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Caecilia Pieri

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Of modernity as heritage, of heritage as future

Caecilia Pieri, Ph.D
Head of the Urban Observatory, Ifpo (French Institute of the Near-East)- Beirut

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With 82 million tourists, and a 84,7 billion € income per year, 235 000 firms or shops and two million *permanent* jobs, directly or indirectly linked to the sector of tourism, France is the first tourist destination in the world (data 2009).[1]

This paper has two aims: the first one will attempt to give evidence that such figures do not fully depend upon the quality of French heritage, to which others could be compared[2], but that they can be partly explained by the fact that France has one of the oldest and most experimented tradition in managing heritage, and partly by the fact that heritage is understood as a national good, identity, pride and source of income. The second aim consists in drawing up a comparative vision of what could be seen as a modern, even recent, and vernacular heritage in Iraq, and especially Baghdad, according to the main guidelines of what is considered as modern heritage in France.

The old and the new, two highly relative notions

As concerns heritage in Iraq today, there is a gap of "non-awareness" between what is officially listed by UNESCO World Heritage and what is not. [3] The former is represented by ancient and Islamic heritage to the detriment of all the rest, to the exception of the Marshlands of Southern Iraq. The latter, *i.e.* modern or vernacular heritage, has suffered from a lack of documentation over a long period of time, but this can be explained by many factors the analysis of which would exceed the scope of this paper. Let's list some of them very roughly.

Generally speaking, as concerns vernacular architecture, utility is an overriding consideration, to the detriment of any other. Also, in Oriental regions, (inasmuch as this generic term may be used in opposition to the generic Occident), there is a general acceptance that housing is something temporary, contrarily to a sedentary western notion, which entails the fact that it can easily be rebuilt and is not worthy in itself.[4] Furthermore, the prominence of the archaeological in Iraq (Ancient and Islamic periods), has been used since the 30s as a

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[1] Sources (2009) : http://www.tourisme.gouv.fr/cnt/publications/poids-economique-social-du-tourisme.pdf ; http://www.monuments-nationaux.fr; http://www.rmn.fr. The *Centre des Monuments Nationaux*, a State institution in charge of 104 monuments and sites welcomes 9,5 million tourists per year; the *Réunion des Musées Nationaux*, welcomes 9,2 million tourists per year in 35 State fine-arts museums.

[2] France is nevertheless lucky enough to have an exceptional conjunction of cultural resources added to natural ones and a good climate which allow tourism all along the year in all kind of landscapes, ranging from seaside with islands to mountains, countryside, forests, moorlands, marshes...

[3] Ashur (Qal'at Sherqat) (2003), Hatra (1985), Samarra Archaeological City (2007). Properties submitted on the Tentative List: Ur (2000) ; Nimrud (2000) ; The Ancient City of Nineveh (2000) ; The Fortress of Al-Ukhaidar (2000) ; Wasit (2000) ; The Sacred Complex of Babylon (2003) ; The Marshlands of Mesopotamia (2003) ; Erbil Citadel (2010) ; The Site of Thilkifl (2010) ; Wadi Al-Salam Cemetery in Najaf (2011). Source: http://whc.unesco.org/en/statesparties/IQ.

[4] We must add that in Iraq, recurrent violent floods and termites would severely attack a housing made of wood and brick.

spur of nation-building.[5] Last, the Mesopotamian period had being particularly highlighted by Saddam's regime to enhance a new legitimacy through an ideological continuity between the ancient and current Iraqi identity.[6] Nevertheless, in Iraq there is a general feeling that "the new" is more valuable than "the old", - given that the "old" in question is a "recent old" when compared to the "ancient". Lastly, the political troubles in Iraq since several decades, particularly severe during the 13 year-sanctions and the last war (2003), entailed functional instability resulting in the lack of qualified staff, evanescent or even lacking services in organizing appropriate administrative schemes with trained officers or servants. [7]

All these factors explain how the study of modern architecture and urban planning *as heritage* became a kind of "blind spot" in Iraq. This heritage was rarely documented locally, to the exception of several attempts in the 80s and 90s, which never had time or opportunity to develop.[8] To sum up most of local opinions I have gathered for eight years, even within academic or professional *circles*, the 1920-1960 Baghdad suffers from the burden of an Orientalist prejudice: the mythical image of the vanished Abbassid Baghdad masks the real city, which is never seen for what it is, but for what it is no longer. This lack of consideration contests any identity to the modern city.[9] Also, it is not yet the new capital which emerged from the national revolution: this post-revolutionary Baghdad had created its own elite via the first Department of Architecture within the College of Engineering (1959), under the mastering of Iraqi foreign-educated architects who elaborated a new pride together within a new architectural environment. In other terms, until recently the Baghdad of the Hashemite monarchy was not even seen, stifled as it was into a despised "in-between" status.

I would like to propose a personal re-evaluation of the urban and architectural modernity of XXth century Baghdad by "reading" it in terms of heritage, i.e. of cultural achievement, societal process and collective memory, and perhaps in the light of a future collective project. My approach is based on the principles underlying the 220-year French experience in that domain, the theory, the practice and the management of modern heritage, itself based on the statement that the modern must be preserved for the present is the past of the future.

By producing such a voluntary statement, I hope to raise some public awareness about the vernacular, urban modern heritage of Baghdad seen as an important part of the Iraqi heritage, both prestigious and meaningful.

French heritage protection: main historical phases

The current corpus of French heritage was established in several phases.

The first French law protecting historical monuments was enacted in 1792, after three years of looting and voluntary destruction all over the national territory in the aftermath of the 1789 Revolution.[10] The first revolutionary government had to face the following debate: "What shall we do with the properties of the Kingdom and the Church: shall we destroy them as the symbol of a hated regime? Shall we preserve them as our History? Shall we keep them for we, the People, and transform them so that we can integrate them in our new collective project?" Most of the time, the third solution was adopted, so that the founding stone of the

[5] On the use of archaeology as an ideological and symbolic stake during the XXth century in Iraq, see Bernhardsson 2005, *passim.*

[6]. See Méténier 2006.

[7] What happened in Iraq may be compared to other places, for instance in "reframed" 1990 Warsaw. See Czarniawska 2000.

[8] See Bianca-Fethi 1983, but also the studies by Layth Raouf and Khalid al-Sultani.

[9] See Pieri 2008.

[10] The Church's properties were nationalized in October 1790 , those of aristocrats who emigrated abroad in November 1791, and those of the Kingdom in September 1792.

new society was actually a re-founding one, which kept the prestige [and the know-how] of the old one to turn it into a collective and prestigious framework for the new social and cultural vision of the country:[11] it seems quite a paradox, which was called the "revolutionary conservation of the *Ancien Regime*'s properties".[12]

The second stage occurred after another serious uprising, the French Revolution of July, 1830, when Louis-Philippe, the *roi bourgeois* (the "middle class King") appointed the historian Ludovic Vitet in 1831, then the writer Prosper Mérimée in 1834 to become the first "Inspectors of Historical Monuments"; he also created the official Commission des Monuments Historiques in 1837.[13]

The third and capital stage happened once again after a Revolution, the third one, in 1848. Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, who was elected President of the French Republic, became Emperor after a coup d'Etat in 1851. With the baron Haussmann, who was the governor of Paris district, he launched a new urban policy and transformed Paris according to their vision of what a capital should be: modern, and under control. The straightening of the urban design followed two main principles, which would become a *topos* among the European colonial urban policies: the tropisms of *sanitation* and *modernization*, inherent to any imperialist design; and the *wide street*, which, at the very centre of Paris[14] destroyed most of the urban pattern dating back to the Middle-Ages, in order to make urban revolts impossible such as that which had recently occurred during 1830 and 1848 revolutions.[15]

In parallel to this ambiguous policy of "renewal by erasing", and as its exact counterpoint, the French Emperor launched the first policy of complete, systematic and accurate surveying, documenting, archiving, restoring and even reconstructing of the heritage all over the national territory. Teams of architects and painters were supervised by the architect, theorizer and conservationist Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. During the Third Republic, in 1882, the first Museum of Compared Sculpture was established, followed by the first academic teaching specialized in history of architecture and conservation/ restoration of heritage buildings. It is during this period that the corpus of theoretical and technical tools for the new scientific discipline of heritage/patrimonial process was forged.

Before World War I, this "patrimonialization" policy[16] entailed the institution of heritage as a national good, and the birth of cultural tourism. The law of December 31, 1913, was enacted to protect historical monuments and the Caisse nationale des monuments historiques was created in July 1914. It was the first State organization entitled to manage public subventions for maintenance and paying visits of historical buildings which had formerly belonged to the Kingdom and the Church and now belonged to the State, and also historical sites such as prehistoric caves, Greek or Gallo-Roman ruins on the French territory.[17]

Last, during the prosperous post war years preceding the petrol crisis, ("Trente Glorieuses" 1950-1980 period), the 1960s witnessed the booming of national and international tourism with different laws to protect and enhance not only the monuments, but also the country's environmental resources via a huge planning of land development (mountains, seaside, countryside, protected valleys and regions). Finally, in 1964, after 20

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[11] See Beghain 1991, chapter 1.
[12] See Poulot 1985.
[13] See Pinon 1999.
[14] i.e. around the cathedral of Notre-Dame, built on the first site of Paris, called "the City Island".
[15] The "wide street" was intentionally used by the British in most of their colonies, especially in India. See Home 1997.
[16] In French, heritage is "patrimoine".
[17] http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/organisation/dapa/historic-dapa.htm. This short paper deliberately ignores the fields of ethnologic and intangible heritage, which would be beyond its scope.

years of official Reconstruction in the aftermath of the terrible destructions due to the US and UK bombings during World War II, André Malraux, the reknown author and Minister of Culture, and André Chastel, an art historian specialized in the Italian Renaissance, founded the "Inventaire Général des Monuments et des richesses artistiques de la France" (General Survey of French Monuments and Artistic Treasures). Their purpose aimed explicitly at preserving endangered data, knowledge and memory, as both of them foresaw a new coming age of large-scale destructions in the name of modernization – and it would be the case all over the world from the 60s to the 80s…

Thus, it can be said that the French policy, philosophy and economy of heritage, were born from the direct experience of wars, violence and destructions on the national territory: they gave a concrete application to the desire of preserving the built memory of the country – ancient, but modern as well – in the name of the general interest. Also, the efficiency of this policy is mainly due to the fact that enjoying heritage is not seen as a cultural privilege reserved to privileged segments of the population; and it became a basis for most of ulterior heritage policies in the world.[18]

APPENDIX I, Main phases of heritage protection in France

1. September 16, 1792: *temporary conservation of "art works threatened by the revolutionary troubles"*
2. 1795: *Creation of a General Council of the Civil Buildings*
3. 1796: *Creation of the Museum of French Monuments*
4. 1837*: Creation of the Commission des Monuments Historiques (Committee of Historical Monuments)*
4. 1913: *Label MH « Monument historique" for architecture, which entails a preserved surrounding perimeter of 500 metres, not to be built or changed without a special permit.*
5. 1964: *Heritage listed among the « Inventaire général des monuments et des richesses artistiques de la France" (General Survey of French Monuments and Artistic treasures).*
6. 2003: *ZPPAUP (Zones de protection du patrimoine architectural, urbain et paysager): preserved sectors, understood as "architectural, urban and landscaping heritage".*
7. 1989: *Cities of Art and History: a special label given to municipalities which have demonstrated a consistent heritage policy in terms of preservation, funds, manifestations, educational programs; this label allows the mayoralties to ask subventions from the State as to such or such project.*
8. 2000*: Special Label « XXth century Heritage »: to this very day, it concerns about 1500 items, which deserve special criteria of analysis and possible restoration, adapted to modern materials and environments*

« From the cathedral to the spoon », or from *unicum* to *typicum*

Since 1964, in France we protect all kind of items transforming the country daily into heritage, "from the cathedral to the spoon".[19] This is based on what modern techniques of investigation in archaeology can reveal from a simple spoon when found in a Mesopotamian grave, for instance: culture, techniques and craftsmanship (style, decor), economy, industry and trade (materials), sociology (owner, type of grave), anthropology (food remains), etc. According to the principles of the French Inventaire Général (General Survey), the notion of protection does not aim at "freezing" the object in a museum window. It consists in several phases :

[18] In UK, the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England, founded in 1908, protected first historic buildings dating back to "the early XVIIIth century." Then in 1921 the limit was postponed to 1714, after WWII to 1850, before being abolished in 1963. This means that anything of recognized heritage, even very recent (building, monument, landscape or neighborhood), may be protected from destruction. See Edelblutte 2008.

[19] A phrase which has always been used in France for 40 years to describe the extension of the field of heritage; it is also the subtitle of Heinich 2009.

- identification and documentation, as accurately as possible, following a precise and scientific methodology established since 1964;
- information available to everybody via a web data bank, under the shape of a descriptive catalogue;
- decision about what will be done in terms of protection, or not; even when some items get destroyed for various reasons, the information about them remains to be used by historians, architects, urban planners, any other private or public decision makers.

Official referenced categories are architecture, including all elements of a building which range from grounds to roofs; also, its numerous sub-categories, such as social housing, garden-cities, seaside and resort heritage, private mansions, etc; built heritage with all kind of sub-categories: educational, commercial, rural, industrial, sports, infrastructures, public buildings such as administrations or hospitals, and, at last, "places of memory" and preserved sectors. Thus, some items can be recent or modest, but each of them has its exemplarity as a landmark of identity, whatever it is, or embodies collective or civilian values. In other words, nowadays the concept of heritage ranges from the *unicum* to the *typicum*.

Protecting items of a generic modernity

These items, sometimes whole ensembles, have been classified according several categories. The first one addresses what could be called a generic, or iconic modernity in the field of space-building. Modern urban sites include whole cities, such as Le Havre, a millenary city which was totally destroyed during World War II and then rebuilt in 1950 by Perret brothers arch. ; it became UNESCO World Heritage in 2005. But some low cost housing cities, too, are preserved not necessarily for their architectural value but because they represent a key stage in the building history of modern France. Some are famous, as buildings by Le Corbusier in Marseille, Rezé, Firminy, Briey or Pessac. Some other are less well known, such as the Cité des Dents-de-Scie (Gutton arch., 1931- MH 1992): but the heritage value here consists in the witnessing of a new kind of societal organisation, contemporary of a new stage of industrial development, of family organisation, of relationship individual/ community/ work.

Modern vernacular houses are preserved,_even when they are private villas, such as picturesque mansions of the *Belle Epoque* or more recent architect's masterpieces dating back to the 1960s or 1970s. But modern buildings representative of specific constructive techniques can be listed too, such as the Tour Albert in Paris (Albert, Boileau and Labourdette arch., 1960), which is famous for its structure in steel tubes.

Space building and technological field include of course infrastructures, which are considered as important witnesses of the daily life: typical bridges, viaducts or dams; water supply, lighthouse, transports: airport, metro stations... A certain quantity of the XXth century railways stations are now protected although still in use, and it is also true of some airports: the Paris airport of Le Bourget (Labro arch., 1937) has been partly transformed into a museum of aviation and a place for trade fairs, but is still used as a small airport for official personalities.

APPENDIX II Databases of the French Ministry of Culture

http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/inventai/presenta/bddinv.htm

http://www.inventaire.culture.gouv.fr

Mérimée. *Created between 1978 and 1995. Built heritage : domestic, religious, agricultural, industrial, military, funerary, commercial, of craftsmanship, schools and unviersities, hospitals and gardens. About 200 000 items aver about 20 000 towns. From Prehistory to 1970.*

Palissy. *Created between 1978 and 1995 for objects which are in the buildings registered in « Mérimée » (for existing works or items, remains, destroyed items or projects) : fines arts (painting, sculpture, graphic arts), objects, domestic , monumental and religious furniture, glass-windows, music instruments, industrial heritage, navy heritage (sea and rivers), scientific tools, ironwork, etc.*

Mémoire *: photos. Created in 1995 : 275 000 images. Urbanism and architecture : religious, public, domestic, industrial, of craftsmanship and commercial ; civil engineering, gardens, objects, religious, civil and domestic furniture; music instruments; scientific tools ; engineering machines, motors, etc. international exhibitions, historical events, reportages, portraits.*

Archidoc *bibliographic files. Created in 1997 : about 70 000 files, for XIXth and XXth century only. Urbanism and architecture : religious, public, domestic, industrial, of craftsmanship, commercial ; civil engineering.*

Thésaurus *gathers a set of common vocabulary to all these databases.*

Each database can be accessed separately. Common informations which are useful to identify the items are in each base, so that surfing from one database to any other is easy.

Of built heritage and its intangible meaning

Deriving from space building, a second category could include all what documents the life of the country considered in its ethnology/ethnography. Because of their activity, commercial buildings, hotels or simple shops are very often partly preserved, usually the façade. It is an interesting compromise which does not hamper business by allowing internal transformations or modernization. All kind of wide spaces were re-converted since the 1980s, for instance the area of the former main slaughterhouse of Paris-la Villette (XIXth century, 55 hectares), located in what was once the northern fringe of the capital. It has been reconverted into a huge natural and architectural area (design by Tschumi arch., 1980) which includes a palace for trade fairs, theatre performances, exhibitions (Reichen and Robert, eng.); the offices became a theatre. On the remaining area, a complex of new buildings was erected: museum of Sciences and Industry (Fainsilber arch., 1980-1986); City of Music, with museum and national school of music (Portzamparc arch., 1991-1995); there are also restaurants, cinemas, circus, huge playing-games area for children and walking paths along the Canal de l'Ourcq, along which the former mills and factories have been preserved and transformed into housing and artists workshops. On the green area, many families come on Sundays for picnics, and by Summer, a giant screen allows thousands of people to see movies in the open-air, for free, at night. All this has transformed the whole neighbourhood into one of the most successful meeting point of social conviviality in Paris.

For the same reason, industrial buildings, including railways systems and mines are protected not only as structures but also as places of memory for industry: various kinds of factories are frequently converted into museums, or research and educational centres in the

field of their former activity. For instance, a water supply factory (Loewy arch., 1901, listed 1993) became a research centre on hydraulics and waste water treatment.

Educational or leisure buildings are protected too, although still in use for culture, sports, entertainment, so that both the built envelope and the use of the building are seen as heritage. Swimming pools, stadiums (Gerland football stadium in Lyon, Tony Garnier arch. 1926, listed 1967) can become historical protected buildings…. As to the movies-theatres and cinemas in Paris, most of them were built in the 1930s and 1940s; many of them were destroyed in the 70s in the name of modernization. Now, almost all the remaining ones are protected, not only as buildings but as cultural intangible heritage. Urban objects can be protected, such as urban « furniture»: public fountains (Wallace fountains), advertising columns (Morris columns), road sign-posts...

Last, places of memory (referring to Pierre Nora's concept of "lieux de mémoire") must be understood in a very broad meaning, ranging from war memories to houses belonging to personalities, artists, writers, famous characters: the German concentration camp and gas chamber of Strutdhof (Alsace), the German batteries of concrete blockhaus all along the French Atlantic Coast, Le Corbusier's cabanon in the South of France, the sculptor Rodin's house in Meudon near Paris....

We can easily infer from such classifications that the notion of *typicum* is never neutral, as it results from something which lays between the arbitrary and the consensus, whatever it is. Actually the notion of built heritage, although it differs from intangible heritage, has nevertheless something intangible. Therefore, the built tangible envelope and its intangible meaning or context are not dissociable: it is what makes their ambivalence.

In Iraq: from the mosque to the *isment balât*?

To begin with, the Baghdadi river panoramas from Jadriya to Kadhimiya are highly noticeable, as they offer a remarkable example of horizontal river- cityscape typical of the traditional characteristic Arab-Muslim city. Baghdad is probably the last one among the Arab capitals to give such an example of a visual specific continuity, whose evidence is given by the striking parallel between XIXth century images of its panorama and contemporary views of it. In such respect, this urban river-panorama is in itself an exceptional historical testimony.

In a way, many neighbourhoods and urban ensembles of the XXth century Baghdadi cityscape, taken as a whole, tell a meaningful urban history. This is true for the oldest ones, from 1915 to 1930: Rashid street in Rusafa, which, if properly restored, could pretend to become World Heritage including every building from Abu Nawas- Bab Shargi to Bab al-Muaddham and determining a preserved sector along both sides, East (Hafidh al-Qadi square, Shorja, Bab-es-Sheikh), West (Nahr Street). It is also very true for Battaween (from 1926/ 1928) with its straight streets, open wooden sculpted *verandahs*, delicate brick decors, neo-traditional schemes with covered centred halls, which testify to a successful example of composite new middle-class, typical of the formation of Iraqi nation-building. It is true, then, of Abu Nawas, the harmonious perspective of which along the Tigris is unique and punctuated with 1930-1970 houses which, for their most part, are gorgeous although sometimes in a dilapidated condition.

Among the 1930-1970s architectural period, some neighbourhoods are particularly rich in gorgeous houses and should be preserved as a whole, too, under certain conditions,[20] after getting rid of their degrading elements and without forbidding demolitions providing it would

[20] It would entail first important budgets to establish consulting, enquiries and social participation of local *majlis* for each *mahalla*, to re-think the complexity of the area in order to preserve the existing social links and create some new urban dynamics.

entail the strict control of any renovation or new construction: Waziriya -Aywadhiya, Adhamiya- Raghiba Khatoon north-east; Karrada -Abu Nawas, Saadoun, Masbah-Jadriya, south-east; Karkh- Salhiya-Shawaqqa centre-west. And, last but not least, one remarkable segment is the urban scheme formed by al-Amin/ al-Wathba/al-Kifah street, which was, in 1937-1939, the first modern urban tracing with two-story buildings designed under the supervision the first Iraqi architect, Ahmad Mukhtar Ibrahim, also the first to become Architect of the Government in charge of the Public Works.

Also, some neighbourhoods constitute the first examples of modern cooperative housing and access to ownership on a large scale ever built in Iraq: Tobshi, Washash, Baghdad Gharbia, the housing compounds built by the Iraqi Raiways, or by the IPC (Iraq Petroleum Company) in the North…..Advertizing publications of that time used to present them as an achievement to be proud of. If by chance some or part of these compounds were still intact, at least some items of them should be preserved not for their aesthetic performance but because they might be appropriate to new impulses and integrated processes of social restructuration.

From New-York to Dubai, and from Shanghai to Paris-La Défense, "Manhattan-type" neighbourhoods have become a compulsory parameter of globalization. But any perspective of sustainable development entails the re-thinking of the "BCD" concept (Business Centre Development), typical of US cities which had been built from nothing. Erasing the old cities-centres belongs nowdays to an obsolete ideology, which tends to be replaced by a new balance between existing areas and new areas, between preservation and development.

In Baghdad itself, several neighbourhoods could be more adapted to welcome such high-rising developments, for instance al-Alawi which, on the Western bank, between Mansur, Shawaqqa and Salhiya, has already appropriate geographical and functional advantages. It is somehow a city-gate neighbourhood situated at a strategic crossroad between the two main axes coming from abroad (West and North-West).[21] Thus, Baghdad could become the last Arab capital capable of preserving its unique formal, chromatic, visual and functional centre-cityscape *as a whole*, while allowing other neighbourhoods to be developed, as it has plenty of empty spaces within its boundaries.

The eclectic decor of typical Baghdadi housing during the 1930s and the 1940s, is far from being merely a blind mimicry of the West. Most of this housing was built by Iraqi *ustawat* at the maximum of their art, technique and invention. Each house represents a unique ensemble. The repertory of sculpted details testifies to a creative hybridity which mixes vocabularies coming from Mesopotamian tradition, Mediterranean Antiquity, Islamic and regional tradition, and European contemporary fashion. The resulting synthesis has its idiosyncrasy which differs from what is found in the neighbouring countries at that time, either in brick or in moulded concrete.

This mastery, although not "avant-garde", is quite sophisticated and inventive, as it adapts a long tradition to new fashions. Some aspects of this symbiosis could constitute either what Anthony King calls a post-modern vocabulary, or even, an alternative modernism.[22]

Most of the houses today still retain a large part of their decorative apparatus. Curtains of electric cables or new concrete walls very often hide elegant iron-works, such as the typical "peacock-feather" motive or Art Deco geometric patterns. Under the dust of oblivion or the machinery of a saw-mill, hundreds of cement tiles patterns (*isment balât*) transform the

[21] Also, it is already punctuated with important buildings, such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Iraqi Museum, the International Railways West Station, the Bunnia Mosque… It is not far from other important buildings such as ministries – Planning, Justice, Housing -, other administrations or cultural centres – Baghdad Governorate, Iraqi Contemporary Museum of Art, Rashid complex (to be restored). Lastly, it is very close to the Tigris and the city-centre, with the Tower of Telecommunications (in restoration), the buildings of the Mayoralty of Baghdad and Water Supply administration…

[22] Anthony King, in Nasr-Volait 2003.

house-floors into shimmering precious carpets. Not to mention the beautiful carved doors, the delicate brass handles, the aesthetic quality of solid interior furniture, in imported teck or even sometimes mahogany, or the coloured-glass windows whose modern shapes and patterns follow the technique and spirit of the *ursi* windows.

Among the modern "historical places", some played a specific role in the building of the modern spirit in Iraq: the first Olympic Club in Adhamiya[23], or the cinema Firdaous, (Ahmad Mukhtar Ibrahim arch.); the Zawra movie-theatre (Rasheed Street, Ibrahim al-Naddaf arch., 1933) which was a place for debates and meetings for the generation of the Revolution... or also famous artists' houses among which Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's or Faiq Hassan's house, which witnessed many meetings and discussions between artists, and could have been protected as a memory of the Baghdadi modernity.

From 1950 to 1980, lots of Iraqi and foreign architects, well known or less well known, gave Baghdad an amazing variety of "modern heritage" buildings on various scales, ranging from bridges to stations, administrations or anonymous modernist houses. Plot buildings, particularly, develop interesting solutions by adapting the modernist vocabulary and typology – double skin façade, sun-breakers, columns, porches, etc – as an alternative to traditional and regional demands.

What can be called "national" heritage?

What do we call French heritage in France? Above all, the style is not what makes an item become heritage: the French Parliament, for instance, is a mixture of Greek and Roman traditions. And among the 43 180 items which are officially listed as "XXth century Protected French heritage and historical monuments" we find a Greek style villa: Kérylos, South of France (Pontremoli arch. 1908, protected 1966); the main Mosque of Paris, of Moroccan style a cinema of Egyptian style, the Louxor (Zipzy arch. 1921, protected 1981); the Moresque building of the Art and Archaeology Institute in Paris (Bigot arch., 1930, protected 1996); a German Bauhaus style villa Villa Cavrois, near Lille (Mallet-Stevens 1932, protected 1990); a Japanese pagoda, the Cinéma La Pagode in Paris etc.

Of course some periods led to characteristic "French styles" in architecture: the French Renaissance, the Loire castles, the French classicism "Grand siècle", *i.e.* the XVIIth century such as in Versailles, the French "Art nouveau", etc. But generally speaking, is considered as French heritage any kind of item which has been built on the French territory and to this extent, has become part of the French landscape, identity, history, whatever its style.

In fact, beyond the question of style, the idea of national heritage requires a process of appropriation of the heritage by the people. If we take the example of the *shanashil*, there is no doubt that it is Iraqi. But this typology of *oriel* can be found in many countries with conservative societies and narrow streets system because of the climate. Therefore, if it is Iraqi, it's not from its style (despite the specificities of the Iraqi *shanashil*), but rather because with the passing of time –since the Abbassids – it became part of the Iraqi urban landscape and was appropriated by the people, as the iconic symbol of the "traditional Iraqi house"[24].

We can find another and striking example of appropriation of an allogenic architecture in Erythrea, where the typically fascist Italian colonial architecture has been totally re-appropriated by the people and reincorporated into their national heritage. It can be found now on the official website of African architecture.[25] In several other countries, (Syria, Lebanon,

[23] The name was Royal Sporting Club, then it was changed into the Republic Sports Club, then now the Adhamiya Club for Sports.

[24] Some images among the *Maqamat* illustrated by the Baghdadi painter Al-Wasiti (XIII th century) represent stylized constructions which could be *shanashil* (see Warren-Fethi 1983).

[25] Website: www. archiafrika.org.

North Africa), European-style modern architecture of the former colonizers became "national" heritage. The same could be true of Iraq with its modern Iraqi heritage: I mean in particular not only the splendid buildings built by the British, but also the first "urban verticals" of the 50s, such as the Daftar Dar Building or the Khan Pasha building, both built by an Iraqi pioneer architect, Abdullah Ihsan Kamil, or the collection of "plot-buildings" 1930-1960 in Baghdad, which constitute a very special conservatory of urban housing forms.

Urban context as consensus - and sometimes as compromise

An urban context provides « something » which is much more than the mere addition of its parts: it is an intermingling of forms and functions, new and old, and often a compromise between successful facts and failures. This is the main reason why in most of the countries where laws exist since the early XXth century, the notion of heritage has been extended to blocks and neighbourhoods, even whole towns, such as landscape units or vast territories combining various natural elements or human, although it greatly complicates their management.

Speaking of house, we speak of a living household made of interwoven relationships between educational and representational patterns, individual and collective projections, links with the cultural, social and political collective environment, etc. In this respect any urban reformulation which takes place at the core of the city must incorporate formal and functional continuity and diversity into innovation, at least to a certain extent. From that point of view, the overall reshaping of Baghdad that was planned in the 1980s,[26] was much more than a physical change. What happened in Haifa Street was a total erasing of entire neighbourhoods in Karkh, on the West bank, of what either had kept traces of the pre-modern urban fabric, or had been built during the 1930s as a residential area for a high bourgeoisie and their westernized mansions. Then Saddam Hussein ordered the building of housing ensembles for chosen upper-middle classes, together with cultural and official facilities. Such a neighbourhood was supposed to embody the new affirmation of a new affluent class, in what became the grand axe leading from North toward the president's privileged neighbourhood, Karradat Maryam (today the "Green zone"). Of this gigantic demolition enterprise, only nine houses survived: they were perfectly restored from the architectural and technical point of view[27], but today it can be said that they have lost part of their meaning since the neighbourhood they were part of has disappeared. Haifa Street is still a residential area, but it offers a striking contrast between the deserted main artery with no shops, no passers-by, no activities, no trees, no life at all, and the vivid, teeming, overcrowded and busy areas next to it, all situated in the older neighbourhoods along the Tigris (Shawaqqa, Kraimat).

Today, modern urban utopias are becoming obsolete, because they cannot suit any sustainable long-term vision of development, and because they have proved to be often aggressively destructive or illusory. But thirty years ago, all around the world, the 1970s and 1980s were the more destructive decades in the name of the so-called "modernization", as they aimed at transforming the urban fabric and the way of life on radical basis. Paris itself is a good example of a successful ensemble with some huge mistakes dating back to both decades. One of the most visible of them is the Tour Montparnasse, with which Parisians must cope: it is a huge isolated tower, which spoils all the urban perspectives and panoramas of the

[26] This was part of a whole remodeling of the city into eleven new areas. See "Madinat as-Salam", *Process*, special issue, 1985.

[27] The restoration was led by a British-Iraqi team including John Warren, Ihsan Fethi, Nicholas Wood, etc.

very centre.[28] The worst was the destruction of the main Parisian market-hall (half covered/half open-air), Les Halles, built by Baltard in the XIXth century, which constituted a neighbourhood that was alive 24h out of 24h. It was replaced by a huge mall, the biggest problem of which is not its quite vulgar architecture, but its urban disruption. During daytime, it is crowded and safe; but at night it becomes dangerous (gangs, drug dealers' traffic…). Obviously such an urban failure has complex reasons; but among the main ones is the fact that it erased a whole lively neighbourhood to transform it into a place of mere consumerism with no other social value. At night, shops are closed and consumerism is off: the place becomes a huge public vacuum, which cannot be secured by private guards. The failure is such that there was recently a public demand for a restructuring of the whole. After several years of public consultation, enquiries and an international competition, it will be implemented, and it will cost billions of euros.

The destruction of the Paris Halles became a point of no-return, and since then we, French, learnt from our mistakes: the Centre Pompidou was built without erasing anything (there was a car park before) (Piano and Rogers arch., 1976). From the beginning it was designed to be not only a museum for tourists, but above all a collective landmark and source of activities for citizens of Paris; thus, it has been the opportunity to create a new social and collective value.[29]

The European notions of heritage and of city are linked: both entail that diversity should be preserved and organized as a whole and as a collective value, as the city is the place of shared space (even if only partially) by various people whatever they come from. For that reason, surgical gestures aiming at systematically levelling odd details or idiosyncratic uses of the city might be harmful on the long term. One aspect which has been emphasized by the French writer Victor Hugo, who was an activist in the field of national heritage, is the fact that *« The building belongs to its owner, but its beauty belongs to the people »:* this sentence was written in 1832 in a very famous article published with the title "Guerre aux démolisseurs" (Fighting against demolishers). Hugo vehemently advocated the notion of beauty as a national good and collective interest, which became one of the basic principles of French idea of heritage: the landscape, urban or natural, has and is a collective value which cannot be altered without a certain consensus. Such a consensus should imply at least a minimum adhesion between the individuals and the community. Their particular interest lays in the respect the law, as the law is not seen as something which deprives them of their liberty: it is a constraint which has a cost, but it is the price to pay to be part of a shared sense of civic space.

Highlighting the principle of reconversion/adaptive re-use.

The *patrimonialization* of vernacular heritage is fairly recent and has to be envisioned in parallel to the development of globalization: in Europe, the heritage becomes the warrant of an identity threatened by open borders and barriers. In this respect, the re-conversion of existing structures or buildings may prove to be more expensive in the short term, but more successful in the long term, in terms of collective prestige and social cohesion. In France, as elsewhere in Europe, modern heritage buildings are either still in use, such as dams or private houses, or converted to other uses. For instance, because of its proportions and size, industrial

[28] There is also an urban highway along the Seine, (the "Voie sur Berge"), which proved to be such a failure that now on Sundays it is closed to cars and open to pedestrians; and even transformed into a beach one month every summer! This points out that an urban population cannot be deprived of a direct link with the river.

[29] Speaking of compromise, the church of Montmartre in Paris was erected by a reactionary government to commemorate its triumph and the massacre of 30 000 persons during the French civil uprising of 1871 called "La Commune". For that reason, the people of Paris don't like this monument, but with time we accepted it: it became part of Paris' landscape and is visited by 10 million tourists a year. Source : http://www.paris.catholique.fr/-Saint-Pierre-de-Montmartre-.html.

heritage proved to be particularly adapted to educational uses - for universities, high schools and colleges-, or research activities - sometimes in continuity with the former use-. Rural heritage becomes often a centre for local/agricultural tourism and information, or for craftsmanship. According to the principle of re-conversion, the persistence of forms and spaces can be subject to renovation with no destruction, and to re-conversion toward another life. In such projects, the "soul" of the former function gives a place its unique character, its value, and this value has to be understood in terms of both real estate and prestige, economic and symbolic.

In an urban regeneration process, the city is not seen as a museum, as a fixed image forever, inasmuch as it generates a new attractiveness, new activities, new dynamics and new incomes. Once restored and rehabilitated, any kind of building or neighbourhood – factory, mill, port, hospital, castle.... – can become a new starting point for the territory, such as occurred in the case of the La Villette neighbourhood of Paris. In some aspects, the new area which was developed in London around the Tate Modern museum is very similar: a former industrial heritage which was transformed into an art museum, with free entrance for the public, free areas which became a crowded place for walking, meeting, playing...

Heritage implies an investment, but primarily, imagination: most neighbourhoods of the Paris centre before were poor, dirty and collapsing; they are now clean, extremely expensive –a new problem still to be solved in order to counterbalance speculation and gentrification. In the same way, some neighbourhoods of Baghdad-centre today, such as part of (among others) Battaween, Aywadhiya, Adhamiya, Waziriya, Kraimat or Shawaqqa which are poor, dirty and extremely dilapidated, could become a fantastic urban centre with beautiful houses if properly restored.

Conclusion: n**o future without a (modern) past.**

Heritage is not isolated from the urban context, and this urban context is not only the product of collective practices: it is also the producer of them. Also, heritage is not only transmission of the past, it is mainly a collective project. So at this point we should ask: what collective memories shall we protect, to build what collective project? Understandably, the question is highly delicate in Iraq today, but Iraqis mustn't shun this issue, so they can come to terms with it, sooner or later, and whatever the solutions found.

The successful achievement of an urban context does not lie on abstract decisions on paper. It is a complex process, subject to negotiations and conflicts as it requires time and daily appropriation of the people itself. It is a paradox that the people, although the first stakeholders, are not the decision makers, and when heritage and development are articulated only in terms of "architecture" and "tourism", and when the capitalistic investment is the major triggering event, this kind of development is more a façade for business. On the contrary development, such as heritage, should embody negotiated consensus, whatever the shape and the extent this consensus take. Obviously, as the French notion of heritage derives from a specific history, this heritage became a landmark and a practice of city-making, itself linked to modes of leaderships and of governance. The participation of the citizens became part of urban policies because of the progression of the civilian society and urban middle-class.

But what does the "participation into public action" signify for individuals or citizens who have always been excluded from urban policies? Until today civilian societies in the Middle-East witnessed a gap between the experts and the simple citizens. These citizens were generally deprived of access to the destiny of their urban environment, which was characterized by the absence of negotiation, regulations or deregulations from above, or global *laissez-faire*. But this could change, not only because of the recent societal and political shift in the Arab world: several examples in countries of urban East Africa show that

urban citizens, far from being inactive, launch various initiatives, most often outside formal structures. When their interests are threatened, they organize themselves in groups or local associations which negotiate with public institutions.[30]

In Baghdad, one of the most delicate aspects of the question lies probably in the complexity of its fabric, which reflects the complexity of its population and history. In the 1980s, the Iraqi Palestinian critic Jabra Ibrahim Jabra wrote about "Baghdad in a perspective of time": he invoked Babylon a city of pluralities, where all languages, religions, races and cultures could be found.[31] But the immediate future of Iraq will have to deal with – among others – the issue of sectarian antagonisms, which has led to a new urban fragmentation and will imply a delicate process of re-composition, re-vitalization of the city. This leads to raising the issues of institutional accountability and civil responsibilities of the rulers, together with the appropriation of the urban space, understood as a common/shared space for multiple communities. Shared heritage and shared public space should be enhanced in parallel, for a city with fragmented spaces, fragmented populations and fragmented social bodies goes back to pre-modern ages and cannot face the long term future properly.

In such a perspective, the XXth century heritage of Baghdad, if restored, renewed and incorporated into a perspective of development, could become a key "missing link" between the city's past and future. Once again, the challenge is not to "sanctuarize" Baghdad, from Kadhimiya to Jadriya, as a museum. Nevertheless, it would be risky for the Iraqis to deny the architectural and urban quality of such or such neighbourhood under the pressure of economy, as *no identity can be built from scratch,* even if it can seem easy to copy such or such model, in particular the so-called "Dubai- success-story-model": production of iconic images and spectacles which are detached from the "local" and reflect the global flows of money; short term valorization; territorial partitions and control, with clusters and specialized zones; terra-forming as image-making, blurring the real present with an imaged future; non-sustainable over-mobilisation of critical resources, etc.[32]

Last but not least, in Iraq as in any other country, but maybe more than in any other country, the dilemma of the XXIth century will be to re-evaluate the rich potentialities of its modern heritage. Indeed the main challenge will be firstly, to give this "inherited modernity" an opportunity to nourish the future and secondly, to protect it from the jeopardizing illusions of a quick - show off- ready-made "renewal" induced by the impersonal and alienating laws of the market. In other terms, rather than "bigger, higher, faster, further", I'd rather advocate Sonallah Ibrahim's phrase, *Lâ mustaqbal bidûn mâdî*: no future without a (modern) past.

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[30] See Legros 2008.
[31] Jabra 1985.
[32] I am referering to Dr. Waleed Hazbun's lecture during the 2011 City Debates (American University of Beirut): 'The 'Dubai Model' and its Effects: Tourism and the Political Economy of Place-Making » .

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