



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The *International Scientific Committee on Historic Towns and Villages* ICOMOS-CIVVIH is pleased to announce the Scientific Symposium and the Official Annual Meeting of CIVVIH

## **Theory and Practice of Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) and Cities and Sustainable Development (SDG)**

**October 21-24, 2019, Tunis, Tunisia**

### **LABEL WORLD HERITAGE / HISTORICAL URBAN LANDSCAPES**

At a time when tourism is a massive global phenomenon, the notion of "World Heritage", promoted by UNESCO, is becoming of central importance. Since 1972, UNESCO, together with the "Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage", has created its World Heritage List, which lists sites considered to be of exceptional value.

The UNESCO World Heritage Label, created in 1972, is an object of prestige and covetousness for the States, anxious to promote their cultural or natural historical sites and to promote them on the international scene.

#### **AN INTANGIBLE AND DOCUMENTARY HARDWARE HERITAGE**

To this list, which now includes 1092 sites, was added in 2003 the list of intangible heritage, which brings together not physical sites but traditional practices, traditions, dances, customs and know-how, and which has been designed in part to counterbalance the glaring imbalance of the previous list. Finally, in 1995, UNESCO created a register called "Memory of the World" which lists important and sometimes threatened or fragile elements of the documentary heritage of humanity.

#### **A SOURCE OF POWER STRUGGLES**

However, the mechanisms stipulated by the 1972 Convention, seemingly consensual and likely to arouse the feeling, for the peoples, to have a common cultural heritage to preserve, lead on the contrary in many cases if not conflicts, at least struggles of power, rivalries that show that heritage issues are diverted for economic, political or geopolitical purposes.

### **MASS TOURISM IN CLASS SITES**

Several cases illustrate the sensitivity of the heritage protection mechanisms put in place by UNESCO. In many cases, the notion of world cultural heritage has been diverted from its official purpose, and has been used as a tourist tool, or for political and economic purposes.

### **NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE POPULATION**

The effects of the classification of sites on the prestigious World Heritage List can have negative effects for part of the population. Thus, in some cities the classification on this list of the historic district, has led to the relegation of the poorest to the periphery, in parallel with the development of tourism in this central district.

The historic center, which at the time of its classification was a dilapidated neighborhood, has undergone a profound transformation, which has resulted in a brutal eviction of the working classes; while the neighborhood was restored and "gentrified".

Some are invested by rich who buy the most beautiful buildings to convert them into guesthouses, restaurants, cafes or art galleries ... etc. Tourism in some historic cities has increased exponentially since the site was placed on the UNESCO list, but the result is a standardization of urban space and a polarization of inequalities.

Of all the sites inscribed, the city category alone represents more than 200 properties making it the most important category. However, these sites are also the most difficult to manage because of the permanent tension between the preservation of the heritage and its "outstanding universal value" justifying its inscription, and the transformations of the urban environment that demand economic and social development.

It is not surprising that so few texts have been produced on heritage cities in international organizations. This is probably partly to fill the void that the General Conference of UNESCO adopted at the end of 2011 the Recommendation concerning the historic urban landscape (UNESCO, 2011), since the previous text dated from 1976 (Charter of Washington). This text proposes a renewed vision of the management and conservation of urban heritage sites. However, in the case of a "recommendation", the text does not need to be ratified by each member state of the organization and its application is not mandatory, but it does provide clear guidance on the orientations that will be favored in the coming years for the evaluation of cities already on the World Heritage List and candidates for inscription.

**Does this recommendation ensure a better quality of life in historic cities? Does the document on "Historic Urban Landscapes" (HUL) advocate an integrated approach to a successful urban environmental approach, especially in its historical part? Does it examine the importance and benefits of appropriately integrating conservation, management and**

**planning strategies of historic urban areas into local development processes? Will it prevent gentrification?**

The second topic of the conference is historic cities and sustainable development (SDG). An overview of practices concerning the recognition, mainstreaming and effective contribution of cultural heritage within the broader sustainable development discourse and to achieve a coordinated and effective process of advocacy for the localization and monitoring of the SDGs and New Urban Agendas focusing on the three action areas of advocacy, localizing the means of implementation and monitoring, is useful. Urbanization nowadays is leading to irreversible socio-economic changes and cooperation between all parties involved at different levels. The question is, how to achieve a comprehensive quality of living environment

**CALL FOR PAPERS:** Submission of abstracts: 31st of August 2019 (500 words, Calibri 12 pt)

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**THE SCIENTIFIC TEAM:** Samir Abdulac, Nur Akin, Sofia Avgerinou-Kolonias, Claus-Peter Echter, Faika Bejaoui

**THE LANGUAGE of THE CONFERENCE:** English and French for presentation, French presentations with English subtitles

PROGRAMME (Schedule)

**21 and 22 October :** Monday and Tuesday : Official Statutory Meeting - Annual meeting of CIVVIH and Scientific Symposium. The afternoon of Tuesday visit of the Medina

**POST-TOURS 23-24 October,** Wednesday23 : *Guided Tours: Sousse, Kairouan (are world Heritage)*  
Thursday: *Coliseum of El Jem (world Heritage) and Mahdia, beautiful Médina.*

**On Sunday, 20 October,** the participants can visit the Medina, the Bardo Museum or the Carthage site in Tunis.