

Balance between “conservation” and “reconstruction” of historic center in Spanish cities

Daisuke ABE/ CPIJ

Spain is blessed with well conserved built environments of old city quarters as well as numerous single monuments and works of modern architecture. However, through the early 1970s, when Spain was still ruled under the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, most of the country's historic centers were faced with serious problems such as destruction of historic buildings and deterioration of public safety, mainly caused by the collapse of the social structure of city center inhabitants.

Some cities like Barcelona, Valencia and Madrid elaborated a series of redevelopment and/or conservation plan from the end of the 1970s to the middle of the 1980s, and have achieved total renovation of their historic centers. Although interesting differences can be seen between the strategy and methodology used by each city, the basic proposition was striking the appropriate balance between "conservation" and "reconstruction" in order to make the historic centers creative. Projects, which have been catalysts for urban regeneration, have concerned rehabilitation of existing buildings, construction of cultural facilities, and creation of new public spaces by selective destruction of ruined blocks or buildings.

Acknowledging the scarcity of information about Spanish planning theory and practice in English, this article tries to identify what has been emphasized in the planning strategy applied to the major cities of Spain. First, the influence of planning experience of other countries within the Spanish context will be analyzed. Second, important aspects of urban problems of Spanish cities in the 1970s will be introduced. Third, actual district plans including the Special Plan for Internal Reform known as PERI, will be focused upon in order to reveal the key factors for upgrading the residential conditions while maintaining social coherence in the neighborhoods of old towns.

Study on the changes of the old heritage houses through the owner's living interest in Salt, Jordan

Rafif “Mohammad Jafar” Al zubi, Masanori SAWAKI & Hisako KOURA/ CPIJ

Salt, the first capital of Jordan, is one of the oldest historical cities in the Mid-East countries, which is mentioned in the UNESCO list for the heritage cities. Salt old heritage houses face either decaying or changing or abandoning, because of their owners' behaviors such as leaving the houses or making changes on them without giving any consideration to its cultural value. This has resulted the missing of the special Salt city's character. This study aims to research the physical changes and the conditions of the heritage old houses and to examine the reasons and the process of these changes through the owners' life interest needs and the future plans towards their heritage old houses. A field survey has been accomplished, in addition to interview survey to the old houses' owners. The samples of the houses observed in the survey have been chosen according to the age of the old heritage houses, the big families' names of the owners “Ashira name” and the locations of the houses. The main reason stands behind the phenomena of leaving these houses is that the owners' interests in such kind of old houses' design, inside plans, and the yellow color of the stones have become different and through adopting some of western style (any thing comes from the non-Arabian countries) the houses' design starts to take different shapes of the façade; including windows, doors, balconies, and color of stone. The inside plans appear with more individual rooms for each member in the family, as well as for the services' like; wash- room and maid's room. So all these could not find the way in the design and the possible facilities provided in their old houses.

Challenge of historical conservation projects in Beijing City, China

Zhenjiang Shen, Mitsuhiro KAWAKAMI & Fangfang Lu/ CPIJ

The economic reform of past few decades has physically transformed China's cities. The private ownership of real properties has been rising gradually from a long period under nationalization policy after 1949, and the policy change of property right impacted urban system. Recently, the local government of Beijing city declared the reorientation of urban policies regarding historical conservation projects, which explores how to carry out conservation projects from a new viewpoint, promotion of public participation that has been stipulated in the text of a new ordinance of the local government (Enacted on 18.11.2003).

However, the progress stoppage of conservation projects is caused by confusion on real estate management due to the policy change regarding property right. During the period of 1949-1966, local government gradually expropriated private courtyard houses under the nationalization policy. During the Cultural Revolution, the expropriation was not processed reasonably and ownership of the courtyard houses was lacking in trustworthiness because of the confusion on real estate management. From the 1980's on, due to economic reform and liberalization in China, land use right that is separated from nationalized land ownership and ownership of the courtyard house buildings are returnable to their original owners. Contrary to expectation of the local government, conflicts on land use right between the original owners and the owners of the buildings constructed in the period of nationalization policy became a serious problem in urban conservation projects because of the confusion on real estate management during the Cultural Revolution.

For further researches, the following points are important. Firstly, the local government should cultivate inhabitants' taste and identity of the historical culture of restoration areas, in order that the inhabitants can take the initiative in planning process. However, confusion on real estate management discouraged the inhabitants who cannot extricate themselves from a tangle regarding their property rights of real estate. Secondly, there are many house-renters who are migrant labors from other cities and regions outside Beijing metropolis. Their existent generates overpopulation in the inner city of Beijing that made historical conservation projects more difficult.

A Study on the historic conservation of Changchun, China: About the evaluation of the eclectic buildings

Haixing ZHANG & Yuichi FUKUKAWA/ CPIJ

Changchun city is the capital of Jilin province and one of the important cities of Tohoku District. Changchun was built as the capital of Manchukuo and there remains many characteristic eclectic buildings called 'Manchurian style' built under the Japanese rule, which have eastern style roof on the western body. The buildings are not only the memory of the colonial ruling but also architectural heritage of the city. And in order to preserve them in the context of the living city, it is very important how to estimate the buildings in the architectural history.

In this study we are going to make clear how this kind of buildings has been managed under the cultural properties law, research the present state of the buildings in the city and finally discuss the identity of the style. First we review the policies of local and central governments for the buildings under the foreign rules and find the educational role emphasized. Second, we consider how the Chinese researchers have interpreted the value of these eclectic buildings. We found that the new trends of vision. Third, we check the status quo of the buildings one by one, and make clear that some buildings are not conserved in the suitable way. We guess that the undecided evaluation for the buildings might be a barrier to conservation. Fourth, we take the new main buildings in Changchun and find they are under the influence the eclecticism.

As a conclusion we found that the Manchurian style have been born under the trend of eclectic buildings movement of the day and identifiable with peculiar characters which are different from the Chinese 'Ethnic style' and Japanese 'Teikan style' and 'Koa style'. In this way we can break the spell and do the best to conserve these buildings.