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International Committee
on Vernacular Architecture

International Council on
Monuments and Sites

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Narrow, shaded alleys in the desert vernacular town of Balat, Egypt © Marwa Dabaieh
Cover photo: il-Mellieħa, Malta@pexels-pho-tomass-883344227-31642590



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International Council on
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EDITORIAL

Hossam Mahdy

President of CIAV

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Dear colleagues and friends,

Warm greetings from CIAV Bureau and from myself.

It was a pleasure seeing many of you during CIAV Annual Meeting and the CIAV Web Café that followed, which took place online on 6th December 2025.

From your comments during the Annual Meeting and in reflection on the year 2025 as it is nearing an end, I think CIAV has made many exciting achievements.

The highlight of the year was the documentation camp for the tangible and intangible attributes of the built vernacular heritage that took place in Yunlong, China, thanks to the amazing efforts and leadership by CIAV Vice President and Editor in Chief of CIAV Newsletter, Shaoyong. As you know, it is the first camp that CIAV holds in collaboration with ICOMOS International Scientific Committee on Intangible Heritage (ICICH) with the aim of producing a manual/ toolkit for the documentation of both tangible and intangible attributes of the built vernacular heritage. The working group of both CIAV and ICICH experts is progressing impressively under the leadership of Gisle, CIAV's former president. The outcome of the Yunlong camp was exhibited and discussed during the International Conference that took place in Shanghai from 25 to 26 October 2025 under the title: "Reshaping Heritage Conservation In Higher Education: What, How, For Whom?". The event was organized by the First International

Network for Urban-rural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions (UHC-HEI): <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2712>

Another achievement is the establishment and running of CIAV Web Cafes, thanks to the wonderful planning, organization and moderation by Marwa, CIAV's Vice President. The CIAV Web Café series are documented and uploaded on CIAV's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@CIAV-fy6pm>. Four Web Cafés are organized per year. I think they are a great way to tackle issues of interest to CIAV members and to offer a platform for the members and for those who are interested in the built vernacular heritage. Please do propose topics for the next Web Cafes and propose speakers or speak yourselves to share with the rest of us your knowledge, expertise and thoughts.

This year's achievement that is closest to my heart is the revival of the CIAV Emerging Professionals group (CIAV EPs), thanks to the great efforts and dynamic initiatives by Catarina Mouraz. I had the pleasure of attending the first meeting of the group, which initiated meetings every six weeks.

As discussed during the Annual Meeting, the CIAV Bureau decided to invite volunteers to undertake the roles that should be created in CIAV Bureau once we receive the approval of the By-Laws amendments from ICOMOS Board and AdCom. I am very pleased to announce that Velika Ivkowska has volunteered for the events officer role. I hope that other CIAV members will volunteer.

We are getting closer to an event that is highly relevant for us all: "The 14th Terra World Congress 2026", which is planned to be held from 13 to 16 April 2026 in Al Ain, UAE: <http://terraalain2026.ae/>. I strongly encourage you to attend this very important event if your circumstances permit. CIAV formally supports the event. I hope that many CIAV members will meet during this event and maybe arrange an informal meeting.

Another opportunity to meet in person will be the ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium in Kuching, Malaysia from 17 to 24 October 2026. The general theme of the symposium is "Living heritage: respect – enhance – accept – partnership". <https://www.icomosga2026.org.my/>. I requested from the organizers a meeting room for CIAV members who will attend the event.

Finally, as Marwa has requested during the Annual Meeting, it would be great if we can organize a CIAV conference during the year 2027. Please do contact CIAV Bureau if you have suggestions or wish to host the event.

Yours,

Hossam Mahdy

CIAV President

EDITORIAL

Hossam Mahdy
President of CIAV

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Estimados colegas y amigos,

Reciban un cordial saludo de parte del Buró de CIAV y de mi parte.

Fue un placer ver a muchos de ustedes durante la Reunión Anual de CIAV y el CIAV Web Café que le siguió, celebrados en línea el 6 de diciembre de 2025.

A partir de sus comentarios durante la Reunión Anual y al reflexionar sobre el año 2025, que ya se acerca a su fin, considero que CIAV ha logrado numerosos avances y logros muy alentadores.

El momento más destacado del año fue el campamento de documentación sobre los atributos tangibles e intangibles del patrimonio vernáculo construido, celebrado en Yunlong, China, gracias a los extraordinarios esfuerzos y al liderazgo del Vicepresidente de CIAV y Editor en Jefe del CIAV Newsletter, Shaoyong. Como saben, se trata del primer campamento organizado por CIAV en colaboración con el Comité Científico Internacional de ICOMOS sobre Patrimonio Inmaterial (ICICH), con el objetivo de elaborar un manual o una caja de herramientas para la documentación de los atributos tanto tangibles como intangibles del patrimonio vernáculo construido. El grupo de trabajo, compuesto por expertos de CIAV e ICICH, avanza de manera muy positiva bajo el liderazgo de Gisle, expresidente de CIAV. Los resultados del campamento de Yunlong fueron presentados y debatidos durante la Conferencia Internacional celebrada en Shanghái

del 25 al 26 de octubre de 2025, bajo el título: «Reshaping Heritage Conservation in Higher Education: What, How, For Whom?». El evento fue organizado por la Primera Red Internacional para la Conservación del Patrimonio Urbano-Rural en Instituciones de Educación Superior (UHC-HEI): <https://whc.unesco.org/en/news/2712>

Otro logro importante ha sido la creación y el desarrollo de los CIAV Web Cafés, gracias a la excelente planificación, organización y moderación de Marwa, Vicepresidenta de CIAV. La serie de CIAV Web Cafés está documentada y disponible en el canal de YouTube de CIAV: <https://www.youtube.com/@CIAV-fy6pm> Se organizan cuatro Web Cafés al año. Considero que constituyen una excelente plataforma para abordar temas de interés para los miembros de CIAV y para ofrecer un espacio de intercambio tanto a los miembros como a todas aquellas personas interesadas en el patrimonio vernáculo construido. Les animamos a proponer temas para los próximos Web Cafés, así como a sugerir ponentes o participar ustedes mismos para compartir con el resto de la comunidad sus conocimientos, experiencias y reflexiones.

El logro de este año que me resulta más cercano es la reactivación del grupo de Profesionales Emergentes de CIAV (CIAV EPs), gracias a los grandes esfuerzos y a las iniciativas dinámicas de Catarina Mouraz. Tuve el placer de asistir a la primera reunión del grupo, que dio inicio a encuentros periódicos cada seis semanas.

Tal como se discutió durante la Reunión Anual, el Buró de CIAV decidió invitar a voluntarios a asumir los nuevos cargos que deberán crearse en el Buró de CIAV una vez que recibamos la aprobación de las enmiendas a los Estatutos por parte del Consejo y del Comité Asesor (AdCom) de ICOMOS. Me complace anunciar que Velika Ivkowska se ha ofrecido voluntariamente para asumir el cargo de responsable de eventos. Espero que otros miembros de CIAV también se animen a colaborar.

Nos acercamos a un evento de gran relevancia para todos nosotros: el «14.º Congreso Mundial Terra 2026», que está previsto que se celebre del 13 al 16 de abril de 2026 en Al Ain, Emiratos Árabes Unidos: <http://terraalain2026.ae/> Les animo encarecidamente a participar en este importante evento, siempre que sus circunstancias lo permitan. CIAV apoya formalmente este congreso. Espero que muchos miembros de CIAV puedan encontrarse allí y, quizás, organizar una reunión informal.

Otra oportunidad para reunirnos presencialmente será la Asamblea General y el Simposio Científico de ICOMOS, que tendrán lugar en Kuching, Malasia, del 17 al 24 de octubre de 2026. El tema general del simposio es «Patrimonio vivo: respetar – potenciar – aceptar – asociación». <https://www.icomosga2026.org.my/> He solicitado a los organizadores una sala de reuniones para los miembros de CIAV que asistan al evento.

Por último, tal como solicitó Marwa durante la Reunión Anual, sería excelente poder organizar una conferencia de CIAV durante el año 2027. Les invitamos a ponerse en contacto con el Buró de CIAV si tienen sugerencias o si desean acoger el evento.

Con mis mejores deseos.

Atentamente,

Hossam Mahdy

Presidente del CIAV



2025 CIAV Annual Meeting

CIAV's 2025 Annual Meeting took place online on December 6th. CIAV's President, Hossam Mahdy, and remaining members of the Bureau, Shao Yong, Marwa Dabaieh and Ivan Enev, were present, along with CIAV expert and honorary members. A total of around 30 people attended the meeting.

The meeting started with CIAV's President 2025 Report, approach subjects such as:

- AMs and Conferences, highlighting HERITAGE 25 in Valencia, Spain, and Conservation in the Higher Education, Shanghai, as events that contributed to CIAV's visibility;
- CIAV By-Laws, the amendments to which were submitted to the International Secretariat in November 2023 with the proposal to extend the Bureau with four additional offices (Membership Officer, Communications Officer, EP-Leader, and Events Manager), which haven't been approved so far. Nonetheless, given the importance of these roles to the effectiveness of the Bureau, the positions were open for call;
- Regional Groups, with the proposal of initiating a Latin America and Caribbean Group (LAC).

Then, CIAV's Secretary General (Ivan Enev) presented 2025 membership statistics and welcomed new members to CIAV which, as of December 2025, includes 120 members in total, including 57 nationalities.

Catarina Mouraz volunteered to assume the role of CIAV EP Rep, and has been participating in EPWG meetings and holding meetings with CIAV EPs. CIAV's webpage has been working accordingly, and the presence of CIAV in social media was strongly encouraged.

Also, 2 issues of CIAV's Newsletter were published in 2025 (58th and 59th), with Shaoyong (CIAV's Vice-President and Editor-in-Chief) inviting all members to further contribute to the newsletter, opening the call for entries to issue 60 and addressing EPs to join the editorial team.

The collaboration of CIAV and International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICICH) was also stressed, focused on the WG's progress established in 2022, with the first documentation camp taking place in 2025. Gisle Jakhelln will participate in the Web Café taking place on 15th March 2026 on this topic, including the presentation of a toolkit for documenting both tangible and intangible traits of the Vernacular Heritage. All CIAV members are encouraged to participate and share this and other events.

(News from Catarina P. Mouraz)



President's Report 2025

Introduction

This is my second annual report after the election of the CIAV Bureau for the cycle 2024 – 2026.

The CIAV Bureau members are:

- Mr. Hossam Mahdy, President;
- Ms. Marwa Dabaieh, Vice President;
- Ms Shao Yong, Vice President;
- Mr. Ivan Enev, Secretary General and Membership Manager

1. CIAV annual conferences and meetings

CIAV supported and participated in two important conferences this year. Some of us attended one or both conferences and enjoyed in-person catch up:

- Heritage2025 in Valencia (10–12 September 2025) <https://heritage2025.blogs.upv.es/>
- First International Network for Urban-rural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions (UHC-HEI) International Conference (25– 26 October 2025) [First International Network for Urbanrural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions \(UHC-HEI\) International Conference -UNESCO World Heritage Centre](#)

A non-business meeting was held in Valencia as a side event of Heritage2025 Conference. CIAV 2025 Annual Meeting is decided to be held online at the end of the year to ensure that as many members as possible could attend and

also to follow ICOMOS policy of reducing long distances travels whenever possible.

2. Collaboration with ICOMOS ISCs and WGs

A collaborative initiative is working with ICICH (ISC on intangible heritage) to develop a toolkit for the documentation of both the tangible as well as the intangible attributes of built vernacular heritage. A working group was established under the leadership of Gisle Jakhelln. The work is progressing very well. A documentation camp took place in China under the leadership of thanks to amazing efforts of planning, coordination and organization by Shaoyong. It took place during the two weeks before the First International Network for Urban-rural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions (UHC-HEI) International Conference (25–26 October 2025). You will read detailed reporting on the camp in CIAV Newsletter. The idea is to test methods and approaches by different camps in different geographic and cultural settings.

Regarding ICOMOS Working Groups:

- Samir Abdulac is CIAV's representative at the Syria/Iraq WG;
- Naima Benkari who was CIAV's representative at the Sustainable Development WG has been appointed as the ICOMOS Focal Point for that WG. Naima has been very active throughout the year representing ICOMOS in many important international events;
- Deirdre McDermott and Martin. Cernansky

are CIAV's representatives at the Climate Action WG.

- Catarina Mouraz is CIAV's representative at the Eperging Professionals Working Group (EPWG).
- CIAV is seeking representatives for the following WGs:
 - Our Common Dignity-Rights-Based Approach WG
 - WG on Indigenous Heritage

3. Support of ICOMOS TSP and other ICOMOS activities

CIAV continues to support and align activities with the identified themes by ICOMOS

4. CIAV Newsletter

- Shaoyong, CIAV Vice President, is the Editor in Chief of CIAV Newsletter. Shaoyong has formed an editing team of volunteers who are helping her in the planning, design and issued of the Newsletter.
- An open call to support the editing team is open. Any CIAV member who is interested to support in any of the editing aspects, including translating, proofreading and graphic design is most welcome to get in touch with Shaoyong.
- All previous issues are available on CIAV website.
- All members are encouraged to contribute to the contents of the Newsletter.

5. CIAV visibility

Marwa Dabaieh, CIAV Vice President has created a CIAV YouTube channel and uploaded on it the previous two knowledge cafés that she has planned and moderated.

CIAV Bureau would like to call for volunteers to help with developing a strategy, then to implement it for the presence of CIAV in social media platforms and for more accessible means for CIAV's visibility. CIAV EPs are encouraged to help with this task.

6. Amendments to CIAV By-Laws

CIAV Bureau has requested advice and comments from ICOMOS Board the amendments that have been proposed to CIAV By-Laws to enlarge the number of Bureau officers and to invite higher participation from EPs. The amendments propose the creation for four new roles:

1. Membership Officer:

The Membership Officer's role will be to do the bulk of work under the directions of the Membership Manager, including analysis and innovative ideas in encouraging members to be active in CIAV's activities, such as initiating regional WGs.

Priority for this position will be for EPs.

2. Communications Officer

The Communications Officer's role is to plan and implement visibility on social media and communications with other ISCs & WGs for collaboration and coordination on different event, such as the current collaboration on Africa24 Conference initiative with 7 other ISCs and WGs. S/he should assist the Editor in Chief of the CIAV Newsletter if and when requested. Also reaching out to NCs for possible collaborations and support regarding any built vernacular heritage issues and coordinating with their national CIAV Committees.

Priority for this role will be for EPs.

3. Emerging Professionals Leader:

This role is to represent CIAV at EPWG, manage EP members of CIAV and the introduction of EP's approach and ideas to the Bureau's work in general.

This is an EP role!

4. Events Officer

The Events Officer's role is to organize regular webinars/web cafes, the CIAV Annual Meeting and any other events that CIAV organizes or contributes to. This role will work under the

guidance of CIAV Vice President responsible for scientific activities.

Priority for this role will be for EPs.

Once the Bureau finalizes the amendments, invitations will be circulated to CIAV members who wish to stand for elections for the new positions.

Meanwhile, CIAV Bureau calls for volunteers to undertake the roles of these positions until we are able to formalize the positions. This has been done with great impact regarding the role of the Emerging Professionals Leaders since Catarina has volunteered to be acting for the position. Since then, Catarina has been very active on the EPs front.

7. CIAV membership

Ivan Enev, CIAV Secretary General is the Membership Manager. His annual report includes all activities for the year 2024.

Efforts started as follows:

- Emerging Professionals (EPs) are encouraged to join CIAV and to assume duties and tasks supporting the CIAV Bureau in order to prepare future leaderships for CIAV. Also, mentorship arrangements are under discussion with the relevant taskforce from EPWG for CIAV to test models of mentorship between expert members and emerging colleagues.
- Geographic balance of membership representations in CIAV will be sought by encouraging memberships from under-represented regions. I am delighted to report that progress has been achieved on this front since my last year's report.
- Engaging all CIAV members will be sought by inviting and encouraging members to take part in different CIAV activities and discussions and in initiating activities that build on their expertise and knowledge in the field of vernacular heritage.

8. Outreach outside ICOMOS

The collaboration with ICOMOS ICICH on developing a toolkit for the documentation of the tangible and intangible attributes of built vernacular heritage is a great opportunity to collaborate with Tongji University, Shanghai, UNESCO category 2 centre WHITR-AP and other universities and institutions in China and elsewhere. The working group is currently seeking to find a partnership with an institution in another culture zone for the next camp.

Other initiatives to reach out for relevant institutions outside ICOMOS are underway through interested CIAV members.

The annual program of webinars will be used to approach institutions and individuals to contribute and to start discussions on the different aspects of built vernacular heritage and the potential of future collaborations.



Hossam Mahdy, CIAV President

December 04, 2025



ICOMOS CIAV

International Committee
on Vernacular Architecture

International Council on
Monuments and Sites

ICOMOS CIAV Secretary-General Report 2025

December 2nd 2025, Berlin, Germany

Dear Colleagues and Fellow Members of the ISC ICOMOS CIAV,

This year's AM will be held over Zoom, at 12:00-13:30 Paris Time (European Central Standard Time) and is accessible over the following link. No registration in advance is required to join the meeting:

<https://mau-se.zoom.us/j/62055733304?from=addon>.

The agenda for the AM will be circulated prior to the meeting.

The AM will be followed by a CIAV Web-Café with our esteemed colleague Clara Arokiasamy and her team Dr. Zahida Quadri and Dr. Ishanlosen Odiaua - "The Benefits of South-South Cooperation in Heritage Protection in the Global South". The web-café starts at 14:00 Paris time and is accessible over a different link:

<https://mau-se.zoom.us/j/62697546335?from=addon>

The following is a brief overview of the Bureau business and the membership issues over 2025.

1. Membership

1.1. Membership statistics (as of December 2025).

In 2025, the Bureau has received a total of 6 membership applications, 3 of which are pending due to required documents/confirmation.

We would like to briefly rewind the successful applications of 2025 and take this opportunity to welcome again our 4 newest members:

- Ms. Velika IVKOVSKA -- CIAV Expert Member (08.2023), ICOMOS Macedonia
- Ms. Humeyra BIROL -- CIAV Expert Member (12.2025), ICOMOS Turkey
- Mr. Gnimdou Abalo KOLA -- CIAV Associate Member (07.2025), ICOMOS International (Togo)
- Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz Metallaoui -- CIAV Expert Member (02.2025), ICOMOS Saudi Arabia

We wish our newest CIAV members a prolific scientific collaboration within CIAV and inspiring professional development in the field of the built vernacular heritage!

Membership 2025 in comparison to 2024:

DESCRIPTION	as of 12.2025	% of total	comparison 12.2024
<i>Members:</i>			
Members in total *	120 ↑	100%	116
<i>i. by membership category:</i>			
Honorary	11 (10 active + 1 passive)	9%	11
Expert	95 ↑ (95 active)	79%	92
Associate	14 ↑ (10 active + 4 passive)	12%	13
Institutional	0	-	0
<i>ii. by experience:</i>			
Emerging Professionals (EP)	15 ↑ (all active)	13%	12
<i>iii. by status (engagement with CIAV):</i>			
active	115 ↑	96%	111
passive	5	4%	5
<i>Membership applications/update:</i>			
accepted 2025	4 (3 exp. + 1 assoc.)	3%	6
rejected 2024/2025 (not eligible)	0	-	0
deferred 2024/2025 (application postponed or withdrawn)	3	-	3
pending 2025 (incomplete/in evaluation)	4	-	4
discontinued membership since 12.2024	22	-	22
<i>Voting Members:</i>			
NC-designated Voting Members for ICOMOS CIAV	35	29%	35
<i>Other:</i>			
Membership consents for online publishing of personal data (CIAV webpage)	74 ↑	62%	71

* 57 nationalities / 49 NCs or Int. Secretariat

1.2. Discontinued expert membership.

We are glad to inform you that there have been no cases of discontinued membership in 2025 as a result of the Suggested Measures for Passive Members (CIAV AM 2018). However, the Measures will be applied further on and the membership status of those members, who systematically stay out of touch with both the Bureau and the CIAV membership, and do not engage with the CIAV activities as outlined in the CIAV Minimum Participation Requirements (2018) and in line with Art.6.(8).c of the CIAV By-Laws (2020), shall be relegated and discontinued in due course.

Concerning new membership applications, it is worth mentioning that the most common reason for a deferral is the incompleteness in submissions, where applicants drop out of the application process or do not provide the minimum requested application documents. In other cases, the Bureau could not officially accept eligible applicants due to issues with their international (individual) membership at ICOMOS International (Secretariat).

On this note, we would like to urge you to please get in touch with the International Secretariat at secretariat@icomos.org, Ms. Gloria Martellino, and enquire about the status of your

international membership, should you have any concerns or should the latter not ensue automatically with your national (individual) membership.

Retaining the membership of every active CIAV member is a key priority for the Bureau. We are happy to advise and assist you in this regard at all times. Do not hesitate to approach us directly!

2. ISC Annual Report Form 2024.

The Annual Report Form on the activities of CIAV was submitted in July 2025. We were glad to be able to highlight the success of the Africa 24 Conference, spearheaded by CIAV.

Furthermore, the question of the still pending approval of the proposed amendments of the CIAV By-Laws regarding the extension of CIAV Bureau was raised. Unfortunately, there has been a response neither from the International Secretariat nor from the ICOMOS Board so far. We regret, that the topic did not make its way on the AdCom agenda in October 2025 either. Nevertheless, the Bureau is determined to pass the amendments and is working on ways to implementing them in the Bureau business.

3. CIAV EPs.

As of January 12th 2025, Ms. Catarina Mouraz, ICOMOS Portugal, CIAV expert member and EP, was appointed the EP Representative for CIAV at the EPWG. Catarina has been fully dedicated to this role, organizing many online meetings with the CIAV EPs and attending the monthly meetings of the CIAV Bureau. We would like to express our deep gratitude for Catarina's engagement, valuable insights and work with the Bureau and CIAV! Catarina will continue assuming the role of a CIAV EP-Rep until further notice.

4. The CIAV Webpage

Following the reconstruction of the CIAV webpage in 2019 < <http://ciav.icomos.org/> >, the CIAV Bureau has published an online list of members, which should allow for membership transparency and open access. To this date 62% (74 individuals) of the CIAV membership have provided the Bureau with a written consent on publishing their personal data online, as part of this list.

If you cannot find your name listed online but

would like to be on it, please keep in mind that **the Bureau cannot list any names and/or personal data without an explicit written consent** (at <icomosciav.sg@gmail.com>) **by the individuals in question** (for the up-to-date list of members' consents, please refer to column 'web consent' in Appendix 1). The individual decision on whether to appear on the CIAV online list of members or not shall not affected the CIAV membership rights and/or status in any way. If we have omitted to enlist you due to a technical mistake, please do let us know.

5. Budget and financial plan.

To this end, ICOMOS CIAV has no established budget and/or financial plan. Membership and work at/with the Committee have an exclusively voluntary character, are not subject to remuneration. No additional fees are collected for membership at the Committee.

The CIAV Bureau remains open for suggestions about financial plans, aimed at furthering the work of the Committee and supporting EPs in building their expertise in the field of work of CIAV.

On behalf of the current CIAV Bureau, I wish to take the opportunity to once again express our sincere gratitude to all CIAV members, who have remained actively engaged with the work of the committee and the built vernacular heritage over the past year. We hope that 2026 will be a year of peace and kindness, healthy, joyful and rewarding to all of us!

We look forward to seeing you in person again soon.

Sincerely,



Ivan Enev,

ICOMOS CIAV Secretary-General 2018/2026

icomosciav.sg@gmail.com



Review of Yunlong International Workshop on Vernacular Heritage

From 11 to 22, October 2025 | Yunnan, China

From October 11 to 22, 2025, the Yunlong International Workshop on Tangible and Intangible Culture of Vernacular Heritage 2025 was successfully held in Yunlong County, Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. The workshop was hosted by Tongji University, World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region under the Auspices of UNESCO (WHITR-AP), International Committee for Vernacular Architecture, ICOMOS (ICOMOS-CIAV), International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage, ICOMOS (ICOMOS-ICICH), and organized by World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region under the Auspices of UNESCO, Shanghai Centre (WHITR-AP Shanghai), College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University, Tongji-Dali Heritage Conservation and Cultural Innovation Institute, Yunlong County, Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, with support provided by Shanghai Tongji Urban Planning and Design Institute Co., Ltd., the

National Foreign Expert Program(Category H), Tongji University Key Foreign Expert Recruitment Program, 2025 Tongji University Europe-America International Student Summer School Program.

The workshop aimed to explore innovative approaches to conserving cultural ecosystems by integrating the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Taking Yunlong and its rich salt heritage, this workshop tried to explore the integration of UNESCO's Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), and also marked an important step toward strengthening international cooperation in the conservation of vernacular heritage and contributed to improving the international academic community's understanding of the value of China's vernacular heritage.



Mariana Correia
Expert member of ICOMOS-CIAV,
Former president of ICOMOS-ISCEAH,
Professor of Universidade Portucalense
Infante D. Henrique



Eivind Falk
Voting member of ICOMOS-ICICH,
Director of Norwegian Crafts
Institute



Gisle Jakhelln
Former President of ICOMOS-CIAV



Hossam Mahdy
President of ICOMOS-CIAV



Jelena Pejkoic
Expert Member of ICOMOS-CIAV,
Qualified Conservation Architect
in Serbia



Gamini Wijesuriya
Deputy Coordinator for World Heritage
at ICCROM, Special Advisor of WHITR-AP
Shanghai



Liu Yan
Associate Professor, Faculty of
Architecture, Kunming University
of Science and Technology



Shao Yong
Director of WHITR-AP Shanghai, Vice
President of ICOMOS-CIAV,
Professor of CAUP, Tongji University



Sun Hua
Former Vice Dean of the School of
Archaeology and Museology at Peking
University; Director of the Cultural
Heritage Protection Research Center



Su Junjie
Expert member of ICOMOS-ICICH,
Associate Professor at the School of
Ethnology and Sociology,
Yunnan University



Zhao Kui
Professor at the School of Architecture
and Urban Planning, Huazhong
University of Science and Technology



Zhang Tian
Postdoc researcher of Tongji University,
Coordinator of Workshop

Workshop Preparation and Opening

The preparation for the workshop began in July 2024, included preliminary research and a series of consultations with international experts and specialists from ICOMOS-CIAV and ICOMOS-ICICH. Participant recruitment commenced on May 8, 2025, and attracted 88 applications from four continents. 17 students from six countries were selected, including master's and doctoral students in architecture, urban and rural planning, and cultural heritage conservation from China, Indonesia, France, Portugal, Finland, and Spain.

The expert team consisted of 12 experts and scholars representing nine national and international heritage conservation organizations, academic institutions, and universities. These included ICOMOS-CIAV, ICOMOS-ICICH, ICOMOS-ISCEAH, ICCROM, Peking University, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Kunming University of Science and Technology, Yunnan University, and Tongji University, collectively covering expertise in both tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation.

On October 11, 2025, workshop participants arrived in Yunlong. On the morning of October 13, the opening ceremony was held at Yong'an School in Yong'an Village, Yunlong County. The



Opening Ceremony
© WHITR-AP Shanghai



Academic Lectures © WHITR-AP Shanghai

ceremony was attended by Professor Zheng Qinghua, Secretary of the Party Committee of Tongji University and Academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering; Mr. Gisle Jakhelln, former President of ICOMOS-CIAV; Professor Li Xiangning, Vice President of Tongji University; Mr. Wang Wu, Member of the Standing Committee of the Dali Prefecture Party Committee and Head of the Organization Department; Mr. Yang Guojun, Deputy Secretary of the Yunlong County Party Committee.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Shao Yong, Professor at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning at Tongji University, Secretary-General of WHITR-AP. Opening remarks were delivered by Deputy Secretary Yang Guojun, Mr. Gisle Jakhelln, and Vice President Li Xiangning. Prof. Li Xiangning reviewed the long-standing and in-depth cooperation between Yunlong County and Tongji University under the "pairing assistance" initiative. He expressed the hope that this workshop would foster cross-regional and cross-cultural exchange of ideas, encourage mutual learning, and introduce innovative perspectives to cultural heritage conservation in Yunlong, Dali, and beyond. Thereby contributing to the advancement of heritage conservation and sustainable development. At the end of the ceremony, Professor Shao Yong invited Prof. Zheng Qinghua, Mr. Gisle Jakhelln, Mr. Wang Wu, and Mr. Yang Guojun to jointly unveil the workshop board, formally marking its commencement.

Between October 11 and 14, the workshop conducted field research on Yunlong's salt culture system. Under the guidance of local guide, experts and students visited historic salt villages, including Nuodeng and Baofeng,



Experts and students conducting field research
© WHITR-AP Shanghai

Domestic and international experts participating in the workshop © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Experts and students conducting field research
© WHITR-AP Shanghai

investigated ancient salt wells such as Luoma Well and Nuodeng Well, dispersed salt stoves within ancient villages, as well as historic bridges and pathways, including Tongjing Bridge. Through observations of salt valleys, rivers, wells, stoves, villages, and transportation routes, participants developed an initial, integrated the basic understanding of Yunlong's salt culture system.

Building on daily field research, the workshop arranged corresponding lectures to support systematic reflection on participants' observations and analytical insight within a cultural heritage framework. Professor Sun Hua from Peking University presented a lecture on salt culture from an archaeological perspective, Professor Zhao Kui from Huazhong University of Science and Technology discussed salt culture and salt heritage in a global context, and Associate Professor Liu Yan from Kunming University of Science and Technology explained the construction techniques of wooden arch bridges in Yunlong.

Group Research and Output Development

After the preliminary research, student participants and experts were organized into

four thematic groups, each focusing on a key component of the salt culture ecosystem structured around salt production: Salt wells, Salt stoves, Salt villages, and Salt trails. The salt well group, led by Mr. Gisle Jakhelln examined the production process and physical features of Luoma Well in Baofeng and other historic salt wells. The salt stove group, led by Mr. Eivind Falk, and the salt village group, led by Prof. Shao Yong and Prof. Mariana Correia, studied the tangible and intangible heritage associated with salt production in Nuodeng Village. The salt path group, led by Ms. Jelena Pejkoic, expert member of ICOMOS-CIAV, focused on the ancient Jiancao Bridge, with particular attention to its construction techniques and conservation needs.

Each group followed a four-stage working framework of "Investigation-Understanding-Documentation-Conservation." First, participants carried out on-site investigation under the guidance of mentors and local experts. During this process, the participants were closely engaged with local communities living and working within these living heritage sites. Through semi-structured interviews, participants gathered information on the condition, historical development, and future aspirations of the heritage. Central to this process was an effort to understand the intangible cultural heritage



Group Research © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Closing Ceremony © WHITR-AP Shanghai

behind the tangible remains, including collective memory, social organization, and traditional craftsmanship. This holistic approach emphasized the interdependence of tangible and intangible heritage in the dynamic conservation and transmission of vernacular heritage.

Following this phase, participants proceeded to the documentation phase, which included mapping key tangible heritage components and recording associated intangible elements, such as functions, meanings, tools, materials, and techniques, supported by audiovisual documentation of the key processes. On October 19–20, the groups developed conservation frameworks and finalized their outputs. Collectively, the workshop produced 18 exhibition panels, 4 research reports, and 1 electronic database documenting Yunlong's salt culture ecosystem.

Closing Presentations and Ceremony

On October 21, the workshop concluded with closing presentations and a formal ceremony held at Tongji Garden in Yunlong. Local leaders, including Ren Min, Secretary of the Yunlong County Party Committee, and Yan Changzheng, Deputy County Mayor of Yunlong (seconded from Tongji University), attended the event, along with local experts, craftspeople, and villagers who had developed close bonds with participants during the workshop. Each group summarized their two-week research findings, outlining the historical development of the heritage elements, assessing the current state of

tangible and intangible heritage, and proposing targeted conservation strategies.

At the closing ceremony, Secretary Ren Min, representing Yunlong County, highly praised the workshop outcomes. He noted that during the 12-day workshop, experts and students engaged deeply with the local vernacular landscape and contributed professional expertise to revitalizing Yunlong's cultural heritage. His remarks highlighted the workshop's role in activating heritage resources and strengthening local conservation efforts. The workshop closed with a bonfire gathering, where participants experienced Yunlong's traditional Ligegao dance alongside local villagers under Yunlong's beautiful starry sky and the warmth of togetherness.

While the field programme formally ended in Yunlong, the workshop activities continued in Shanghai. On 22 October, experts, scholars, and international student participants returned to prepare for an exhibition and a roundtable



Closing Presentation © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Heritage After Hours : The Tangible/Intangible Debate
© WHITR-AP Shanghai



Experts and students at the exhibition
© WHITR-AP Shanghai

discussion. From 25 to 27 October, the UHC-HEI International Conference “Reshaping Heritage Conservation Education: Why? How? For Whom?” was organized by Tongji University and hosted by the College of Architecture and Urban Planning, the WHITR-AP Shanghai Office, and the academic journals Architectural Heritage and Built Heritage. The conference provided a platform for international dialogue on emerging approaches and trends in heritage conservation education. On the evening of 26 October, as a key component of the conference, the Yunlong workshop organized a roundtable discussion titled “Heritage After Hours: The Tangible/Intangible Debate,” which brought together participants, experts, scholars, and young heritage professionals to participate.

Simultaneously, an exhibition titled “International Workshop on the Conservation of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Yunlong, Dali, China 2025” was presented in the Bell Court of Building B at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University.

To conclude, the workshop successfully achieved its objective of engaging young heritage professionals and raising their voices, showcasing Yunlong’s rich tangible and intangible

cultural heritage, as well as Tongji University’s contributions to rural revitalization. International experts highly praised Yunlong’s tangible and intangible cultural heritage, acknowledging that traditional vernacular wisdom of harmonious human-nature coexistence holds positive significance for advancing global cultural heritage conservation. Building on this shared understanding, the workshop produced research reports, a heritage database, and conservation strategies for Yunlong, which will inform future heritage conservation and rural revitalization initiatives. Furthermore, the “cultural ecosystem” research perspective and associated conservation toolkit developed through the Yunlong case are expected to be formalized into an ICOMOS document, contributing to continued international exchange and cooperation in heritage conservation.

(News from SHAO Yong, Zhang Tian)

For more information: <https://www.whitr-ap.org/index.php?classid=1461&newsid=3940&t=show>



1st UHC-HEI General Assembly Successfully Held

24th October 2025 | WHITR-AP Shanghai, Shanghai, China

The 1st General Assembly of the Urban-rural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions (UHC-HEI) International Network was held on Friday, 24th October 2025 at the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO, Shanghai Center (WHITR-AP Shanghai), Shanghai, China. It convened in all 53 UHC-HEI Network full members and partners, 41 in person and 12 online, from 46 institutions and 21 countries.

Introduction and Opening

Professor Shao Yong, Secretary General of WHITR-AP and Director of WHITR-AP Shanghai, Professor at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning (CAUP), Tongji University, Head of the UHC-HEI executive Secretariat, chaired and introduced the General Assembly, thanked the participants and then invited Professor Chang

Qing, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Professor at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning (CAUP), Tongji University, former Head of the Architecture Department and Editor in Chief of Built Heritage to open the General Assembly.



Professor Shao Yong giving her opening speech
© WHITR-AP Shanghai



Professor Chang Qing giving his remarks © WHITR-AP Shanghai

Professor Chang Qing, in his opening remarks, on behalf of the Organizing Committee, the Academic Committee of the CAUP, Tongji University, and the Architectural Society of Shanghai, extended a warm welcome and congratulations on the opening of the 1st UHC-HEI General Assembly and the international conference on "Reshaping Heritage Conservation in Higher Education: Why? How? For Whom?" scheduled the following two days.

He recalled the inception of the International Network for Urban-rural Heritage Conservation in Higher Education Institutions (UHC-HEI) in September 2023 at the International Conference on Urban Heritage Conservation and Design for Sustainable Development organized by CAUP and WHITR-AP Shanghai, following a foundational workshop which explored the relevance of an international Network, gaps in teaching and research as well as thoughts on the importance of promoting traditional knowledge systems. He highlighted the pressing need to rethink heritage conservation education in the face of global challenges like urbanization, climate change, and digital transformation, rethinking careers paths and new professional competencies as outlined in "Shanghai Initiative" and "Roadmap" adopted at the end of the September 2023 conference.

Professor Chang Qing noted the Network's rapid growth to more than 40 member institutions worldwide and emphasized the significance of this first General Assembly for reviewing the draft Charter and leveraging member expertise.

He expressed his hopes for the Network to become a dynamic platform for innovation in heritage education and to contribute to reshaping global systems through international collaboration. He stressed the importance of the Network's focus for CAUP. The address ended with wishes for a successful and fruitful meeting.



UHC-HEI Coordinator Marie-Noël Tournoux presenting the work report © WHITR-AP Shanghai



On site and some of the online participants, Professor Michael Kloos © WHITR-AP Shanghai

Network Institutional Development

Professor Plácido González Martínez chaired the next session on the institutional framework. This session examined, discussed and voted on the adoption of the draft charter, and held the first election for the steering committee.

Professor Plácido González Martínez introduced the establishment of the Steering Committee, its role and the presentation of candidates. The candidate and elected institutions and their representatives are the following, listed by region and country by alphabetical order and following the World Heritage Center's geographic distribution.

Arab States

1) International University of Rabat, UNESCO Chair Historic Urban Landscape, Morocco, Professor Imane Bennani represented by Professor Sharif Anouar;

Asia Pacific

2) The University of Melbourne, Australian Centre of Architectural History and Urban and Cultural Heritage, Australia, Hanna Lewi represented by Professor Stuart King;



The Charter was discussed by all of the Assembly © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Steering Committee (from left to right) UHC-HEI Coordinator Marie-Noël Tournoux, Professor Stuart King, Professor. Angelo Paulo Mogul, Professor. Burak Asiliskender, Professor Mariana Correia, Professor Ramón Pico Valimaña, Professor Z hang Peng, Xavier Clarke, Françoise Ged, Professor Johannes Widodo, Professor Shao Yong, Professor Plácido González Martínez © WHITR-AP Shanghai

3) Tongji University, CAUP, China, Professor Zhang Peng;

4) Woxsen University, School of Architecture and Planning, India, represented by Professor Rajdeep Routh;

5) National University of Singapore, Singapore, represented by Professor Johannes Widodo;

Europe

6) École de Chaillot, France, represented by Françoise Ged and Xavier Clarke;

7) Portucalense University, Department of architecture and Multimedia Gallaecia Portugal, represented by Professor Mariana Correia;

8) University of Seville, School of Architecture, Spain, represented by Professor Ramón Pico Valimaña;

9) Abdullah Gül University, Faculty of Architecture, Turkey, represented by Professor Burak Asiliskender;

Latin America

10) University of Cuenca, Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Cuenca, represented by Professor Sebastián Astudillo Cordero;

International Organization

11) Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA), Alessandro Martinelli represented by Angelo Paulo Mogul.

Future Plans

Professor Zhang Peng chaired the last session of the Agenda which focused on future plans. Professor Zhang Peng further insisted on the importance of experimenting pedagogies as well as advancing research and promoting it through publications.



Professor Zhang Peng speaking © WHITR-AP Shanghai

A key moment of this session was the discussion on the organization of the 2nd UHC-HEI International Conference. The Assembly agreed the Academic conferences would be every 2 years and the General Assembly, as determined in the Charter, would be held every year.

Professor Ramón Pico Valimaña, Dean of the School of Architecture, University of Seville, announced, Seville would be happy to host the 2nd Academic conference in 2027.

The session allowed for lively exchanges and an invitation to Network members by Professor Carola Hein, Delft University of Technology to contribute to the Blue Papers journal [1], of which she is Editor in Chief, which is a biannual peer-reviewed journal which explores the complex relationship between water, culture and heritage. A proposal to develop a Network special issue for the next conference was proposed and welcomed by the General Assembly.

Notes: [1] <https://bluepapers.nl/index.php/bp/article/view/178>

Closing Session

Professor Shao Yong gave closing remarks, expressing gratitude to all members and the WHITR-AP Shanghai support team. She emphasized the platform's importance, drawing on her personal educational experiences to highlight the mutual benefits of international cooperation in enriching heritage knowledge and educational methodologies.

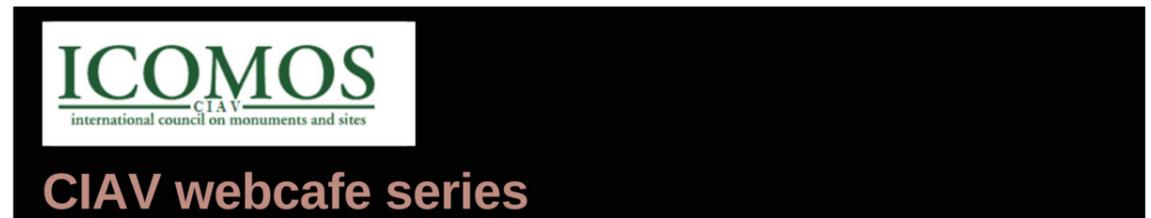
For more information: <https://www.whitr-ap.org/index.php?classid=1461&newsid=3936&t=show>



Professor Ramón Pico Valimaña speaking © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Some of the participants of GA © WHITR-AP Shanghai



Event: Web Café session – Presentation by the Global South Exchange Network

Organisers: ICOMOS-CIAV

Date and Time: 6th December, 13.00 – 14.00 CET

Presenters:

1. Clara Arokiasamy, OBE Founder and Coordinator of GSEN
2. Dr. Ishanlosen Odiaua, immediate past President of ADCOM, founding member of GSEN
3. Dr. Zahida Quadri, Vice President of ICOMOS Pakistan, support member of GSEN's Leadership Group

Chair of the Web Café Session:

Professor Marwa Dabaieh, CIAV



Clara Arokiasamy

Title for the session

The Benefits of South-South Cooperation in Heritage Protection in the Global South

Abstract

Global South and South-South Cooperation (S-SC) are not new terms or concepts. They have existed for many decades and have facilitated exchanges of knowledge, resources, technology and expertise among nations in the Global South since the late 60s. S-SC is supported by key international organisations like the UN and the World Bank. Other longstanding international structures within the Global South – including the African Union, ASEAN

and Caricom - are also committed to S-SC. These organisations' aims promote the need for regional and territorial peace, as well as political and economic and social development cooperation based on equality, mutual benefit and respect for sovereignty. The Global South Exchange Network (GSEN)- a collective comprising ICOMOS and non ICOMOS members from the five regions of the Global South - was launched in February 2023 as a continuation of this global trend, specifically within in the cultural heritage sphere. GSEN seeks to expand the scope of S-SC to include transversal mutual support and exchanges in the management of cultural heritage between regions. Its core aim is to establish an international network of individuals from the GS committed to creating culturally sensitive models of cultural heritage management. This includes the establishment of new models of conservation responsive to diverse regional needs and/or the advancement of locally developed education, skills, knowledge, research, practice, technology and repositories in the management of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Conservation and restoration of cultural heritage in the recovery from conflicts and the adverse impacts of climate change form key themes in ICOMOS' Triennial Scientific Plan 2024-2027.

Clara Arokiasamy OBE, founder and Coordinator of Global South Exchange Network (GSEN) will outline the purpose of GSEN and explain the benefits that cultural agencies like ICOMOS would derive from such a network and in the process dispel myths, misinformation and concerns about S-SC. Dr. Ishanlosen Odiaua, the immediate past President of ADCOM and a founding member of GSEN, will present examples of S-SC in the conservation and restoration of vernacular architecture in Africa and lessons for the future. Using the recent floods in Pakistan as an example, Dr. Zahida Quadri, Vice President of ICOMOS Pakistan and support member of GSEN's leadership group, will outline why S-SC is critical for countries in South Asia and South East Asia, where the impact of climate crisis on tangible and intangible heritage is frequent and acutely felt.



CIAV WEBCAFE SERIES

A BROADER VIEW ON CULTURAL HERITAGE

HOW TO INCLUDE BOTH INTANGIBLE AND TANGIBLE HERITAGE WHEN DOCUMENTING A SITE

 **START AT**
2 PM - 3 PM

 **ON SUNDAY,**
15TH MARCH
2026



FREE WEBINAR



Gisle Jakhelln

Speaker



Preview of CIAV Webcafe:

A Broader View on Cultural Heritage – How to Include Both Intangible and Tangible Heritage When Documenting a Site

Gisle Jakhelln has had a distinguished career in architectural practice, ranging from housing and hospitals to town planning, rehabilitation, and the reconstruction of historic buildings, with particular expertise in early timber structures. He has served in leading roles within ICOMOS Norway and ICOMOS International, including President of ICOMOS Norway and President of CIAV International. He currently serves as focal point of the CIAV-ICICH Working Group / VIDA (Vernacular Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage Group).

In this Web Café, Gisle will present the work undertaken since the establishment of the CIAV-ICICH Working Group in 2022, which aims to advance a holistic and balanced approach to cultural heritage by integrating both tangible

and intangible dimensions in the documentation of vernacular built heritage.

He will share reflections from the first documentation camp held in October in Yunlong County, Yunnan Province, South West China. Drawing on the region's thousand-year history of salt production, the case reveals a remarkable salt cultural ecosystem rich in both material and living heritage. The presentation will offer insights into methodology, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the broader implications for CIAV's future work.

Date: Sunday, 15 March 2026

Time: 2:00 PM

Link:

<https://mau-se.zoom.us/j/65568407874?from=addon>



Yunlong International Workshop
© WHITR-AP Shanghai



22nd ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium 2026
(ICOMOS GA 2026)

LIVING HERITAGE: RESPECT - ENHANCE - ACCEPT - PARTNERSHIP

17-24 October 2026
Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching

Know more

Call for Abstract:

22nd ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium 2026

LIVING HERITAGE: RESPECT - ENHANCE - ACCEPT - PARTNERSHIP

17-24 October 2026

Borneo Convention Centre, Kuching

About ICOMOS GA2026

Join 2,000 cultural heritage experts from 130 countries to discuss development and conservation at the prestigious ICOMOS GA2026, being held for the first time in Malaysia. The event is expected to bring social, cultural and economic benefits to Sarawak and Malaysia in line with the commitment to protect and manage cultural heritage. The aim is to learn from ICOMOS GA2026 how to modernise while safeguarding our cultural and heritage assets and how to foster peace and respect in a complex world by celebrating and preserving our culture and heritage.

The Scientific Symposium Committee welcomes the submission of abstracts for the ICOMOS General Assembly and Scientific Symposium (ICOMOS GA2026).

Theme and Abstract Categories

Abstracts can be submitted for a paper (oral) or poster presentation.

The ICOMOS GA2026 Scientific Symposium is held under the main theme: **LIVING HERITAGE: RESPECT, ACCEPT, ENHANCE, PARTNERSHIP.**

The symposium aims to respond to the Triennial Scientific Plan (TSP) 2024–2027 theme, “DISASTER AND CONFLICT RESILIENT HERITAGE,” by focusing on how we can RESPOND to both disasters and conflicts in Cultural Heritage Sites. Submissions should align with the overall GA2026 theme and one of the following four sub-themes.

Sub-theme 1: RESPECT

This sub-theme focuses on ethical principles, cultural inclusiveness, and safeguarding diverse heritage values, recognizing heritage as a dynamic narrative interwoven with community identities and traditions. Submissions should explore how respect can be integrated into policy development, leveraging traditional knowledge for sustainable conservation, facilitating collaboration between stakeholders, developing communication strategies to amplify marginalized voices, and building capacities that empower communities.

Sub-theme 2: ENHANCE

This sub-theme encourages sharing research and experiences that fortify ways of safeguarding tangible and intangible heritage through innovation, technology, and various interactive means. Key areas of inquiry include enhancing cultural heritage practices for inclusivity, using new approaches and technologies for effective conservation (especially concerning disaster risk management and conflict response), building capacity and improving communication, and safeguarding intangible cultural practices.

Sub-theme 3: ACCEPT

This sub-theme recognizes that cultural heritage evolves through time, including during times of crisis such as conflict, natural disasters, and climate change. The focus is on how acceptance supports dignity, recovery, reconciliation, and resilience by listening to diverse voices. Submissions are invited on plural narratives and cultural diversity, technology and modern interventions (including AI and virtual reconstruction), disaster/conflict/post-crisis recovery, intangible heritage and continuity, and ethics, policy, and governance frameworks.

Sub-theme 4: PARTNERSHIP

This sub-theme highlights how communities, governments, and organizations work together through shared responsibility, knowledge exchange, and effective communication to safeguard cultural traditions. Key areas include effective policies that foster sustainable partnerships, learning from traditional knowledge systems (especially regarding disaster management and indigenous knowledge), facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration, improving communication (e.g., via digital technologies and storytelling), and capacity building.

Additional Sessions

Abstracts may also be submitted for specific Call for Papers sessions organized by various ICOMOS International Scientific Committees (ISCs) or Working Groups (WGs). Examples of announced session themes include:

- Heritage Management Planning Systems
- Living Historical Cities: New Paradigms and Call to Action
- Does ICOMOS still need Doctrinal Documents?
- Knowledge, Standards, Guidelines and Resources for Education and Training in Architectural Conservation
- Expansion of “ICOMOS Heritage and the Sustainable Development Goals: Policy Guidance for Heritage and Development Actors”.

Abstract Format and Content Guidelines

- Language: Abstracts must be submitted in English or French.
- Template: Authors must use the designated abstract template (which will be made available for download).
- Content: The abstract should clearly relate to the main theme and the selected sub-theme or specific session.
- Submission Limit: Participants may submit more than one co-authored paper and/or poster abstract. However, only one individual paper abstract and/or one individual poster abstract is permitted.
- Reclassification: The Scientific Committee Co-chairs reserve the right to reclassify submitted abstracts into the most appropriate theme or program.

Timeline

Abstract Submission Open : 20 January 2026

Abstract Submission Deadline : 30 April 2026

Abstract Review Period : until 30 May 2026

Notification of Abstract Submission Outcome: 15 June 2026

Full Abstract Resubmission Period : 30 July 2026

Author Registration Deadline : 14 August 2026

For more information:

<https://www.icomosga2026.org.my/abstract>



WHITR-AP Call For Good Practices : World Heritage Contribution to SDGs

Introduction

DEADLINE of application: 31 March 2026

In 2023, the World Heritage Institute of Training and Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (WHITR-AP, Shanghai) launched the "World Heritage Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals" project (2023-2028). The overall goal of the project is to facilitate the understanding of the 2015 UNESCO Policy document for the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Process of the World Heritage Convention and to create appropriate tools for heritage practitioners to streamline recommendations for the effective use of heritage as a driver for sustainable development,

in line with the Regional Framework Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific developed based on the 3rd Periodic Reporting cycle. The project includes multiple activities, including the recognition of Good Practices from heritage practitioners on how heritage conservation and management contribute to sustainable development.

The Heritage Asia-Pacific (HeritAP) is a network of heritage practitioners supported by WHITR-AP Shanghai. It aims to foster the sharing of knowledge and experiences among individuals and institutions in the Asia-Pacific Region by establishing diverse links between individuals, groups and institutions, adhering to the philosophy that true knowledge springs from practice.

Background

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the core guidelines for global development efforts from 2015 to 2030. In 2015, UNESCO adopted the "Policy on the Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Process of the World Heritage Convention" to guide the conservation and management of World Heritage. The "Regional Framework Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2023 - 2030)" adopted by the World Heritage Committee, considers good sustainable development cases as one of the performance indicators.

In addition, the UNESCO Thematic Indicators for Culture (Culture| 2030 Indicators) proposed a conceptual framework to measure and monitor the progress of culture's enabling contribution to the SDGs with four transversal thematic dimensions 1. Environment & Resilience; 2. Prosperity & Livelihoods; 3. Knowledge & Skills; 4. Inclusion & Participation.

As aforementioned, **in 2023, encouraged by UNESCO, WHITR-AP Shanghai launched the "World Heritage Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals" project (2023 - 2028) in the Asia - Pacific region. A steering group was established with representatives from UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the World Heritage Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS, ICCROM and IUCN), the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SEAMEO SPAFA), and the International Centre on Space Technologies for Natural and Cultural Heritage (HIST). The overarching aim of the project is to facilitate the dialogue between a range of viewpoints, identify Good Practices based on the four transversal thematic dimensions established by the 2030 Culture Indicators, and provide guidance to heritage practitioners to effectively contribute to sustainable development.**

The overall goals of the project are as follows:

- Facilitate the understanding of the 2015 Policy on Integration of a Sustainable Development Perspective into the Processes of the World Heritage Convention and contribute to the implementation of the Regional Framework Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2023-2030).
- Create appropriate tools for heritage practitioners to streamline sustainability and

effectively harness the potential of heritage as a driver for sustainable development;

- Promote capacity development and information exchange between heritage practitioners on good practices to streamline sustainable development in heritage conservation and management.
- Disseminate experiences and lessons learned from good practices in World Heritage contribution to SDGs, recognize and reward the contributions made by heritage practitioners.

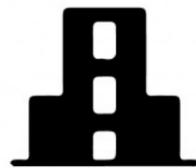
Knowledge & Skills (2026)

The theme for the 2026 call for practices are "Knowledge & Skills". This thematic dimension provides a framework for evaluating the role of heritage in developing knowledge and skills, including traditional knowledge and cultural diversity. It emphasizes the contribution of heritage in transmitting local values, knowledge, and skills, and fostering empowerment through education, training, processes, policies, and materials. The focus is on integrating heritage knowledge into primary, secondary, and tertiary education, as well as vocational training and to assess the commitment of public authorities and institutions in leveraging heritage knowledge to foster respect for cultural diversity, understanding of sustainable development, and transmission of values. Additionally, it prioritizes cultural and natural training, including advanced training in heritage conservation, and promotes skills and competence in creative fields.

This thematic dimension also directly supports UNESCO's Promoting Tangible – Intangible Synergies at UNESCO Designated Sites in Asia-Pacific by generating and sharing integrated knowledge systems that treat built fabric, landscapes, and living practices as mutually reinforcing resources. By embedding both tangible and intangible elements in education, training, and policy tools, it equips practitioners to document, interpret, and safeguard sites holistically; facilitates joint curricula that link craft techniques to conservation science; and strengthens local capacity to manage heritage places as dynamic cultural-ecological systems.



Local communities



Enterprises
NGOs



Authorities



Institutions

Categories of Heritage Practitioners Eligible to Apply © WHITR-AP

Target Audience

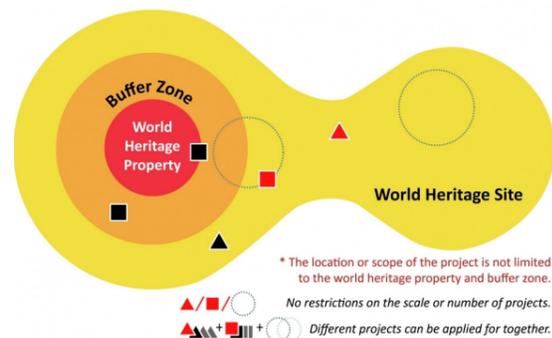
This call is open to all heritage practitioners directly involved in heritage conservation and management. The applicants can be individuals, organizations, or a combination of individuals and organizations.

Projects are located at heritage sites that have been inscribed on the World Heritage List or the Tentative List.

For World Heritage List, click here: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

For the Tentative List, click here: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/?action=listtentative&order=states>

The location or scope of the projects is not limited to the World Heritage property or buffer zone.



Location or Scope of the Projects © WHITR-AP

Benefits of Participation

By participating in this Call for Good Practices, applicants will reap the following benefits:

Authoritative Affirmation and Value Highlighting

The heritage conservation and management efforts will receive official recognition on an international scale. Certificates will be granted by WHITR-AP Shanghai, a UNESCO Category 2 Center. This serves as both an acknowledgment of past endeavors and a powerful impetus for future initiatives. Moreover, outstanding cases will be forwarded to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre. This will enable heritage sites to stand out in the international heritage conservation arena, draw widespread attention, and further underscore their intrinsic value.

Exchange and Mutual Learning to Optimize Development Paths

It offers a unique opportunity to engage in communication and exchange with UNESCO heritage conservation experts and other outstanding practitioners internationally. Participants can share the sustainable development approaches of their respective heritage sites and jointly explore optimization strategies. In the process of exchanging ideas, the local concepts of how World Heritage contributes to sustainable development can be further enriched. Particularly for the heritage site hosting the annual conference, it can directly obtain suggestions from domestic and international experts regarding its own sustainable development path. It can also collaborate with experts in planning the annual conference activities, thereby injecting new vitality into the development of the heritage site.

Amplifying Influence and Enhancing Recognition

By leveraging international professional platforms such as the World Heritage Convention (WHC), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), and the WHITR-



Timeline © WHITR-AP

AP, the heritage site will be actively promoted and publicized. Project leaders will also be invited to attend the HeritAP annual meeting. This provides an opportunity to showcase the achievements of the project, gradually expand its influence, and enable more heritage practitioners to understand the unique charm and effective protection of the heritage site.

Schedule of the year

March 31: Submission deadline;

April 30: Preliminary review;

May: Online presentation of preliminary selected cases at HeritAP Chat;

June - July: Enrichment of case information, field study to the annual meeting host;

August - September: Annual meeting preparation;

October - November: Annual meeting held, announcement of good practices;

November - March of the following year: Call for the next round of good practices.

How to Apply

Please complete the application form and send it heritap@whitr-ap.org.

The following are some notes to facilitate your application:

1. Each project should be submitted on a separate application form.
2. A heritage site may apply for one or multiple projects, and the intrinsic relationship of sustainable development among multiple projects should be stated in the application.

3. One or multiple projects can meet the requirements of one or more themes ("Environment and Resilience", "Prosperity and Livelihoods", "Knowledge and Skills", "Inclusion and Participation"). The 2026 call is for "Knowledge and Skills" cases.



Chinese Application Form



English Application Form

Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact:

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For more information:

heritap.whitr-ap.org



Recommended Conference The 14th Terra World Congress 2026

About The Congress

The Terra World Congress is a well-known worldwide meeting whose themes relate to the study and conservation of earthen architectural, archaeological and cultural landscape heritage, as well as contemporary earthen architecture. It is organised under the aegis of ICOMOS – ISCEAH, the International Scientific Committee on Earthen Architectural Heritage.

The Terra 2026 World Congress in Al Ain is the 14th edition which will be organised by Department of Culture and Tourism- Abu Dhabi with the main theme “Managing Change in Earthen Cultural Landscapes”. This is the first time it will be hosted in the Arab region and is expected to draw 700 – 1000 participants with an estimated 120 – 150 presentations.

The four-day program will feature talks, posters,

digital material, side-events and activities, that showcase the most recent findings and best practices in the study and conservation of earthen heritage. Sessions covering technical knowledge, management issues, methodology, research advancements, case studies, and best practice guidelines will be covered in the programme.

Story Behind the Logo

Inspired by the recovered collapsed earthen walls at the Iron Age site of Hili 2 in Al Ain, UAE which presented finger impressions from the masons over 3000 years ago. The logo aims to create a modern symbol that celebrates the timeless and enduring tradition of earthen architecture and highlights its tangible and intangible attributes. This aligns with the mission of the Terra World Congress to preserve, promote and celebrate earthen architecture and earthen architectural heritage.

Theme

Theme1

Transmitting Earthen Heritage and Architecture

Theme2 :

Safeguarding Earthen Cultural Landscapes

Theme3 :

Innovations in Earthen Architecture

Theme4 :

Resilience to Vulnerabilities of Earthen Cultural Landscapes

Please note we have adjusted the submission, review, and notification timeline to allow ample time for travel planning.

We look forward to reviewing your submissions.

Congress Venue - ADNEC Centre Al Ain

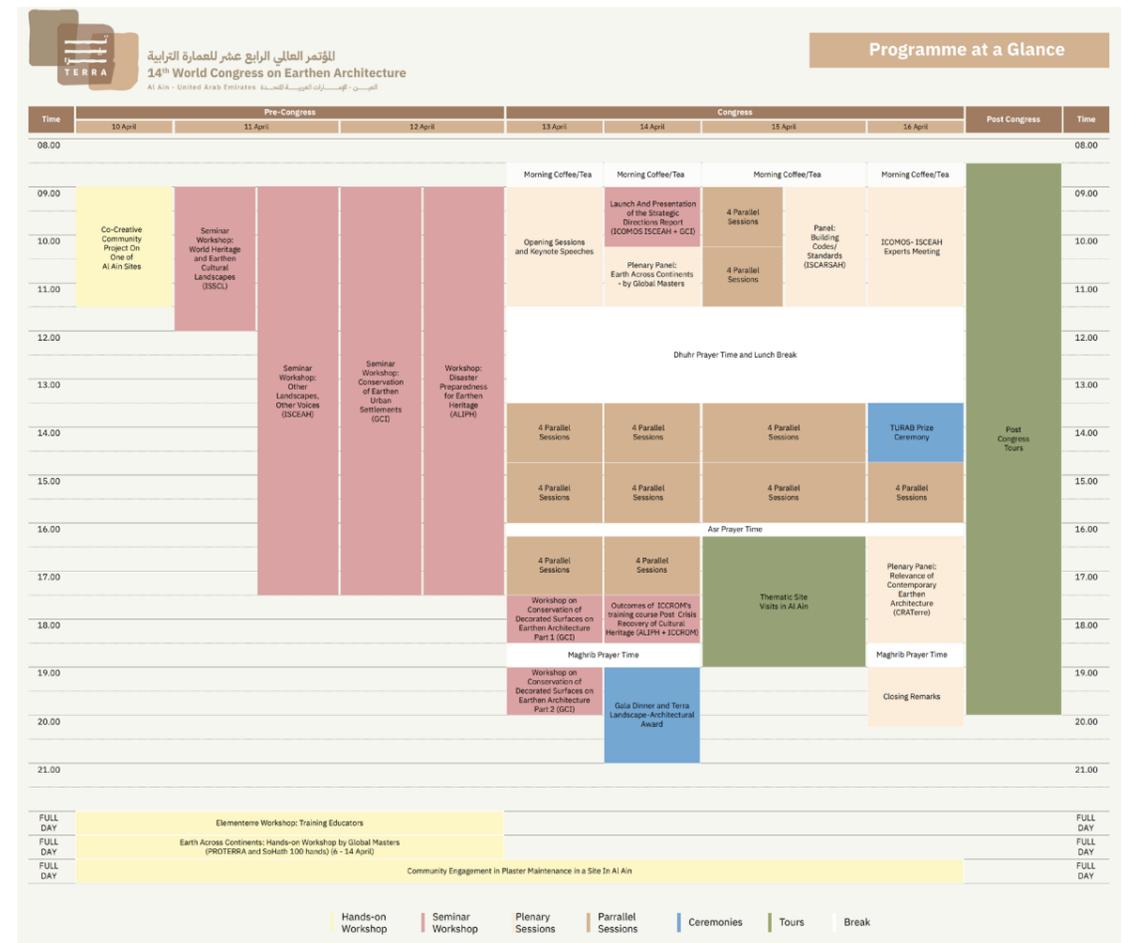
ADNEC Centre Al Ain features a unique architectural design that is in harmony with the emirate’s heritage. Part of the award-winning ADNEC Group, the centre provides exceptional venue facilities for exhibitions, conferences, weddings, gala dinners, graduation ceremonies, banquets and other special occasions.

For more information:

<https://terraalain2026.ae/>

Key Dates

- **14th December 2025:** Deadline for Full papers submission.
- 14th TERRA Congress from **13 to 16 April 2026.**



Reflections on Vernacular Architecture: Learning from Earthen Traditions and Environmental Practice

Marwa Dabaieh



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My engagement with vernacular architecture developed gradually, through fieldwork, observation, and a sustained curiosity about how buildings respond to their environments without reliance on industrial systems. This journey began in the Western Desert of Egypt, where earthen architecture remains an integral part of daily life and cultural continuity. What initially appeared as simple construction soon revealed itself as a complex architectural language shaped by climate, material availability, social structures, and accumulated local knowledge.

In the oases of the Western Desert, earthen buildings are not isolated objects but part of cohesive settlements. Their architectural significance lies not only in individual structures but in the collective logic of urban form. Compact layouts, narrow shaded streets, inward-oriented spaces, and thick mud brick walls work together to mitigate extreme heat, intense solar exposure, and diurnal temperature variation. These environments demonstrate how architecture can emerge as a passive environmental system, developed through generations of experimentation rather than formal design processes.



Fig. 1 - Narrow, shaded alleys in the desert vernacular town of Balat, demonstrating passive cooling and protection from the harsh sun. © Author



Fig. 2 - The harmony between a building's materials and the ground from which they originate reflects a circular approach in vernacular practice: from earth, back to earth. © Author

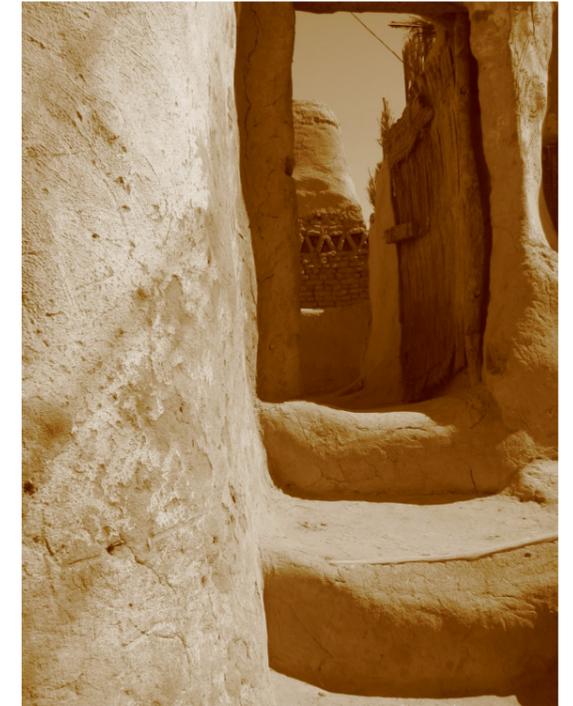


Fig. 3 - In vernacular architecture, function and aesthetics are always intertwined, each informing the other. © Author

Through documentation and analysis of several vernacular cases ranging from domestic houses to communal buildings and fortified settlements it became evident that earthen architecture in this context is highly adaptive. Construction techniques vary in response to available soil composition, local craftsmanship, and functional requirements. Wall thickness, opening size, and roof construction are adjusted to balance structural stability with thermal performance. Such variations highlight that vernacular architecture is not a fixed typology, but a flexible and evolving practice.

What is particularly notable in these earthen settlements is the seamless integration of environmental performance and social life. Architectural elements such as courtyards, transitional spaces, and roof terraces serve both climatic and social functions. Shaded outdoor spaces support daily activities while contributing to ventilation and thermal comfort. These spatial strategies illustrate how environmental responsiveness and human use are deeply intertwined in vernacular design.

As my research progressed, the focus on earthen architecture naturally expanded to include other vernacular traditions in different geographical contexts. While materials and construction

systems vary ranging from stone and timber to hybrid assemblies the underlying environmental principles often remain consistent. Passive cooling, shading, natural ventilation, and thermal mass appear repeatedly as central design strategies. This broader exposure reinforced the idea that vernacular architecture should be understood less through material categories and more through environmental logic and contextual adaptation.

Despite this broader perspective, earth as a building material has remained a central point of interest. Earthen construction offers clear environmental advantages: low embodied energy, local availability, recyclability, and strong thermal performance. At the same time, working with earth exposes challenges related to durability, maintenance, and contemporary regulatory frameworks. These challenges are not reasons to dismiss earthen architecture, but rather opportunities to explore how traditional knowledge can be combined with contemporary research and design tools.

An important aspect of my work has been attempting to relate lessons from vernacular architecture to present-day environmental practice. This does not involve direct replication of forms or romanticization of the past. Instead,

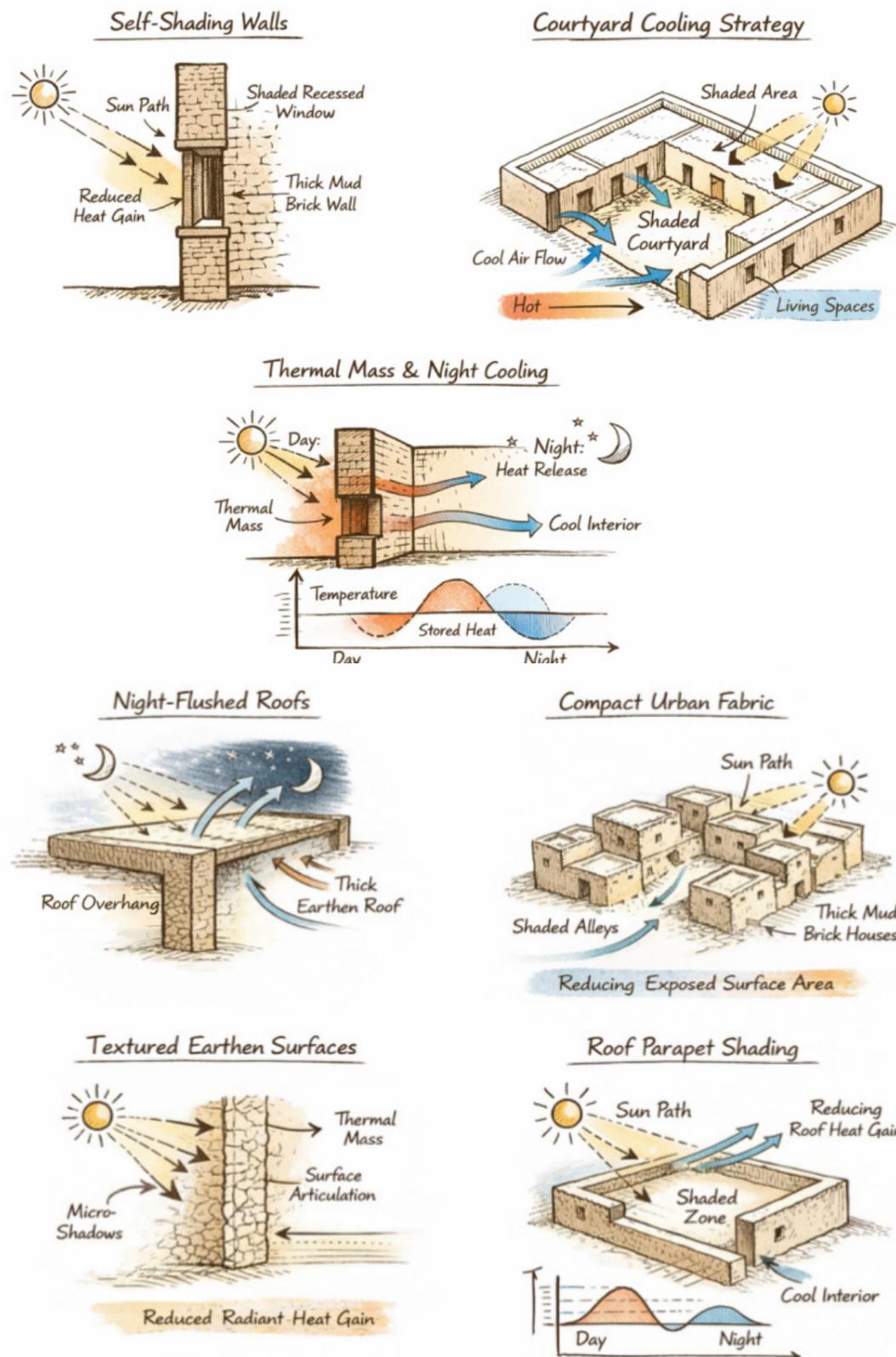


Fig. 4 -Sketches illustrating various vernacular passive cooling strategies. © Author

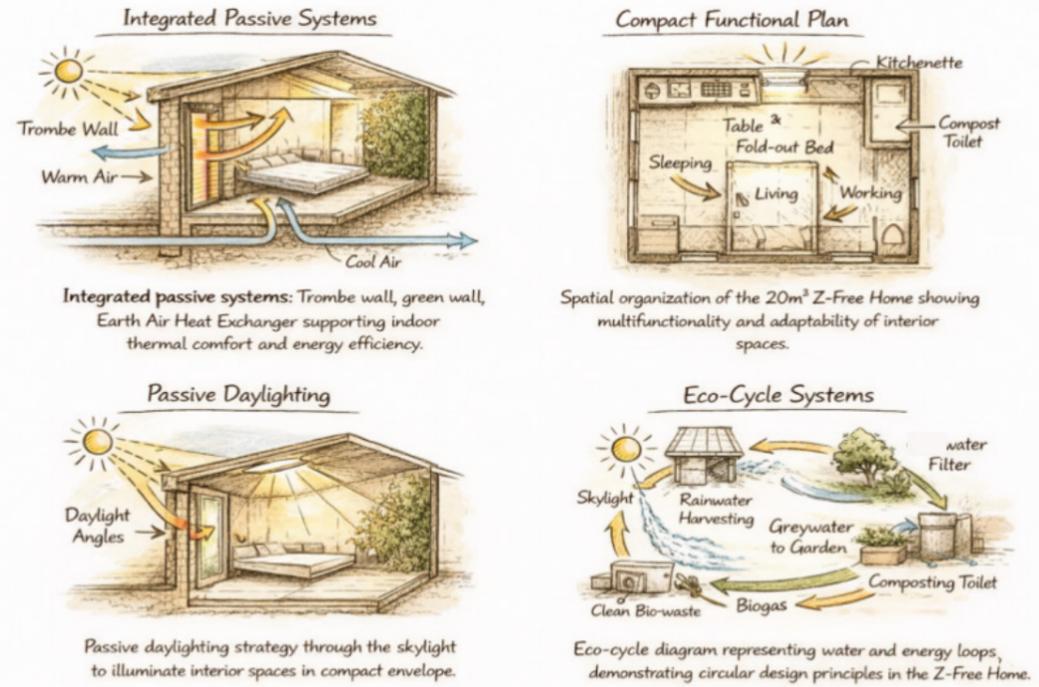


Fig. 5 -sketches from the Z-Free Home project, illustrating how vernacular passive techniques and eco-cycle solutions can inform sustainable contemporary design. © Author

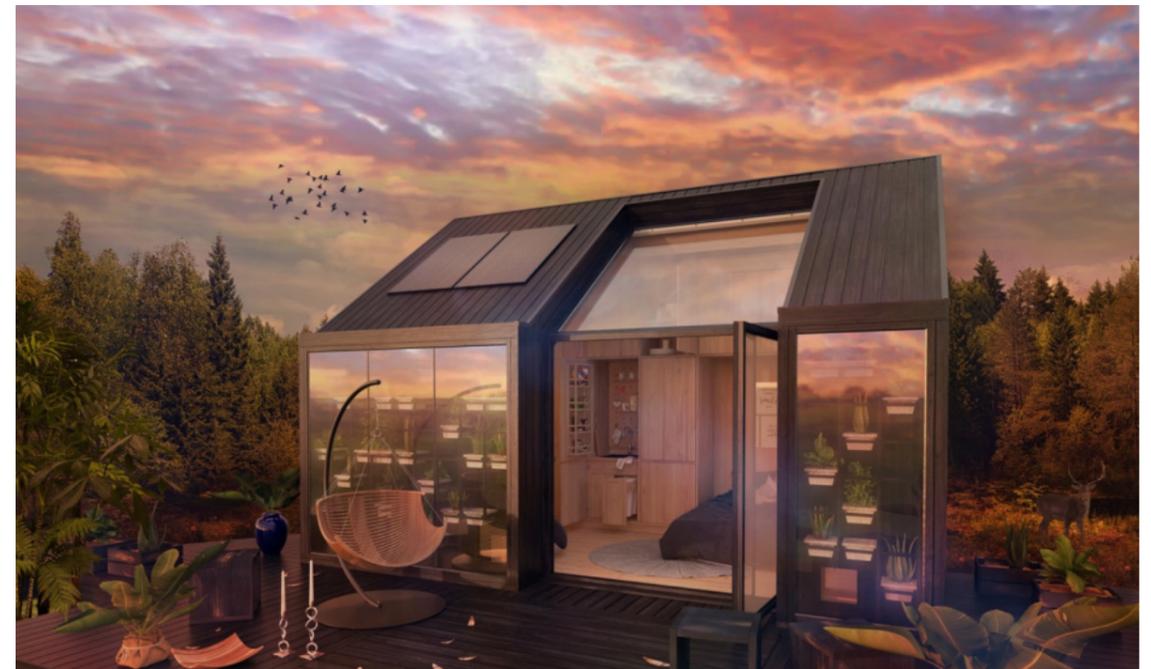


Fig. 6 -The Z-Free Home, highlighting the integration of passive Trombe walls and green walls within the façade to enhance thermal comfort and environmental performance. © Author



Fig. 7 - In vernacular architecture, attention to daily habits and household routines is central, shaping both the design and its interaction with users. © Author

it involves identifying transferable principles that can inform contemporary design processes. Strategies such as self-shading geometries, controlled daylight penetration, thick envelopes, and porous spatial arrangements offer valuable insights for designing climate-responsive buildings today.

Vernacular passive systems are particularly relevant in the current context of climate change and increasing energy demands. In many regions, modern construction has become heavily dependent on mechanical cooling systems, often at the expense of environmental performance and local identity. Vernacular architecture reminds us that alternative approaches exist grounded in climate awareness, material intelligence, and long-term sustainability.

Another lesson emerging from vernacular studies is the importance of construction as a collective and knowledge-based process. Earthen buildings are often constructed and maintained through shared expertise within communities. This

raises important questions about authorship, participation, and the role of architects today. Engaging with vernacular traditions encourages a shift from designing objects to facilitating processes that are responsive to local conditions and users.

Within the context of CIAV, the study of vernacular architecture holds particular significance. CIAV's emphasis on documentation, understanding, and safeguarding vernacular heritage aligns closely with the need to not only preserve these architectures, but also to learn from them. Vernacular environments should be seen as repositories of environmental knowledge that can inform contemporary architectural thinking, rather than as isolated historical artifacts.

Looking forward, I see vernacular architecture particularly earthen construction as a critical reference point for developing more environmentally responsible building practices. This reference does not imply a single solution, but rather a framework for thinking about architecture in relation to climate, resources, and cultural continuity. By continuing to document, analyze, and reinterpret vernacular systems, architects and researchers can contribute to more context-sensitive and resilient design approaches.

Ultimately, this journey through vernacular architecture has been less about defining answers and more about learning how to ask better questions: How can buildings work with climate rather than against it? How can local materials and knowledge be meaningfully integrated into contemporary practice? And how can architectural heritage inform future innovation? These questions remain open, and they continue to guide my engagement with vernacular architecture as both a field of study and a source of environmental insight.

The Rehabilitation of the Morisco-era House at *Calle San Buenaventura 7, Albaicín (Granada)*: An Over Fifty-Year-Long Project

Antonio ORIHUELA UZAL

1. Introduction

This is a presentation of the finished result of the restoration of a Morisco house, a process which has taken place over the course of 55 years. In 2019, the building was acquired by new owners, whose goal was to rehabilitate it and turn it into their primary residence without losing its historical and architectural values. To achieve this, they commissioned the project to the *Escuela de Estudios Árabes (CSIC)*, a task led by the architect A. Orihuela Uzal. These works have been carried out between 2021 and 2024.

The building occupies a 210 m² site located on the corner of *Calle San Buenaventura* and *Plaza de Aliatar*, in the Albaicín neighborhood, an urban setting that became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994. It revolves around a slightly skewed rectangular courtyard that covers an area of 40.8 m². It has a U-shaped layout with single-bay wings to the north, east and south, and porticos and galleries on all four sides of the courtyard. The entrance space



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An exceptional 16th c. house, abandoned and in ruins for over half a century, was acquired in 2019: its new owners tasked CSIC's School of Arab Studies with the project, to recover its architectural values and original single-family use. Built traditionally around a rectangular patio with porticos and wooden galleries, it was El Salvador parish's Rectory from the late 19th to mid-20th c. 1874–1887 documentation (Gómez-Moreno's drawings included) proved essential, as its south wing collapsed later. Acquired in 1969 (nearly ruined), it saw 1970–71 partial restorations; roofs and galleries were later repaired. Valued for carved wood and paneled ceilings, its restoration follows L. Torres Balbás' Casa del Chapiz criteria, preserving original spaces with traditional materials and modern amenities integrated.

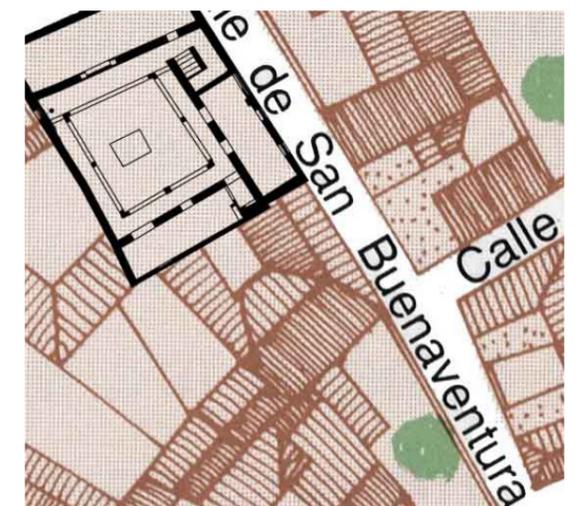


Fig. 1 - Site plan © A. Orihuela et al. 2015

and staircase are located in the eastern wing, along the façade facing *Calle San Buenaventura*. The main wings, to the north and south were two stories high, while the eastern section had three stories of lesser height resulting from a late 19th c. refurbishment. In the middle of the courtyard, there is a small, 3.5 m² pond. A tower exists in the corner where the two façades meet, which provided views through an *ajimez* (projecting wood structure forming an enclosed balcony) parts of which have been preserved (Fig. 1).

The building, which dates back to the 16th c., is of notable architectural interest. This can be appreciated in its regular layout, the full perimeter of the courtyard's galleries, its large proportions and rich decorative features. On the ground floor, corbels from the Renaissance period can be found, featuring anthropomorphic and zoomorphic engravings. There are also corbels with lobe motifs on this level, elements which can also be found in the galleries. The *alfarjes* (paneled ceilings) and *armaduras* (roof frames) in the halls have carved beams and are decorated with paintings. Those in the northern wing are the most outstanding. The building's ties with the Parish of El Salvador, from the end of the 19th c. up until 1969, can be documented thanks to paintings with religious inscriptions on the jambs of the opening that leads to the hall on the upper floor of the northern wing.

2. Historiographic references

The first known reference to the building is the visit that M. Gómez-Moreno González (1834-1918) made to it accompanied by the painter F. Muros Úbeda (1836-1917), before writing his article "Edificios mudéjares de Granada", published in *El Liceo de Granada* (1874). The

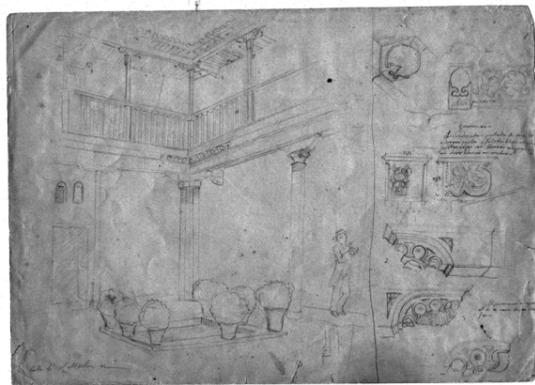


Fig. 2 - Sketch of the courtyard from de northeast. © M. Gómez-Moreno G., ca. 1874

former's drawings can be found at the Instituto Gómez-Moreno of the Fundación Rodríguez Acosta. These drawings include a sketched perspective of the courtyard taken from its northeastern corner, which provides crucial information regarding the southern wing (which would disappear shortly afterwards), with porticos and galleries homologous to those seen on the northern side, which was entirely preserved. In addition, there are numerous details of the engravings and paintings found on the wood ceilings (Fig. 2).

In the decade that followed this first reference to the house, which at the time was number 5 of *Calle San Buenaventura*, it was visited by a party of the *Centro Artístico* de Granada. A young M. Gómez-Moreno Martínez (1887, p.41) published the first architectural description of the house in the bulletin of the aforementioned institution, considering it "one of the largest and best built of the Albaicín". At the time, Plaza de Aliatar did not exist and on that side the house faced an alley called Postigo del Salvador, which disappeared after the demolition of an entire block of houses in order to create the square. From that visit, a diagram with measurements of the ground-floor plan has been preserved, along with a partial section, drawings of the wooden door belonging to the hall on ground floor and sketches of corbels, together with details of the ceilings, of the plaster lattices and the tilework, all made by different members of the aforementioned visiting party. There is nothing to indicate that either the house or part of it were in ruin at the time.

A few years later, in his *Guía de Granada* (1862, p. 481) M. Gómez-Moreno González, writes about the most interesting Morisco-era houses focusing on the richness of their décor or the peculiarities of their construction. He highlights this house, while also lamenting the almost total disappearance of the plasterwork surrounding its doors. During the last decade of the 19th c., the façade along *Calle San Buenaventura* must have been completely redone in accordance to the ordinances of the time. The reconstruction of this wing with three, rather low stories, which replaced the two originally higher ones, had created problems where they met with the original galleries.

Around twenty blueprints, drawings and watercolors of the house commissioned by the *Comisión Provincial de Monumentos* in 1903 can be found at the Archivo Histórico Provincial de

Granada. The upper-level floor plan shows that the galleries had been compartmentalized and closed in, and that the southern end of the western gallery was practically destroyed. A sketch of the courtyard looking towards the south depicts a garden with cane trellises planted on the debris of the demolished southern wing. There are interesting drawings of the latticework that had been preserved in the small western window at the entrance into the ground-floor hall of the northern wing, a piece that was taken to the Archeological Museum of Granada.

The creation of Plaza de Aliatar led to the sealing of the original entrance on *Calle San Buenaventura* and to the opening of a new direct entrance from the square, which in turn led to the division into four spaces of the great hall on the ground floor of the northern wing.

J. Bermúdez Pareja's unpublished PhD thesis *Casas moriscas de Granada y Marruecos* (1956) includes a set of interesting blueprints, probably drawn by Francisco Muros, with the information gathered from the visits he carried out accompanying M. Gómez-Moreno González around 1874. These include the ground floor plan, a longitudinal section, an elevation of the entrance into the hall on the ground floor of the northern wing, etc.

3. Construction analysis

The house's building systems are those found elsewhere in Granada's 16th c. domestic architecture, which in turn are a continuation of the traditional techniques employed during the Nasrid period in the city. Nevertheless, these elements were heavily modified by the reconstruction of the building in the 19th c. and the restoration processes undergone over the course of the second half of the 20th c. The vertical structures are loadbearing walls that are set on rather superficial foundations made of stone and lime mortar. The lower sections of the walls are comprised of a grid of large brick pilasters connected by rows of bricks, the infill between them consisting of a mix of stone and earth, with lime added in small quantities. From there upward the walls are made of rammed earth. Brick pilasters were used to create the openings of the entryways into the halls. The four porticos of the courtyard are sustained by brick pillars. The ones on the corners have an L-shaped section while the central ones on the longer sides are cylindrical, all of which were

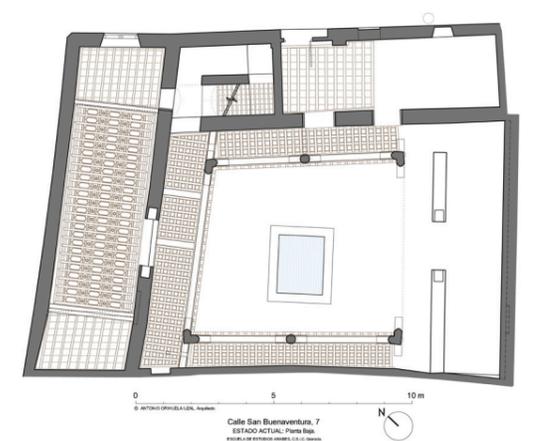


Fig. 3 - Ground floor plan, with ceiling projection, before restoration. © Orihuela, 2019

originally rendered. The galleries on the upper floor are sustained by timber posts crowned by engraved corbels.

The horizontal structures include several types of paneled ceilings in the rooms and galleries on the ground floor, as well as on the stairs and alcoves of the hall in the northern wing on the upper floor. In addition, there are roof frames of different types and from different periods in the central hall on the upper story of the northern wing, the staircase landing in the tower and over the tower itself. The stair is built with a succession of brick vaults which were redone during the works carried out in 1970-1971. The roofs are covered with barrel tiles laid directly over the boarding of the roof frames. There is a pitched roof over the hall on the upper floor of the northern wing (Fig. 3).

4. Twentieth century restorations

The property was acquired by the cultural association Granada Nuestra in 1969 in order to save the building from ruin and use it as their headquarters. They received financing from the Ministry of Education and Culture for two partial restoration projects carried out in 1970 and 1971 by the architect J. Prieto-Moreno Ramirez (Archivo Central, Ref. C/70943 and C/71121).

With the first project the idea was to avoid the imminent ruin of the house. The roof over the main wing was rebuilt, replacing the original roof that covered both the northern hall and the gallery with two independent roofs. The rammed earth walls were consolidated using brick infill, and the paneled ceilings where

reinforced using hidden concrete and steel elements. The pillars on the four corners of the courtyard were disassembled brick to brick and then reassembled reusing the original bricks. The entrance from *Plaza Aliatar* was sealed and the original door to *Calle San Buenaventura* was recovered. The partitions in the galleries were demolished as well as those that compartmentalized the main halls. In the second project, the galleries on the northern or eastern side of the courtyard were consolidated, and the eastern wing was partially rebuilt. However, these works were never finished and the building remained uninhabitable.

Three decades later and with the same goal of making it their headquarters, the *El Legado Andalusi* Foundation, with the support of the World Monuments Fund, financed another project led by the architect C. Sánchez Gómez, with the collaboration of A. Almagro and A. Orihuela (EEA, CSIC). These works were carried out in 1999-2000.

The tight budget was used to renovate all the roofs, including the incorporation of insulation and the placing of waterproof plywood panels to protect the antique timber frames from possible leakage. The roofs over the northern wing and gallery were once again unified, as they had been prior to the works carried out in 1970.

In addition, the western gallery was consolidated, plumbing the central brick pillar without disassembling it. The debris of the southern wing, which had collapsed at the beginning of the 20th c., was removed, leading to the discovery of the base of its stone and brick

masonry walls and some initial work on their reconstruction (Fig. 4).

5. The 2021-2024 Intervention: Criteria, materials and construction techniques

The preliminary design, drawn up in 2020, set out to recover the volumes of the two wings that had disappeared in their entirety, an operation allowed under the ordinances of the *Plan Especial de Protección y Reforma del Albaicín* (PEPRI, 1990) currently in force, in its Article III 37.2. However, the municipality only gave planning permission to proceed in this manner in the southern wing, allowing only the partial reconstruction of the eastern wing.

The volumetric and functional recuperation of the building was conceived following the criteria used by L. Torres Balbás in the nearby *Casa del Chapiz* during the restoration work he directed in 1929-1932 (Orihuela, 2023). There, in spite of the lack of information regarding their original shape, the volumes and galleries of both courtyards were rebuilt by replicating engraved wood features from existing elements in adjacent galleries. The new timber joists placed in areas where no remains had been preserved did not incorporate any engraved decorations. In our case, thanks to the abundance of graphic documentation produced since 1874, there were no doubts about the models of corbels that had originally existed, and we were able to redo them completely. The risk of falsifying history was non-existent, since the ceilings of the southern wing,

of which there was no information, were only schematically rebuilt. The artist and restorer A. Pérez Álvarez was in charge of the engraved woodwork for this project (Fig. 5).

The new walls of the southern wing were raised following the layout of the existing remains, and they were built with a mix of brick and stone masonry on the lower level, and brick bonds on the rest. The aggregate used for the mortar was natural hydraulic lime, of the type i.pro Calix NHL 3.5 by FYM. The main beams of the southern portico and gallery were made of laminated wood, since timber sections of that size are not available on the market. The one on the portico, measuring 20 x 40 x 945 cm was made by joining two 20 x 20 cm sections joined by fiberglass and resin, all in order to enable transport into the house and assembly in situ.

The repair of the beam over the western alcove of the northern hall on the ground floor, which was split, was carried out by specialists from the company Lignum. The first step was to hoist it with two steel struts so it could recover its original curvature. Then, the Beta System was applied by introducing two fiberglass rods and epoxy resin in an indentation on the inner side of the beam. The exceptional original wooden door into the hall on the ground floor of the northern wing was recovered, with its double doors and their corresponding shutters. It had been taken from the house in 1970. Thanks to the detailed drawing of this door made in 1874 and photographs taken circa 1956, its complete restoration has been possible and soon it will return to its original position. The flooring that existed in the rooms was a composition of mosaic cement tiles from the Torres y López factory in Granada. Those in the northern wing seemed to be contemporary to the opening of the new entrance onto Plaza de Aliatar at the beginning of the 20th c. These tiles were carefully removed in order to be reused; however, because of their deteriorated state, only those that were best preserved were re-laid in one of the rooms on intermediate level 2. In most of the house traditional ceramic tiles from the Castillo Siles factory have been used, except in the bathrooms and kitchens, where porcelain tiles cover the floors.

The courtyard was paved with medium sized cobble stones in gray tones, without a trace of decorative patterns. During the archeological oversight phase, a task carried out by A. Reyes

Martínez, not a trace of what could have been the hypothetical original pavement was found, therefore the preexisting cobble stone surface was redone by a specialist in this traditional local technique, Jacinto "el Picante". The edge of the pool was finished with two rows of special ceramic tiles glazed in green, known as *alizares*. With the pieces that had been preserved, two sides of the pond were restored, while for the other two sides new pieces were made by Cerámicas Viceira, one of the few traditional workshops remaining.

The natural lighting levels that are required nowadays are much higher than those desired in a medieval *Andalusí* home. In addition, in Western society, the degree of intimacy needed in a family home is moderate. Therefore, the sealing of windows that had been opened over the centuries is difficult to justify for the mere sake of maintaining a certain fidelity to



Fig. 4 – View of the courtyard towards the southeast, after the works of 1999-2000. © Orihuela, 2019

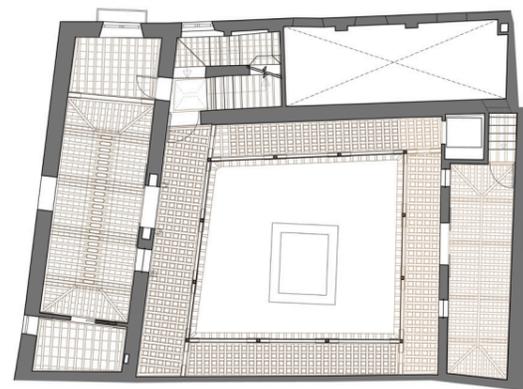


Fig. 5 – Upper floor plan, with ceiling projection, after restoration. © Orihuela, 2024

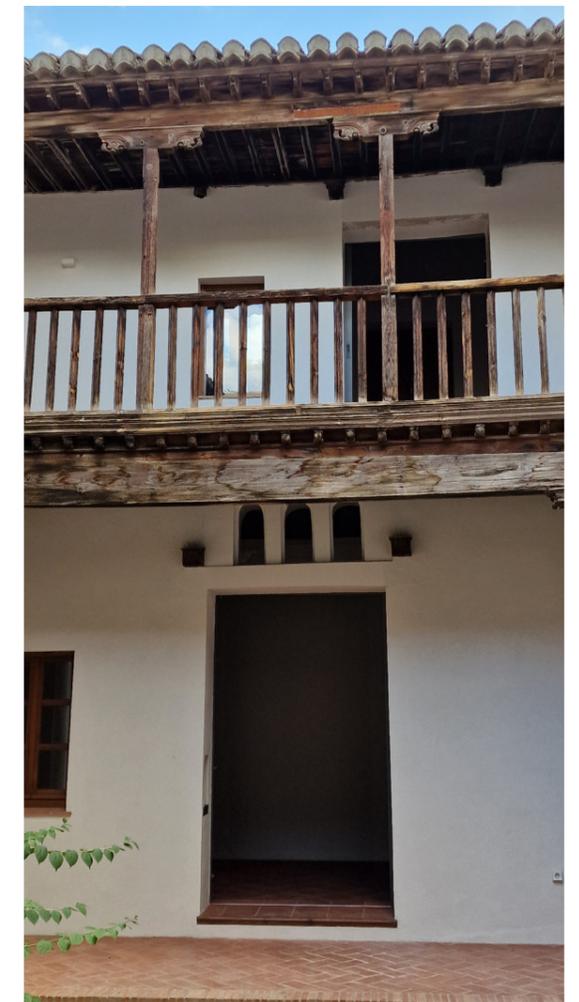


Fig. 6 – View of the entrance to the north main room. © Orihuela, 2024



Fig. 7 - View of the courtyard from the north side. © Orihuela, 2024

the original architectural type. The main halls in *Andalusí* homes only received natural light through the opening of the door leading into the space, along with the tenuous glow that filtered through the lattice work of the two or three small openings over said door (Fig. 6). There were *tacas* (small niches) on both jambs of the door openings leading into the halls, as well as *alacenas* or cupboards built into the walls. A maximum depth was desired for these, so they were separated from the exterior only by a thin brick partition. After the Morisco population was replaced by new settlers from Castille in Granada in 1570, many of these cupboards became windows onto the courtyard (Orihuela, 2007). Consequently, in the two halls in the rebuilt southern wing, pairs of windows have been designed and built where there would have been hypothetical cupboards. These new windows, however, have a more vertically narrow proportion, which highlights their contemporary nature (Fig. 7).

The house is heated and cooled by means of a radiant floor, controlled by a Daikin Altherma Bibloc Estándar heat pump. This system also provides hot water. The new windows are made of wood with European standard sections following a simple design; they also include wooden shutters. The doors of the four halls of the northern and southern wings which open directly into the courtyard are all Strugal-made aluminum sliding doors lacquered in gray, with their tracks embedded into the flooring to become invisible when the doors are open. The spaces on the ground floor are insulated from rising humidity by means of a ventilated slab built by using the Caviti system.

Accessibility to the upper floor is guaranteed with the inclusion of an Embarba EPV2-90 hydraulic elevator located on the eastern end of the rebuilt southern wing, with 90° openings that allow exiting onto the galleries and intermediate floors of the eastern wing. The finishes of the central columns on the eastern and western sides of the courtyard, the only original renders that had been preserved, have been consolidated by the restorer M. J. Calvin Velasco, who has also carried out the cleaning and consolidation of the paintings on the roof frame over the tower. V. Martín Madrid was the construction manager and I. Arto Torres the structural engineer.

6. Discussion

Up until now, this large house has been considered in modern historiography (Gómez-Moreno, 1892, p. 481; López, 1987, p. 326-328; Mir, 1996, p. 118) as a Morisco house. In fact, its architectural typology shows a great deal of the characteristic features of Morisco houses in Granada:

- layout organized around a rectangular courtyard and central pool;
- main wings on the shorter sides of the courtyard accommodating halls with alcoves at their ends and *tacas* in the door jambs;
- decorative paintings on its paneled ceilings and roof frames;
- preserved *ajimez* in the tower with its own *tacas*,

- and the construction techniques themselves.

The remains of the *ajimez* are especially valuable, since only two others of its type have been preserved in Granada. The paintings on the paneled ceiling of the ground floor hall in the northern wing are characteristic of the Nasrid tradition, despite the carelessness of their execution. It is almost as if the artisans had forgotten how these details were correctly done.

7. Conclusions

The house must have been built sometime in the mid-16th c., during the Morisco period, and many of its typological and decorative features are shared with other examples of the time. However, there are other characteristics that are also shared with the Castilian tradition. Therefore, it is reasonable to doubt whether its owner was a Morisco family who had sincerely converted to Christianity or if the family was merely making an effort to appear to have done so. It is improbable that the owner was Castilian, due simply to the fact of the house's location in the midst of the Albaicín neighborhood, a part of town where the Morisco population was concentrated into up until its expulsion.

After 55 years of construction work during which the house has remained closed and uninhabitable, the new owners have managed to restore the building, even recovering its original use, that of a single-family home. This use is more in accordance to this typology than the headquarters of a cultural institution. To achieve this, a great effort was made to recover the building and to change the original objectives. The intervention criteria used fall under the category of what is known as scientific restoration, holding firmly to its fundamental principles but being sufficiently flexible in order to achieve the main goal of the project, which was to turn the house once again into a single-family home. The characteristics of the architectural typology of the *Andalusí* house were fixed in the Lower Middle Ages, and they sought to ensure the intimacy of the family that inhabited the dwelling and its protection from heat radiation and excessive sun exposure.

However, without needing to stick to strict rules, these houses can be adapted to the lifestyle requirements of the 21st c. Western society while maintaining their main architectural values. Among these is the preservation of the courtyard and its open porticos and galleries, as well as the

spatial integrity of its main halls. The adaptation to current needs requires a flexible approach to the way in which the interior spaces are connected and to how windows opened during later periods are maintained, including the creation of new openings in accordance to new functions.

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Lessons Learnt from Adaptive Reuse of Earthen Heritage in Desert Oases in Hot Arid Climates

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Earth is the most widely used construction material in desert oases, for its abundance, thermal insulation, soundproofing capacities and cultural appropriateness. Adaptive reuse of earthen heritage is an emerging oasis trend, aiming to preserve such sites' historical values and revitalize them for contemporary needs. While awareness of heritage reuse and earthen architecture grows, literary research on earthen heritage reuse remains insufficient. This study compares successful projects in Egypt, AlUla Town, Al-Turaif District (Saudi Arabia), Ksar Ait Ben Haddou (Morocco) and Old Sanaa (Yemen). Analyzing conservation approaches in these climates, it highlights global-applicable problems and solutions—community involvement, local economic activities—offering useful strategies for stakeholders, architects, researchers, owners and planners in earthen heritage adaptive reuse projects.

1. Introduction

Earth has been one of the most sustainable and widely used construction materials, particularly in hot-arid climates and desert oases, due to capabilities of thermal and sound insulations, and cultural significance (Minke, 2006). It is considered a practical and efficient housing solution due to its versatility, simplicity and ease (Steen et al., 2003; Minke, 2006; Bourgeois et al., 1989). An oasis can be defined as a human settlement that started in a harsh desert environment and regenerates itself based on available resources to create a self-sustaining lifestyle protected from surrounding harsh conditions (Laureano, 1985). Oases are not only the result of natural conditions, but the interaction between humans and their natural context and the transfer of their knowledge from generation to another (Laureano, 2002). The oases found in the Saharah and Arabian Desert and around Near East, Mediterranean islands and peninsulas, vary in type: wadi (riverbed), erg (sand dune) and sebkha (salt flat) (Laureano, 1985).

Morgan argues that the efficiency of earthen building technology in desert climates is due to its capacity of heat-retaining, making houses warm in winter and cool in summer, protection against weather harsh conditions, absorption of humidity, and resistance to insects and fire (Morgan, 2008; Khalili, 1996; Bourgeois et al., 1989). Locals of desert oases' can reuse earth blocks in buildings or with soil for vegetation. In earthen villages, construction costs are generally lower due to the availability of local materials and skilled laborers. The building know-how in desert oases is based on the combination between knowledge, traditions and adaptation to existing conditions. Thus, locals' involvement is necessary to make decisions according to their

social and economic needs and environmental conditions (Dabaieh, 2013).

However, the increasing dependency on the industrialized materials in contemporary architecture without consideration of cultural identities and authentic values of vernacular heritage has caused a growing risk of disappearance of earthen building technology. The abandonment of earthen architecture was encouraged by the social rejection of traditional lifestyle, desire for modern aesthetics and gradual loss of traditional building knowledge (Moriset et al., 2021). The reasons of deterioration of earthen settlements can be categorized into natural causes (e.g. rainwater, variations in temperature and humidity, strong wind, tornadoes, floods, etc..) and human causes (e.g. lack of social awareness, absence of sense of belonging, unavailability of financial funds for development and maintenance, unsuitable activities or interventions, increase of sewage networks use that causes rise of underground water, absence of regulations and coordinated integrated plan) (Elhamy & Ibrahim, 2022). In addition, technical factors, such as the lack of understanding of building technology, lack of skilled labors and lack of well-researched standards or solutions have further contributed to its deterioration (Bridgwood & Lennie, 2013).

In the last 20 years, many international organizations, programs and projects were created by the earthen conservation community for the preservation and raising awareness of earthen heritage. However, there are still factors that hinder the development of the conservation

field such as the lack of global conservation theory and lack of understanding of the true value of earthen heritage (Carlos et al., 2022). In response to these challenges and the rise in demolition and new developments after war, adaptive reuse emerged during the second half of the 20th century as an effective strategy for preserving abandoned historical buildings (Cantacuzino, 1975). Adaptive reuse can be defined as the process that changes an unused place to a new place that can be used for a different function (DEH, 2004). By introducing new functions that respect historical and authentic values of heritage, adaptive reuse ensures the sustainability of the heritage building while contributing to socio-economic development of the settlement. When heritage buildings are often given new commercial functions (hotels, shopping centers, residential buildings), they generate new job opportunities for the local community and attract more users and tourism, contributing to the building's financial and cultural development (Niemczewska, 2020).

While there is a growing awareness of the significance of adaptive reuse in heritage conservation, its effect on the preservation of vernacular earthen heritage remains underexplored. The study aims to fill this research gap by conducting a comparative analysis of selected successful adaptive reuse projects in desert oases across hot-arid climates. By analyzing different adaptive reuse approaches, identifying common challenges and solutions of these case studies, the research provides efficient



Fig. 1 – Aerial view of earthen heritage in AlUla. © afalula.com

strategies for stakeholders to promote adaptive reuse as a sustainable approach to preserving earthen heritage.

2. Methodology

The research qualitative approach is based on comparative case studies analysis to examine adaptive reuse projects in many desert oases in hot arid-climates. This comparative approach was used to provide an understanding of the contribution of adaptive reuse to preservation of cultural identity and socio-economic revitalization in similar geographic and socio-economic contexts. The case studies were selected based on the following criteria:

Having a cultural and historical significance.

Located in a desert oasis.

Including a vernacular earthen heritage (adobe bricks, rammed earth, etc..).

Undergone an adaptive reuse project by local or international institution.

The selected case studies are AlUla Town and Al-Turaif District in Saudi Arabia, Ksar Ait Ben Haddou in Morocco, and Old Sanaa in Yemen. The data were collected based on review of literature and conservation reports.

3. Case studies analysis

3.1. Alula town, Saudi Arabia

3.1.1. General Information

Saudi Arabia, being the center point of Islam religion, has always been a meeting point for civilizations who left their heritage among history. AlUla oasis, located in Madinah Province in the northwest of Saudi Arabia, has been a crossing point on the trade route connecting Arabian Peninsula, Mediterranean countries, and Asia (UNESCO, 2024). It has been ruled by Ancient North Arabian Kingdoms (Dedan then Lihyan) and the Roman Empire which made it a 200,000 years witness of history, cultural heritage and human relationship with natural environment. The traces of these empires were then used by Muslims to build AlUla Old Town in the 13th century. AlUla is home to a combination of diverse landscapes such as yellow sand panoramas, sandstone canyons and cliffs, and natural arches.

3.1.2. Adaptive Reuse Project

AlUla project is a part of Vision 2030 developed by Saudi Arabia to showcase its significant history and develop its economy. It is a result of the French-Saudi collaboration that founded The French Agency for AlUla Development in 2018. The main objective of the project was to create an open air living museum in the North-West of the country that consists of archeological, cultural and touristic attractions. The project included many sustainable development approaches: Natural heritage preservation by hindering human impact on the natural environment, cultural heritage restoration by implementing management plans, and resources management by installing infrastructure sustainable systems (AFALULA, 2019). At the same time, UNESCO and RCU joined forces in 2021 to create local community and youth development programs for AlUla community. They aimed to introduce concepts of sustainable living and empower local communities to leave their impact in the field of community-driven heritage conservation (UNESCO, 2024).

3.2. Al-Turaif District, Saudi Arabia

3.2.1. General Information

Al-Turaif District in Ad-Dir'iyah, located in Wadi Hanifah in the northwest of Riyadh, was the first capital in Saudi Arabia. Ad-Dir'iyah is a wadi-based oasis, composed of areas of settlement and agriculture, which was founded in 1446 (SCTA, 2009). The oasis was founded in the 15th century but its significant role in the political and religious fields has increased in the 18th and 19th century (El Ghabban et al., 2010). It is a representation of Najdi earthen architecture (Elhamy & Ibrahim, 2022).

3.2.2. Adaptive Reuse Project

From 1965 to 1980, a large number of heritage buildings in Saudi Arabia have been abandoned, replaced or removed. The settlement of at-Turaif fell in ruins because of time passing, lack of maintenance, lack of planned studies, and unsuitable interventions. One of the main causes of this deterioration is the phenomenon of sudden heavy rains that can flood the sites for many days and cause the erosion of mud brick walls. The control of floods has been taken into consideration in the planning of Wadi Hanifah, by redesigning roads infrastructure and planning of monitoring mechanisms. Another

reason of deterioration is the degradation of the environmental resources and natural ecosystems caused by the growth of Riyadh from 1970-1990.

An integrated conservation and development project was set up by the governmental institution: "The Supreme Authority for Riyadh City Development". The development plan aimed to raise awareness of the locals in the field of vernacular heritage conservation and encourage their participation in the conservation project by creating training programs for laborers. In parallel, the project implemented the reuse of vernacular heritage and its revitalization as hotels and museums with respect to its original identity and heritage qualities (Elhamy & Ibrahim, 2022). The conservation of the abandoned 18th century ruins also included the implementation of a development program that aims to rejuvenate the site as a Living Heritage Museum, celebrating its history and values. The conservation strategy of the site was designed by Anthony Crosby for ADAOF 1. The main principle is to consider the whole district as one museum, where the buildings are the artifacts to be shown.

Therefore, the restoration and adaptive reuse decision should follow the overall vision of the MUSEUM in addition to the international guiding principles of UNESCO. The revitalization project included the creation of a small reception center to host the visitors of the Living Heritage Museum. The site was cautiously prepared to host a large number of visitors while preserving the authenticity of the heritage.

3.3. Ksar Ait Ben Haddou, Morocco

3.3.1. General Information

Ait-Ben-Haddou is the most famous ksars in Ouarzazate Province in south Morocco. It is one of the trading points on the commercial route between Sudan to Marrakech. Southern side of Morocco is characterized by harsh pre-desert climate that obligated the tribes to live in groups in areas around water and create oases (Rodriguez-Navarro & Gil-Piqueras, 2018). Dated from the 17th century, the ksar represents an exemplary of pre-Saharan earthen architecture in Southern Morocco. It is composed of a compact group of houses, inhabited by one tribe, gated by defensive walls and reinforced with slender towers and a baffle gate (Nijst et al., 1973; SCTA, 2009). It is one of the unique Ksars that have maintained their authenticity and architectural identity represented in their earthen architecture

which makes it fascinating for the visitors (Elhamy & Ibrahim, 2022).

3.3.2. Adaptive Reuse Project

Similarly, the abandonment of the inhabitants result in the lack of regular maintenance of earthen buildings which eventually leads to the acceleration of their deterioration (Rodriguez-Navarro & Gil-Piqueras, 2018). Due to change in their needs and lifestyle, the locals have moved to the other side of the valley, choosing to live in concrete blocks in search for better accessibility and building services (SCTA, 2009). For this reason, the Moroccan Ministry of Housing carried out actions to improve the quality of life in the ksar so the locals can inhabit it again by repairing and reinforcing existing architecture (Rodriguez-Navarro & Gil-Piqueras, 2018). In 2007, the Center for the Conservation and Rehabilitation of the Architectural Heritage of Atlas and Sub-Atlas Zones (CERKAS) implemented a five-year management plan that respects the integrity and authenticity of the site and ensures the involvement of all stakeholders in the decision making (Elhamy & Ibrahim, 2022). Finally, in 2020, The "Ait Ben Haddou – Ksar Museum project" was created by We Speak Citizen NGO. The locals created three cooperatives that present three types of activities to promote this fascinating living heritage: a tourism cooperative, an agricultural cooperative and a cinema cooperative (Visit Ait Ben Haddou; 2022).

3.4. Old Sanaa', Yemen

3.4.1. General Information

Old Sana'a is not only a unique city in Yemen but also for Arab Muslim Architecture around the world (Conservation of Old Sana'a, 1995). It



Fig. 2 – Aerial view of earthen heritage At-Turaif district in Ad-Dir'iyah. © Constructionweeksaudi.com



Fig. 3 – Close up view of earthen heritage in Ksar Ait Ben Haddou, Morocco. © Yvon Fruneau

is composed of a narrow network of traditional buildings and a strong presence of social bonding. The city is divided into a commercial and residential area, composed of 61 quarters, and each quarter is composed of: housing unit, mosque, open space, water fountain, fruits and vegetables garden and hot bath (Haidara & Talib, 2013). The houses are clay traditional towers that rise more than 5 floors and are designed in a vertical axis (Lewcock, 1986).

3.4.2. Adaptive Reuse Project

After many years of foreign influences, the city opened its doors to the modern world in the 1970s. This phenomenon accompanied by the oil-driven economic boom and the rapid population growth has caused major changes in the lifestyle of the locals (Conservation of Old Sana'a, 1995). The socio-economic changes have led the locals to start reusing the unused spaces of their houses or change its entire use. To create a new source of income, the houses' inhabitants rent the ground floors of the towers for shops whose functions are chosen by the owner (Haidara & Talib, 2013). There are two types of projects: the governmental projects that are done in collaboration with international organizations which depend on the expertise of local and international professionals, and the local private projects which the owner funds, chooses function and degree of intervention. The adaptive reuse can include only the ground floor of the tower or the entire building.

The conservation efforts and adaptive reuse movement started by the creation of the General Organization for the Preservation of Old Saa'a in 1984 by the local government, in



Fig. 4 – Close up view of earthen heritage in Old Sana'a, Yemen. © Jean-Jacques Gelbart

collaboration with UNESCO and UNDP. In 1987, it changed its name to the General Organisation for the Preservation of the Historic Cities of Yemen (GOPHCY) and started to include all Yemeni cities. The organization encouraged the promotion of Yemeni handicrafts by the reuse of Caravanserai (Samsara) Al-Mansorah into crafts shop, Al-Mutahar house into Women technical center and Bayt al Umari as guest house (Petzet & Koenigs, 1995). However, the movement has continued as a series of uncoordinated adaptive reuse projects executed by the locals (UNESCO, 2008). The locals were encouraged to restore and renovate their houses under the guidance of GOPHCY to revitalize the town, safeguard its economy and promote its culture.

4. Findings and discussion

This section presents the research key findings from the comparative case studies analysis, showing common challenges, adaptive reuse strategies and lessons learned in the field of preservation of earthen heritage in desert oases.

4.1. Common challenges of adaptive reuse

- Environmental deterioration: Earthen buildings remain vulnerable to harsh climatic conditions of oases (heavy rains, temperature changes, wind erosions, etc.).
- Abandonment and loss of traditional knowledge: Earthen heritage faces the threat of social abandonment (due to change in needs and lifestyles) which causes neglect and retrogression of traditional knowledge.
- Regulations and global strategies barriers:

Adaptive reuse and conservation projects require strong policies and stable funding resources to increase their success.

4.2. Strategies for successful adaptive reuse

- Importance of community involvement: Local participation in conservation efforts has proven to be very important in ensuring the suitability of the interventions.
- Heritage tourism and socio-economic Development: Adaptive reuse has a great capacity to revitalize heritage sites by transforming them into cultural and economic hubs to encourage locals and visitors to maintain them.
- Integration of enhanced infrastructure with traditional materials: Several case studies have demonstrated that combining traditional building methods with modern infrastructure is necessary to satisfy the locals' changing needs.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Adaptive reuse has emerged as a vital strategy for preserving earthen heritage in desert oases, combining between heritage conservation and socio-economic development. Al-Ula, Al-Turaif, Ksar Ait Ben Haddou and Old Sanaa are considered as successful adaptive reuse projects. However, their common challenges such as climate vulnerability, social abandonment, and lack of policies still threaten the sustainability of these conservation projects. The analyzed case studies highlight the importance of integrating traditional materials with new services, community involvement, income-generating activities and official regulations to ensure long-term conservation. Despite the limitations of the methodology such as inability of performing on-site observation, the findings offer important insights for future heritage adaptive reuse policies. The comparative case study analysis approach provided a synthesis of the role of adaptive reuse in ensuring the sustainability of earthen heritage. By preserving the authenticity of precious heritage while addressing contemporary locals' needs, adaptive reuse can safeguard earthen heritage for current and future generations while contributing to cultural and socio-economic development of earthen settlements.

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Publications

In terms of research contributions in the field of vernacular architecture, circularity, reuse, and sustainable design, Marwa have authored 6 books, with the latest focusing on circular design for carbon-neutral building practices inspired from vernacular architecture. Also contributed to 4 peer-reviewed book chapters and published 40 articles in peer-reviewed journals. Additionally, wrote 4 encyclopedia entries in the encyclopedia of vernacular architecture of the world.

Awards

- Best Paper Award at PLEA Conference (Passive and Low Energy Architecture), September 2020.
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