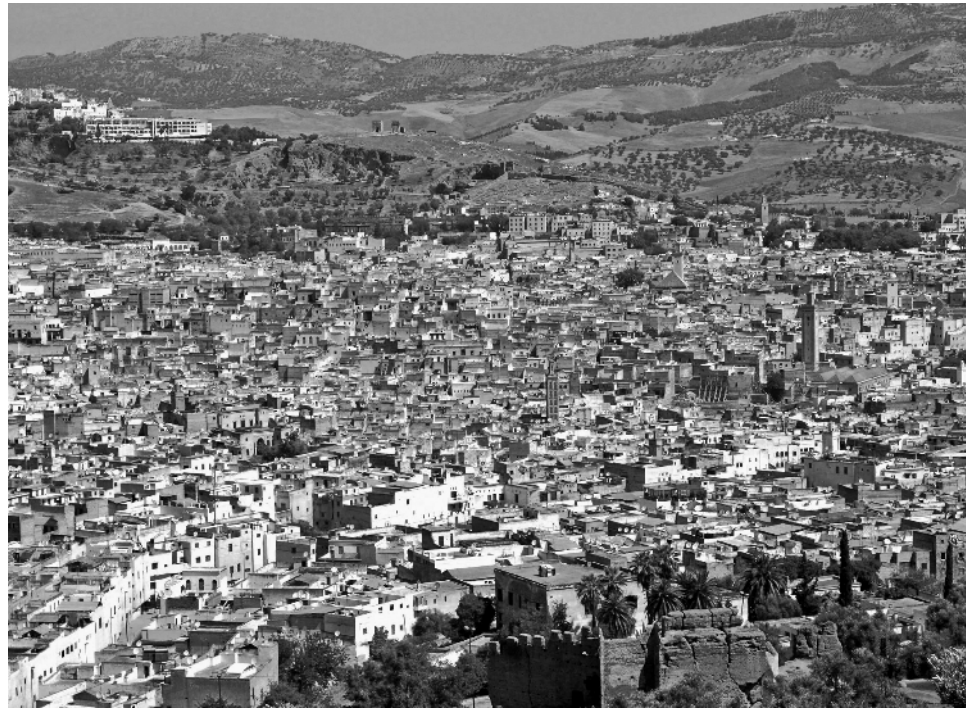
Significant debate has also surrounded the degree to which globalization is controlled and directed by the policies of governments, corporations, and international organizations. Some argue these institutions simply enable and facilitate that which is an inevitable historical process, calling change a healthy, natural, and unavoidable process that, if well-managed, can result in better global living conditions. Others contend that substantial loans to, gifts for, and investments in developing countries from wealthier nations and institutions simply redistribute global wealth. Supporters of globalization reason that change brought about by a country's increased growth brings progress and should therefore not be impeded but rather guided.¹⁵

Skeptics, however, counter that it is a self-serving process orchestrated by the parties who benefit disproportionately from it. Pessimistic views of globalization see it as uncon-

Figure 1-3 The infrastructure and several buildings in Plaza de San Francisco, the historic center of Quito, Ecuador, were restored with loan assistance from the Inter-American Development Bank.



Figure 1-4 The medina in Fez, Morocco. Infrastructure improvements and select building restorations in the commercial center of one of Morocco's two most intact historic cities were accomplished with funding from the World Bank.



trolled modernization causing massive, dehumanizing change along with disorientation and disruption. The most dire of these views is exemplified by American political scientist and professor Samuel P. Huntington in “The Clash of Civilizations?” in which he writes that current economic and political processes are leading the world head on into global conflict along cultural fault lines.¹⁶

A look around us in the first decade of the twenty-first century shows that all of the above-mentioned positions on globalization are both true and ongoing. In retrospect, the accelerating process of globalization in the second half of the twentieth century had a direct and obvious bearing on cultural identity and cultural resource management worldwide. It had a homogenizing effect that has reduced cultural diversity. Many as-

pects of culture have indeed become global, particularly American contributions like MTV, Coca-Cola, and Microsoft. Traditional draped and loose-fitting garments worn in hot climates, such as the *galabia* worn by men, still give way to Western-style fitted clothes, especially the ubiquitous sneakers, jeans, and T-shirts, even if these are less practical or climate friendly.

Globalization and the encroachment of Western culture and values have created a threat, both real and perceived, to communities that feel their proud artistic and cultural traditions are at risk, even though these changes are more often embraced voluntarily than as the result of forced acculturation.¹⁷ The concern is not just that traditional ways and customs—ranging from agricultural practices and regional cuisines to traditional music and manners of dress—will change, but that the values, ways of life, and histories they represent will be lost or forgotten as well. For example, critics of globalization suggest that in Istanbul, opening a Starbucks café that offers customers takeout coffee could accelerate the closure of nearby local coffee shops, which in turn might also contribute to the demise of a centuries-old cultural habit of leisurely interpersonal exchanges at Turkish coffeehouses. There is certain irony in the same franchise having a presence in the Forbidden City, which until a century ago was famously the most inaccessible place in the world to outside influence.

At the same time that globalization has standardized certain lifestyle elements among many of the world's populations, it has also led to an increased awareness of the multiplicity of cultures worldwide and helped individual cultures recognize their own uniqueness. A better understanding of the culture and heritage of others raises one's consciousness and estimation of one's own culture. As British political scientist Mary Kaldor advises, "Globalization conceals a complex, contradictory process that actually involves both globalization and localization, integration and fragmentation, homogenization and differentiation."¹⁸

The recent awareness of cultural, national, and regional identities and interest in local ways of life have led to increased local, national, and international efforts at heritage protection worldwide. Particularly vivid examples are found in countries such as Indo-



Figure 1-5 Starbucks café franchise in the Palace Museum, Forbidden City, Beijing, China, 2004.

nesia, Cambodia, and Morocco, which are endowed with significant—though until recently underappreciated—cultural or natural assets. Today, the unique heritages of Bali, Angkor, and Fez are well-known throughout the world. Moreover, their nationally led redevelopment schemes to celebrate, preserve, and present such places have stimulated similar actions at other nearby heritage sites.

Much of the world's poor live in ancient towns that may be in decrepit condition when compared with more recent settlements. Where such environments involve historic buildings, a special opportunity exists to incorporate community revitalization efforts in heritage conservation. Integrated neighborhood and infrastructure improvement schemes that simultaneously address environmental, social, and health conditions have proven effective. Experience gained from world food programs, such as those administered by the United Nations and its Food and Agriculture Organization, has shown that simultaneous environmental improvement and heritage conservation schemes in impoverished areas should be a priority among both rich and poor countries in the future. It therefore makes eminent sense for world governments and organizations such as the European Union and the United Nations to further cooperate to conserve, and sensitively develop more deteriorated historical residential areas as well as historic town centers for the benefit of all.

Though the concept of world heritage implies worldwide understanding and appreciation, actions to promote, conserve and present such heritage rely ultimately on national and local participation. Through global programs like UNESCO's World Heritage List and the World Monuments Fund's Watch™ List of 100 Most Endangered

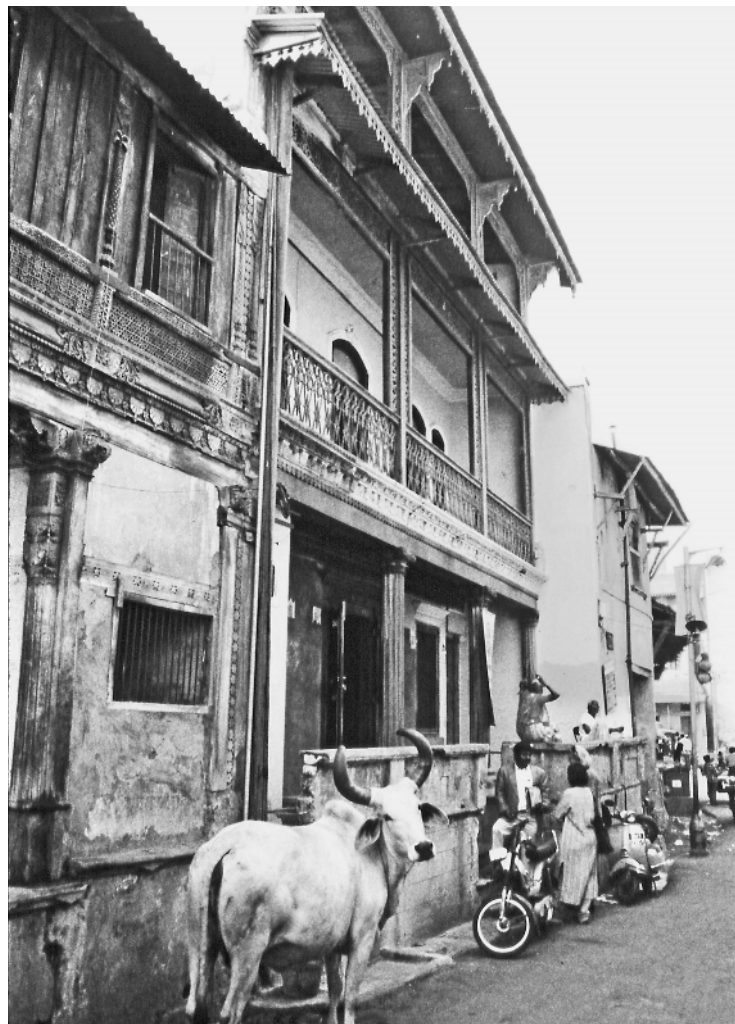


Figure 1-6 In coordination with local architectural conservation agencies in Ahmadabad, India, an innovative approach was developed by a not-for-profit organization aided by funding from the Ford Foundation. Called the Health and Heritage Program as the health concerns of families were addressed, improvements were made to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century *havelis* (finely detailed courtyard houses) in a representative historic district in which they lived.

Sites, individual governments and communities are encouraged to identify and protect significant sites within their boundaries. Optimally, these schemes stimulate local empowerment and private entrepreneurship, which can result in real contributions to local economies. An excellent example is the church of Jesús Nazareno of Atotonilco, located near the town of San Miguel Allende in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico. The church was constructed between 1740 and 1776, and behind its unpretentious *façade* the church and its side chapels contain an extremely elaborate decorative scheme consisting of wall and ceiling murals, silver inlay work, and a rich array of sculpture. The artistic program reflects well a “syncretism” of Catholic religious iconography mixed with native religious beliefs and as such served as a spiritual center and is the destination of frequent religious pilgrimages. In addition the site served as the terminus of the famous Mexican Independence Route. In the mid-1990s, the church suffered from leaking roofs, rising damp, and general neglect as a result of its nearby village being essentially abandoned. In 1995 the fate of Atotonilco changed when local supporters in San Miguel Allende drew the attention of the World Monuments Fund to the site. After placement of the site on WMF’s 1996 World Monuments Watch list of most endangered sites, and with start-up funding of \$20,000 from the American Express Company, a slow but sure effort to restore the church, one component at a time, gained momentum. A key partner early in the project was Adopte una Obra de Arte, a not-for-profit organization based in Mexico City, which was just beginning to take on whole architectural restoration projects at the time. Toward its participation, WMF applied funding from its Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage, which in turn attracted other support for the project from foundations and private donors from as far away as Los Angeles and London. As the conservation project neared completion after nearly a decade of effort, the critical mass of interest and support for the site expanded even further in September 2008 when Atotonilco was placed on UNESCO’s World Heritage List.¹⁹

The motives of international heritage conservation advocacy organizations are rarely questioned, especially when their lists of architecturally distinguished sites and priority conservation projects are backed by the promise of financial assistance, both direct and indirect. Some localities view these actions as paternalistic or even hegemonistic, but most realize the associated benefits of increased visibility, technical assistance and exchange, and leveraged funding is worth the introduction of foreign influence and aid. That organizations such as these are working in all countries, not just developing countries, is testament to both their fairness and their usefulness.

Resourceful and thoughtful *managed change*, performed through an open and inclusive process and based on facts, has proven to be the most viable method for accommodating humanity’s environmental needs in the era of globalization. As heritage conservation specialists at the World Bank have said, “Cultural heritage is, in a sense, ‘knowledge management’ based on simple common sense and sustainable use of resources.”²⁰

Our ever-expanding knowledge of other people and places, both in the present and across time, offers improved abilities to interpret and present heritage sites as well as increased opportunities for international exchange and cooperation. The marvels of humanity’s past—and the issues we face in understanding and conserving them—are topics of concern as never before.

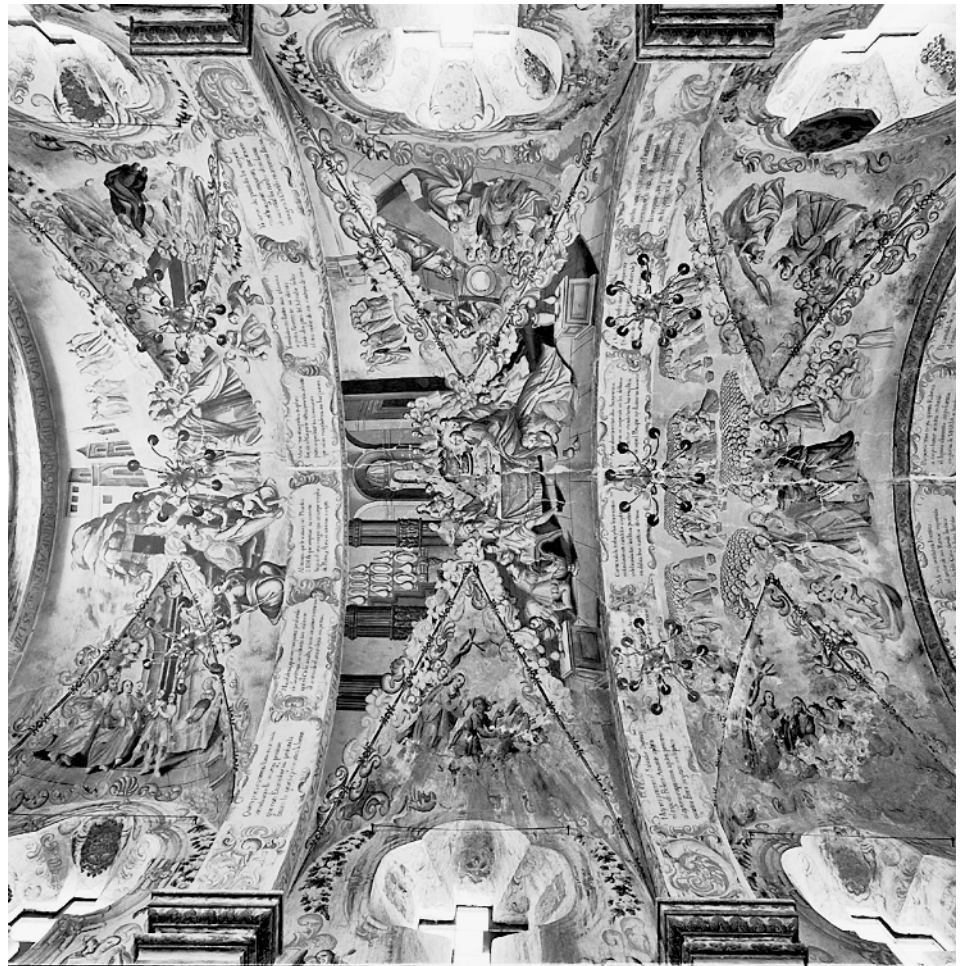
CULTURAL SENSIBILITY

There is more to architectural heritage conservation than arresting or impeding the process of physical decay through technical intervention. It also encompasses the challenging task of fully appreciating and accommodating both the past and present cultural



▲ **Figure 1-7** Restored exterior of the church of Jesús Nazareno in Atotonilco in north central Mexico, which in the 1990s suffered extensively from both rising damp and roof water leakage.

► **Figure 1-8** Interior ceiling murals of Atotonilco, which are part of the church's highly ornate interior decorative features, seen after restoration.



values the objects being observed represent. Conservation assumes an attitude about a building or site, so therefore its interpretation must reflect these cultural sensibilities. To do this effectively, not only are the essential talents of the historian, architect, engineer, and archaeologist tapped but often those of specialized *conservators*, researchers, restoration artisans, and project implementers as well. Input from educators, museum professionals, tourism experts, sociologists, and anthropologists is often equally important. These and other specialists in the social sciences and the humanities would best understand the audience that is served by the conserved buildings and sites.

In all cultures, heritage conservation practice is nearly always inclusive and reflects the complexity of the host society in decisions and its organizational structure. Why conserve an object or a tradition in the first place unless it serves a purpose and benefits the local population? Where intellectual, philanthropic, and educational activities unite with wider community interest and action, the merits of heritage conservation leave an impression on all aspects of modern life.

To date, the socioeconomic impact of architectural conservation projects on communities remains poorly understood because neither the variables nor the benefits are easily measurable. Pride in local customs and the special characteristics of a particular locale, termed *genius loci*—or sense of place—are difficult to define. Assigning a precise monetary value to these intangible concepts is clearly impossible. Even attempts at formulating the replacement cost of vanished landmarks are limited because such replacements can never carry exactly the same meanings as the originals due to their lack of authenticity. Nonetheless, pride in ownership and *associations* with historic places—as reflected in the measures extended toward their protection, maintenance, and presentation—are usually an obvious feature of any community. Pride and interest in a place's upkeep can be fragile and change quickly for reasons ranging from demographic shifts to external traumas to ill-advised planning decisions.

Typically, changes in *genius loci* occur subtly. For instance, interventions at heavily visited conserved sites can be disruptive and disorienting to a locality's sense of ownership, even if the work has been initiated locally. Work that has been orchestrated by foreign specialists can also produce the unhelpful impression of a site's having outside ownership. Some recent efforts in architectural heritage conservation and related activities by local governments, foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations (QUANGOs) have radically changed the meaning and purpose of heritage sites as far as local inhabitants are concerned—and not always for the better. Note, for example, the almost too great popularity among visitors in recent years of sites such as the Athenian Acropolis, the Valley of the Kings in Egypt, Borobodur in Indonesia, Beijing's Forbidden City, and the Italian cities of Venice and Florence.

From the initial stages of planning, cultural heritage interventions should carefully consider their social, cultural, and economic implications as objectively as possible. Sharing experiences and best practices through publications, training programs, cooperative ventures, and exchange programs are among the ways to achieve culturally sensible and sensitive heritage conservation management.

Despite ever-present challenges facing cultural heritage protection, an overriding concern for its protection usually exists. This instinct to preserve represents a certain cultural sensitivity, if only for practical purposes. Stefano Bianca, former Director of the Historic Cities Support Programme for the Geneva-based Aga Khan Trust for Culture once complemented this fact in saying:

*“The richness and variety of many pre-industrial historic cities we admire today result from a seemingly incoherent, if not careless, attitude to the past... When judged in our own terms of preservation, though, we have to admit that the very genesis of this accumulated heritage was fundamentally anti-historic and non-scientific.”*²¹

Figure 1-9 The temple of Tanah Lot, the oldest Hindu temple in Bali, Indonesia, pictured here during a religious festival, is an example of *living heritage*.



Figure 1-10 Tourists viewing a sunset from atop the ninth-century state temple of Phnom Bakheng, Angkor, Cambodia.



Herein lies a certain paradox: Should heritage conservationists disrupt traditional (organic) cultural growth and death processes? By today's principles in heritage protection the answer is yes, especially where the process of alienation has taken place—where members of a society no longer recognize the deeper values and motivations in its *material culture*. Preservation can thus be a substitute for living tradition, though it lacks the power of procreation and may no longer be able to engage the society as a whole.²²

Bianca's argument points to a larger concern: While some heritage site protection measures may at times seem culturally insensitive, they can, when following recognized tenets of conservation practice, actually reflect a greater cultural sensibility than those undertaken by the local communities themselves. Reviewing the track record of the heritage conservation movement allows us to evaluate its accomplishments and failures and see how its philosophy and approaches have evolved over time. Modern heritage conservationists recognize the necessity for continued professional evolution bolstered

by improved measures involving the careful use of new conservation materials and techniques as well as more effective technological and project-assembly processes.

Through the activities of organizations such as WMF, UNESCO, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI), and others, professionals in the field of international cultural heritage protection are more closely in touch than ever before. And as more people become aware of the social and economic benefits of cultural heritage protection, more government agencies throughout the world are committing significant time and resources to such tasks.

As the demand for professional services grows, cultural heritage managers, training institutions, and the allied professions are responding to meet that need. New teaching venues—from workshops to college courses to complete academic programs—are being established in more places around the world. These positive developments are expanding the accomplishments of previous generations, which set the stage for contemporary cultural heritage conservation practice. Our debt to those who preceded us, who likely struggled against even greater odds than those that we face today, should be remembered. The legal



Figure 1-11 The countless actions to maintain historic buildings over generations have a direct relation to their survival. As such it is the daily custodians of the world's architectural heritage, including its advocates in government, site managers, curators, historians, repair technicians, and daily maintenance personnel, who are the unsung heroes of cultural heritage protection. This worker is repainting a precinct division wall within the Forbidden City in Beijing, China.

and operational framework for cultural heritage protection today depends on the efforts and resources expended to preserve many of the buildings, sites, and objects that draw our attention generations later. Throughout history and in every corner of the world, there have been countless unsung heroes of the cultural heritage conservation movement, usually anonymous men and women who protected and maintained old buildings, sites, and other forms of the world's cultural heritage. Through their efforts, today's conservators have a wealth of cultural heritage to work with and are better prepared for assuming the challenge of heritage conservation.

Great challenges lie ahead in the field of cultural heritage protection, and in particular for its main subfield, architectural conservation. Understanding these challenges will be as important as having the vision and will to address them.

ENDNOTES

1. *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (New York: Random House, 1993), defines *monument* thus: from the Latin *monere*, "to remind"; "something erected in memory of a person, event, etc., as a building, pillar or statue; any building, megalith, etc., surviving from a past age and regarded as of historical or archaeological importance; an area or site of interest to the public for its historic significance, great natural beauty, etc., preserved and maintained by a government; any enduring evidence or notable example of something."
2. For example, the remains of ancient Rome inspired the art, architecture, and literature of the Renaissance. Historicism in the nineteenth century in Europe and the Americas was concerned with reviving past styles in architecture.
3. Alexander Halturin, "Monuments in Contemporary Life," in International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), *Colloque sur les Monuments et la Société / Symposium on Monuments and Society: Leningrad, URSS / USSR, 2–8 Septembre 1969* (Paris: ICOMOS, 1971), 21–22.
4. Anthony M. Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities: The Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 2001), 414.
5. John Kenneth Galbraith, "The Economic and Social Returns of Preservation," in *Preservation: Toward an Ethic in the 1980s*, ed. National Trust for Historic Preservation (Washington, DC: Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1980), 57.
6. James Marston Fitch, preface to *Historic Preservation: Curatorial Management of the Built World* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1990).
7. Robert E. Stipe and Antoinette J. Lee, eds. *The American Mosaic: Preserving a Nation's Heritage* (Washington, DC: US National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites [US/ICOMOS], Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987), quote within by W. Brown Morton III, 41.
8. Tung, *Preserving the World's Great Cities*, 17.
9. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, <http://www.unesco.org>.
10. During the twentieth century alone, the global urban population increased more than tenfold, and it is still growing.
11. Preservation planner Anthony Tung has derived some meaningful conclusions on estimates of the amount of loss to the built environment in his *Preserving the World's Great Cities*.
12. The same may be said of other building types, such as religious buildings, civic architecture, commercial structures, parks and plazas, city walls, street systems, bridges, and cemeteries. While the existence of such similarities may be convenient for general comparison purposes, each building possesses its own history and distinct characteristics.
13. The globalization of the world economy in recent decades has been evidenced and perpetuated through the formation of political-economic alliances such as the ever-expanding European Union (EU), trilateral trade agreements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and membership trade organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
14. Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1992), 8.

15. For example, George Soros argues in favor of globalization because it increases wealth and creates open societies. He suggests, however, that institutional reforms are necessary to ensure that the newly generated wealth is fairly distributed, arguing that “all the evidence shows the winners could compensate the losers and still come out ahead” (*George Soros on Globalization* [New York: Public Affairs, 2005], 9). He recommends removing biases from the market, sponsoring parallel social and poverty-reducing actions on a global scale, and ending “corrupt, repressive or incompetent governments” (*ibid.*, 7).
16. Samuel P. Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (Summer 1993): 22.
17. Resistance to the spread of foreign influences has been heroic in some places. For example, in the 1990s in France, legal measures were taken to protect the French language from unwanted intrusions of foreign words.
18. Mary Kaldor, “Cosmopolitanism Versus Nationalism: The New Divide?” in *Europe’s New Nationalism: States and Minorities in Conflict*, ed. Richard Caplan and John Feffer (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 42.
19. The effort over a 10-year period to research, document, and carefully restore Atotonilco brought to light the site’s extraordinary historical and artistic significance. When complemented with a plan for the protection and operation of the site in the future, the church and its immediate surroundings were technically qualified for nomination to the UNESCO World Heritage List
20. Ismail Serageldin and June Taboroff, eds., *Culture and Development in Africa: Proceedings of an International Conference* held at the World Bank, Washington, DC, April 2 and 3, 1992 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1994), 65.
21. Stefano Bianca, “Direct Government Involvement in Architectural Heritage Management: Legitimation, Limits, and Opportunities of Ownership and Operation,” in *Preserving the Built Heritage: Tools for Implementation*, ed. J. Mark Schuster, with John de Monchaux, and Charles A. Riley II (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1997), 14–15.
22. *Ibid.* See also information about the Maori concept of permanence in Chapter 15.