‘Living with Earthquakes’
Jesus College, Cambridge, 24-25 October 2017

Changing approaches to heritage in the face of trauma

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Three areas of concern

• Initiatives taking place in organisations dedicated to dealing with heritage

• Need for ‘joined up’ thinking

• Physical heritage and humanitarian relief
Current Situation

• Widespread destruction, both natural disasters and human-inflicted; climate change will likely mean more

• Across the world, we are obsessed by identity; identity politics is part of human rights narratives; heritage is one key way of determining identity

• Heritage has become centre stage; reconstruction is now a ‘sexy’ topic; but heritage is also culturally and politically contested

• Global economics puts further pressure on destroyed sites

• Technical solutions are better than ever but may not be used in some cases or be rejected as inadequate to human needs
Venice Charter (1964) and others are out of date in some ways
List and approach is Western-centric
Susceptibility to political and economic expediency
Most policies are dependent upon good will
Intangible heritage (since 2008) is very difficult to pin down
Does it make sense to try to write a new charter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone/region</th>
<th>Cultural</th>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>States Parties with inscribed properties</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<tr>
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<td>206</td>
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<td>1073</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Current initiatives

ICOMOS – Working group on global case studies and reconstruction
• Most heritage conservation is based upon case studies
• What can we learn from case studies? How do we make comparisons? Does this lead to policy?
• Cross-cutting areas:
  • How has globalisation affected conservation policy? Can we move away from Western-centric directives?
  • Does multi-disciplinary thinking help us to cross-cut?
  • How can we new technologies be better integrated with human concerns?

Middle East urbicide group
• How can local populations participate?
• How can minorities be represented?
• What are the links between humanitarian crises and heritage crises?

Peking University heritage research groups
• What does migration have to do with heritage?
• How can soft materials used in Chinese architecture be reconciled with Western conservation practice?
• How can over-development and pressures of capital be reconciled with heritage?
• Is growing tourism beneficial beyond financial income?
New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, 2005

- Mixture of natural and human-made disasters – knock on effects
- Hurricane, flooding, poor preparation and emergency response, civil unrest, slow recovery
- Looting, violence did happen but tended to be exaggerated
- But rumours and media over-enthusiasm caused more confusion and fear
- Slow response increased social problems
- Initial fears were for human safety – over 1400 people killed
- Question of fate of a distinct city and its culture became a later concern
New Orleans in the longer term

- Over past 12 years, decline of black prosperity: 180,000 Afro-Americans left the city, 100,000 returned
- Influx of white population; hastening of gentrification by incoming whites
- Lower Ninth Ward – still recovering
- Focus on tourism not locals
- Face of this multi-racial city has changed and intangible heritage has suffered

- Ultimately the heritage of the city is a humanitarian concern
- But the many disasters were dealt with separately and mostly unrelated
Lisbon earthquake (1755) and reconstruction

- Prime Minister Marquès de Pombal, ‘bury the dead and heal the living’
- most radical and rational plan was chosen
- beginning of seismology; human control of destruction
- from Voltaire to Adorno, seen as transformation of culture and beginning of modernity
- conscious building of culture from chaos to order – basis of heritage thinking and practice
Standard heritage protection

- World Heritage site 1986
- Major restoration completed 2006
- Islamic Capital of Culture 2006

Aleppo 2011
Aleppo 2015

- break from ‘rational’ tradition of Lisbon? From order to chaos?
- what are the chances for Aleppo in the future?
- reconstruction of Aleppo is subject to the nature of its conflicts, return of refugees and post-war land speculation - and earthquakes
- will Aleppo mark a transformation in how we view the rational process of reconstruction?
Mostar - destruction of the Stari Most (Old Bridge), 1993

- Ottoman 16th century bridge
- Destruction of place where diverse people gather – destruction of plurality of the city during Yugoslav civil war
- Place targeted in order to attack the people: ‘destruction of memory’
- Close relationship between humanitarian and heritage concerns

Destruction of the Stari Most (Old Bridge), Mostar, 1993
Reconstruction and Listing

• Rebuilt in 2004 by international community
• inscribed on WHL 2005 as ‘Old Bridge Area of Old City of Mostar’
• **Criterion (vi):** ‘With the “renaissance” of the Old Bridge and its surroundings, the symbolic power and meaning of the City of Mostar - as an exceptional and universal symbol of coexistence of communities from diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds - has been reinforced and strengthened, underlining the unlimited efforts of human solidarity for peace and powerful cooperation in the face of overwhelming catastrophes’.

• Listing is of reconstructed artefact
• Criterion is based upon human factors

Compares human death and the death of the bridge:

‘Why do I feel more pain looking at the image of the destroyed bridge than the image of [murdered] woman?’

‘We expect people to die. We count on our own lives to end. The destruction of a... [bridge]... is something else. The...bridge...was built to outlive us. Because it was the product of both individual creativity and collective experience, it transcended our individual destiny. A dead woman is one of us, but the bridge is all of us.’

- Built heritage – collective, long term, transcends individual human life
- When we destroy heritage we destroy the common good. Conversely, if we enhance heritage, does it support the common good?
- In some ways WH Listing underlines Drakulic’s sentiments
The humanitarian argument for heritage

• If we accept the argument that heritage is about the collective human good, then humanitarian emergencies should be connected to emergencies and traumas of the urban fabric

• Measures to deal with physical fabric along side of humanitarian relief need to be developed in an appropriate way

• Practical implications for international relief organisations

• Links between humanitarian efforts and destruction and trauma to heritage could transform heritage practice