

Historic Towns between East and West

Ciudades históricas entre Oriente y Occidente

The concept of “historic town” has been recognized in the West, especially in Europe, since the nineteenth century. Since the emergence of the first significant definitions with the birth of modern town planning, the definition of “historic town” has generated a diverse range of cultural and political debates in particular following the Second World War.

The historic town is a monument, a witness of history, of its communitarian development and social and economic culture. Within different cultures of the world the concept of “historic town” finds different interpretations and definitions. Particularly today, in the West as in the East, the “historic town” is a point of extensive debate on the possible dialogue between historic architecture and contemporary architecture. Certainly the “historic town” represents a cultural heritage where the word culture is a heritage of old and new ideas, a multicultural dialogue of large social values establishing a relationship between history and modernity. Under this premise, the main objective of the monograph has been to investigate and explore the different cognitive approaches and methodologies to define the concept of the “historic town”, to plan its valorisation and most importantly its continuity into the future. The scientific contributions strongly highlight the different cultural approaches between the West and East as made evident through theoretical research, projects and construction.

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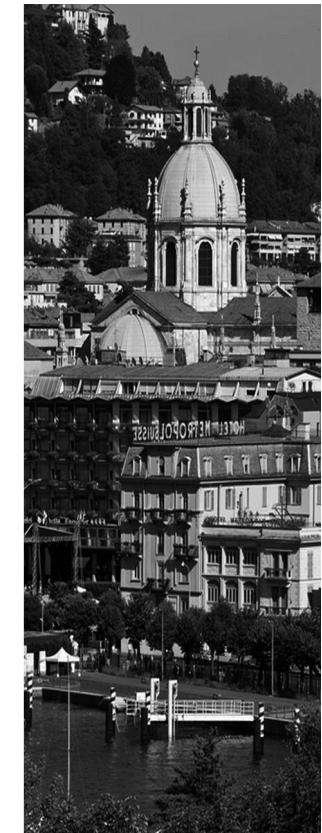
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Intercultural Dialogues

Researchers from different cultures founded the scientific collection ID, *Intercultural Dialogues*, with the aims of realizing a meeting place for scholars around the world and of opening a dialogue that respects the diversity and cultural identities of each country on the valorization of cultural heritage.

This collection offers a reflection also on the values of intangible heritage as defined by UNESCO, or rather, practices, representations, knowledge and techniques that may facilitate a sense of cultural identities (UNESCO, Declaration of 2003) among and within communities, in dialogue with the tangible heritage. In fact the valorization of cultural heritage has many additional elements rooted in sociological, anthropological and psychological phenomena, such as sociocultural values (symbolic, political, recreational, spiritual) and experiential values (place attachment/dependence, rootedness, age). For these reasons the scientific collection ID suggests a dialog also on these aspects as well.

It is also apparent that, in an era of rapid global change, the intercultural dialogue among different values plays a critical role in safeguarding traditional heritage and in strengthening cultural and social integration of the communities.

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The severe crisis in ethical and moral values within our towns requires fundamental questions to be asked. We must preserve these cultural values that are fundamental for the future of the history and for the development of the community. The dialogue between East and West is an important opportunity for the future.

INDEX

- 13
Introduction | Introducción
- 17
Il valore della città storica
Significato e confronto percettivo tra Oriente ed Occidente
Olimpia Niglio
- 29
Oriente y Occidente. La patrimonialización de la herencia colonial
Victor Delgadillo
- 42
La Preservación del Patrimonio Histórico Edificado en Occidente y Oriente
Los Casos de Quito (Ecuador) y Kioto (Japón)
L. Gonzalo Hoyos Bucheli, Dario Humberto Cobos Torres
- 60
Repensar la rehabilitación de los centros históricos: lecturas cruzadas desde
Buenos Aires (Argentina), La Habana (Cuba), Bangkok (Tailandia)
Andrea Catenazzi, Estela Cañellas; Alicia Novick, Adriana Rabinovich
- 73
La participación ciudadana como forma de resiliencia ante la gentrificación de los
centros históricos.
Victor Manuel Gutiérrez Sánchez
- 84
El enfoque histórico, la participación social y la significación, aspectos
fundamentales para el desarrollo sustentable de los centros históricos.
Norma Mejía Morales, Velia Ordaz Zubia, José Luis Sil Rodríguez, Elvia Ayala Macía
- 93
Patrimonialización del espacio urbano y producción de centros históricos
Noelia Ávila Delgado

	107
Lo antiguo, lo actual y lo proyectual: un problema de lecturas y diálogos en los centros históricos <i>William Pasuy Arciniegas, Claudia Rodríguez Espinosa</i>	
	117
La transformación de los centros históricos a través del color <i>Juan Carlos Etulain, Alejandra González Biffis</i>	
	134
Espacio, Significación y Vivencia: implicaciones semióticas sobre la noción Centro Histórico <i>Julio Horta</i>	
	147
Nuevos niveles de intervención sobre el patrimonio histórico de Como <i>Pier Luigi Paolillo, Umberto Baresi</i>	
	163
Berlín: Un entrecruzamiento polisémico del modelo <i>Marcelo Fraile</i>	
	179
Historical city centers that have lost their identity: Istanbul case <i>Hülya Berkmen</i>	
	187
The American Historic Downtown: Characteristics, History and Policy <i>Jeremy C. Wells</i>	
	203
La destrucción del centro histórico de Guadalajara Las Intervenciones Urbanísticas en el entorno de Santa María de la Fuente <i>Antonio Miguel Trallero Sanz</i>	
	225
La gestión turístico-patrimonial de los centros históricos. Dos “pueblos” de la pampa bonaerense (Argentina) <i>Cecilia Pérez Winter</i>	

240
Reconfiguración del *corazón* del Centro Histórico moderno de la ciudad de México a inicios del siglo XXI. Disputa y racionalidad por el control del espacio
Raúl Romero Ruíz

257
El barrio de El Carmen en Puebla y la Avenida 20 de Noviembre en Colima:
Los suburbios de los antiguos centros históricos.
Laura Elisa Varela Cabral, Luis Alberto Mendoza Pérez

272
“El tiempo está después... Prospectiva del BOa, Montevideo-Uruguay
El arte ¿Motor desarrollo urbano?”
Carina Nalerio, Raúl De León

286
Centros históricos en Colombia
Ana María Rojas Eraso

299
El Plan de Revitalización del Centro Tradicional de Bogotá. De la Protección Monumental a la Recuperación Integral y Valoración del Paisaje Urbano
Miguel Hincapié Triviño

313
Centros históricos en el Perú: preocupante estado de la cuestión
Alberto Martorell Carreño

329
Yokohama: Regeneration and Requalification
of the Historical Urban Tissue of the Old Port City
Taisuke Kuroda

338
Okazaki in Kyoto
Olimpia Niglio, Noriko Inoue

351
Authors

INTRODUCTION

The concept of "historic town" has been recognized in the West, especially in Europe, since the nineteenth century. Since the emergence of the first significant definitions with the birth of modern town planning, the definition of "historic town" has generated a diverse range of cultural and political debates in particular following the Second World War.

The historic town is a *monument*, a witness of history, of its communitarian development and social and economic culture. Within different cultures of the world the concept of "historic town" finds different interpretations and definitions. Particularly today, in the West as in the East, the "historic town" is a point of extensive debate on the possible dialogue between historic architecture and contemporary architecture. Certainly the "historic town" represents a cultural heritage where the word *culture* is a heritage of old and new ideas, a multicultural dialogue of large social values establishing a relationship between history and modernity.

Under this premise, the main objective of the monograph has been to investigate and explore the different cognitive approaches and methodologies to define the concept of the "historic town", to plan its valorisation and most importantly its continuity into the future. The scientific contributions strongly highlight the different cultural approaches between the West and East as made evident through theoretical research, projects and construction.

Desde el siglo XIX se implantó en Occidente, concretamente en Europa, el concepto de "ciudad histórica". Son muchos los debates de orden cultural y político que se han desarrollado a propósito de este término y de su significado, sobre todo después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial. Sin embargo, las primeras definiciones remontan a las conquistas iniciales del urbanismo moderno.

La ciudad histórica es un *monumento*, testimonio de historia, de civilización y de cultura social y económica. En relación a las diferentes culturas, el concepto de "casco histórico" encuentra diversos sentidos e interpretaciones. En particular hoy, tanto en Occidente como en Oriente, el "casco histórico" es lugar de amplios debates sobre el posible diálogo entre arquitectura histórica y arquitectura contemporánea. La "ciudad histórica" es un bien cultural en donde la palabra *cultura* es patrimonio de ideas antiguas y nuevas, diálogo entre interpretaciones multiculturales y nuevos valores sociales y como tal establece una relación entre la historia y la contemporaneidad.

Este libro monográfico ha tenido como finalidad indagar y explorar las diferentes aproximaciones cognoscitivas y metodológicas para definir el concepto de ciudad histórica, planear su valorización y su continuidad en el futuro. Las contribuciones

tienen todas un carácter fuertemente comparativo con el fin de evidenciar, con investigaciones teóricas, proyectos y realizaciones, los diferentes acercamientos culturales entre Occidente y Oriente.

Il concetto di “città storica” ha trovato affermazione in Occidente, in particolare in Europa a partire dal XIX secolo. Diversificati i dibattiti culturali e politici che si sono affermati sul significato di questa definizione soprattutto dopo la seconda guerra mondiale. Tuttavia le prime importanti asserzioni vengono fatte risalire alle prime importanti affermazioni dell’urbanistica moderna.

La città storica è un *monumento*, testimone della storia, dello sviluppo comunitario e della cultura sociale ed economica. In relazione alle diversificate culture del mondo anche il concetto di “centro storico” trova diverse interpretazioni e definizioni. In particolare oggi, in Occidente come in Oriente, il “centro storico” è un luogo di ampi dibattiti sul possibile dialogo tra architettura storica ed architettura contemporanea. Certamente la “città storica” è un bene culturale dove la parola *cultura* rappresenta un patrimonio di idee antiche e nuove, un dialogo multiculturale di ampi valori sociali e quindi, come tale, stabilisce una relazione tra storia e contemporaneità.

Con riferimento a questa premessa il libro monografico ha avuto come principale finalità indagare ed esplorare i differenti approcci conoscitivi e metodologici per definire il concetto di città storica, pianificare la sua valorizzazione e soprattutto continuità nel futuro. I contributi scientifici hanno tutti un carattere fortemente comparativo con il fine di evidenziare, grazie a ricerche teoriche, progetti e realizzazioni, i differenti approcci culturali tra Occidente ed Oriente.

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