

A Review of Adaptive Re-use of Historic Buildings: Relevant Lessons from the Dervish Pasha Mansion, Nicosia in Sustaining Conservation Practice in Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract— The policy of managing a common heritage must be based on the understanding of its cultural significance. But that could only apply when indeed those holding these heritage properties in trust realize the necessity of observing best practices. Including consideration of other factors affecting the future of a place such as the owner's needs, resources and external constraints, its physical condition in management policy development is vital. This research is a review of the guiding principles of architectural conservation practices especially as it affects adaptive reuse of immovable tangible properties and its potentials in transforming the historic landscape of Osun State, Nigeria.

Index Terms— Adaptive re-use, Architectural heritages, Conservation.

1 INTRODUCTION

PLACES of historical significance world over have often times contributed a lot in the perception of the geographies that house them. They enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to the community and its landscape and to past lived experiences. They are historical records that are important as tangible expressions of people's identity. Such places reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us – always irreplaceable and precious! This necessitates the overwhelming need for such places to be conserved for present and especially future generations.

Being a broad discipline, architectural heritage could be divided into tangible aspect and intangible aspect, [1]. The tangible aspect comprises of movable and unmovable items while the intangible aspect comprises of folklore, music, dance, social values, beliefs and religions [2], [3]. Further still, the movable items of the tangible aspect could be either of paintings, sculpture and furniture while the unmovable could be *buildings* and *sites*.

The aim of this research is to review the general procedure often involved in the practice of architectural conservation and restoration with particular attention on re-adaptive use of historic buildings. This is essential as it embodies great lessons for developing countries especially in Africa to learn partly because other developed countries have proven over time through their robust professional practices and concerted ef-

fort that it is a veritable means of generating revenue especially when it attracts tourists. The process of converting the Dervish Pasha Mansion (a building once in ruins) in the Arabahmet area of Nicosia into an ethnographic museum is examined and recommendations are made as to how such measures could be adapted in Osun state, Nigeria.

2 ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION

In an age where most of human activities are geared towards ensuring sustainability both in architectural practice and every other aspect of our endeavors, architectural conservation well describes as the process that assures both the sustenance and longevity of the design, construction, and historical integrity and of our built heritage through carefully planned interventions. In order words conservation includes undertaking necessary maintenance to retain a built property in its existing form and condition. Such buildings are often temples, shrines, churches, mosques, residential buildings, etc.

The emergence of architectural conservation could be traced to the eighteenth century though it gained significant attention during the last quarter of the nineteenth century; it came apparently as a reaction to modernism. It is to be recalled that during the industrial revolution, a large number of people migrated into urban settings in Europe and America; consequent upon the resultant surge in urban population, buildings of historical significance were demolished in attempt to meet the increasing demand for housing. On the other hand, it is worthy to note that this period was characterized by wars and revolutions which did much harm to cultural heritage espe-

cially in Europe. Ironically, though thousands of miles apart, colonial African territories (including Nigeria) were not spared of the destructive tendencies of the industrial age especially as it concerns cultural heritage. It became a way of life for local and native people to aspire for foreign and industrially produced goods such as the Afro-Brazilians and the Saros came with upon repatriation from the Americas and Europe [4].

Whereas by the end of the 19th century architectural conservation had gained ground, its *undeniable* growth however, occurred when significant groundbreaking discoveries in archaeology and scientific advancement coupled with three different robust but divergent approaches that came by as a result of definite factors such as are discussed below. These attempts are unity of style, stylistic restoration, and the Italian conservation approach [5]. In order to put this research to context, effort is made to describe in relative details the origin and concept of architectural conservation.

2.1 Stylistic Restoration

(Restoration of Stylistic Integrity)

Also known as Unity of Style, this idea was proposed by the French restoration architect and historian, Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. He was a leading figure in the development of restoration and his writings encouraged a great deal of creative thought and debate regarding honest structural expression and the embracing of modern technology [6]. Part of the characteristics that Jokilehto, (1999) [5] noted was that this philosophy of building restoration could be felt in this statement credited to him—*“the term restoration and the thing itself are both modern. To restore a building is not to preserve it, to repair or to rebuild it; it is to reinstate it in a condition of completeness which may never have existed at any given time”*.

One of the characteristic merits of this approach could be seen in his methodological approach to this development of restoration methodology. He believed restoration is perhaps a form of archaeology and *pure science*. However, some of the restoration works he championed under this approach were done on mere hypotheses and assumptions, even though he often took inventory of the current and previous state of such buildings thereby analyzing all available evidence before commencing the restoration process. His emphasis on unity of style led to complete reconstruction, which ended up as a norm in many countries in Europe and beyond [5]. Supporters of the restoration movement, inspired by Viollet-le-Duc, rested essentially on the merger of newness-value (unity of style) and historic value (originality of style), aiming to remove all traces of natural decay and restore every fragment to create a historic entity.



*Wall of Carcassonne restored by Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc
before restoration*



*Wall of Carcassonne restored by Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc
after restoration*

As the foundation of architectural restoration practice, unity of style or stylistic restoration thrived in many ways: it was the beginning of restoration theory and practice in the nineteenth century which was aimed at the gothic architecture in France. However, its approach was criticized by the opponents such as simple methods which resulted in disapproval, denial, debating and thinking for several years in the aspects of practical and theoretical restoration. These discussions were perhaps consequent upon the conflict of aesthetic value, historical value and technique aspects. “It is also the very reason that the difference in opinion, correlation, and conflict of value judgment give birth to the originally historical restoration subject” [7] as Viollet-le-Duc’s ideas contrasted strongly with those of the anti-restoration movement who fought against the destruction of the historical authenticity of the buildings in favor of their protection, conservation and maintenance. Meanwhile, some principles of stylistic restoration and their attitude to the ancient architecture still have effects in the present age.

2.2 Romanticist Approach (Conservative Repair)

This approach came by as a reaction to the Stylistic Restoration of Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. It emerged as a protest which resultantly evolved into the current modern conservation movement which is partly dependent on giving priority to the irreversibility of time and the specificity of human activity subject to cultural values and social-economic context. While stylistic restoration could be said to have emanated

the practice of conservation and the more the number of protected properties. The case of England, Italy, United States and even South Africa bears witness to this. Regardless of the fact that each of these country has peculiar challenges, their approach to heritage conservation has been well adapted over the years so much that they could be said to be yielding their results. Ironically, South Africa including other countries in southern Africa has elaborate laws and regulations that guide the practice of (*living*) heritage conservation such as the National Heritage Resources Act - NHRA – [12], yet *“the effectiveness of heritage legislation, whether colonial or post-colonial, has been severely flawed”*. Sequel to this, it was observed that there are two challenges that noticeably affect the practicality and implementation of the laws and regulations guiding the practice of conservation in this part of the world; they are “lack of proactive management strategy”, and having a “legal sector that does not fully understand the concept and principles of heritage legislations” [13].

In order to face these challenges and others head-long, apart from the respective government ministries such as the NHRA of South Africa, Antiquities Department of Tanzania, and the National Museums and Monuments of Ghana (among others) that are primarily saddled with the responsibility of safeguarding these heritage properties, other non-governmental agencies work hand-in-hand especially with African countries to provide optimum help in preserving the heritage they’ve got such as the African Union, UNESCO, African World Heritage Fund, World Bank and the International Center for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments thereby providing a veritable platform for capacity building.

In Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Tourism, Culture and National Orientation is the Ministry saddled with the entire responsibility of managing both tangible and non-tangible cultural and natural heritage that Nigeria prides herself with. And of all the parastatals and departments under it, the National Commission for Museum and Monuments is more directly involved in this task.

The first requirement in conserving any building is a sensitive assessment of its history and merits-which every building has! So, “a listed building” as it obtains in the Nigerian context “is one which has been formally declared to be of special architectural or historic interest by being placed on statutory lists compiled by the National Commission for Museums and Monuments” [14].

4 ADAPTIVE REUSE

Adaptive reuse is generally defined as “the process of adapting old structures for new purposes”. Through this re-use, an old building which often time could be a heritage building may be rejuvenated in terms of both physical and economic values. It is a general consensus that adaptive reuse or re-adaptive use of heritage buildings is probably the only way

important and key values such as age, historic and aesthetic values can be salvaged and such buildings once more revamped and hence become useful again. *“The best way to conserve a heritage building, structure or site is to use it. This is because building adaptation links the past to the present and projects into the future.”*

Re-adaptive use or *adaptive reuse* – oftentimes called conversion, adaptation, reworking, remodeling, retrofitting, rehabilitation or refurbishment – comprises of most obvious changes, while other alterations could be made to the original building itself such as the circulation route, the orientation, spatial relationships; additions may be built and other areas may be demolished’. Moreover, in contemporary conservation theory and practice, adaptive reuse is considered an important strategy towards conservation of cultural heritage [8].

The structural and spatial adjustments effected in *social* buildings due to rapidly evolving technology and globalization also have direct effect on architecture and conservation. One of the noticeable results can be seen in the field of architectural conservation. This includes reuse and rehabilitation of old buildings. The adaptive reuse of a historic building should have minimal impact on the heritage significance of the building and its setting as attempts are made at carefully changing such abandoned, disused or ruined item into useable facilities.

4.1 General Process involved in Re-adaptive use of Buildings

In order to make adaptive reuse building blend well with the history of the site to which it belongs, it is important to ensure that the principle of authenticity is carefully observed. By this, new building fabrics or layers are added without distorting or erasing the earlier and existing ones. The process of turning a building into re-adaptive use is quite similar to that of preservation and conservation works of the site. In other words, adaptive reuse includes both the process of preservation and conservation. It provides an opportunity to maintain heritage fabric, spaces and sites that might otherwise be lost and to make them available to new generations.

In order to successfully convert a building into re-adaptive use, the site on which it is situated needs to be understood in complex ways. Other aspects to be considered include the spatial structures and configurations, the relationship between the site and its context, significant views to, from and within the site, and traces of activities and processes. When introducing re-adaptive use into a building, focus should be on how to ensure that the project is aimed at retaining evidence of material flow, work process and technologies involved. Like in building conservation and restoration project, the basic widely accepted standard for carrying out re-adaptive project is contained in the Venice Charter.

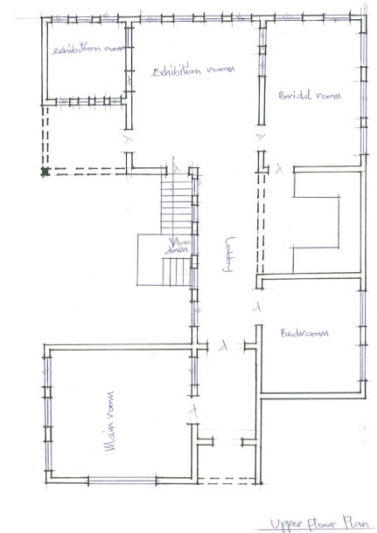
Approaches in dealing with adaptive reuse of historic buildings could be divided into three which are typological ap-

proach, technical approach, and architectural approach.

4.2 Dervish Pasha Mansion

It is located within the walls of Beliq Pasha Street off Arabahmet quarters. It was built in the early nineteenth century (1807). The mansion was built consisting of two floors. While the first floor was built with stone, the second floor was constructed with muddy bricks. This L-Shaped structure has a spacious inner yard. When it was initially built, the second floor served as the main residential part, while the first floor was used as a store which also includes servants' room and service rooms. Also, kitchen, bathroom and lavatories are situated away from the building in the northern section.

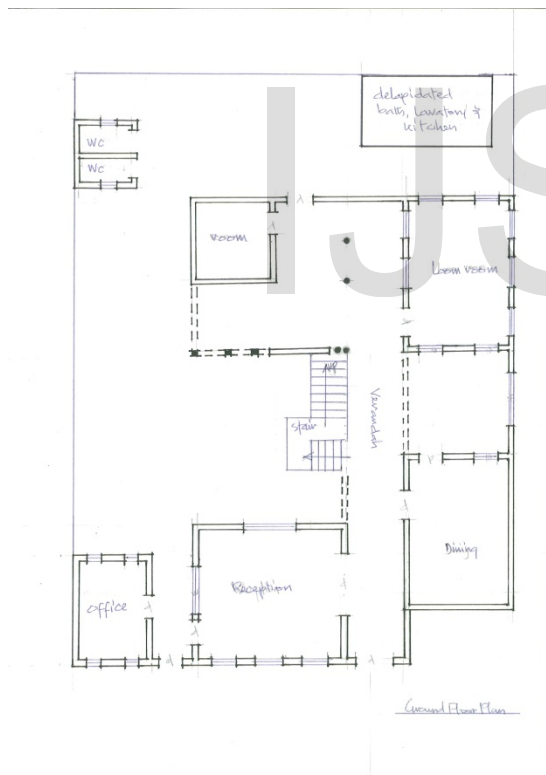
The building was named after its owner who was an elite in his days. Apart from this particular building, other buildings of historic importance in this district are currently undergoing restoration works. This includes the Armenian Church Monastery. This implies that the Dervish Pasha Mansion which has now been converted into an ethnographic museum is located within a conservation area of Arabahmet District.



Existing First Floor Plan (source: author)

4.2.1 Deterioration

As evident in the pictures shown below, not only was this building completely delapidated, its entire material fabrics of walls, fenestrations, roofs, and floors had completely deteriorated thus necessitating a major renovation work.



Existing Ground Floor Plan (source: author)



Pictures showing some aspects of the renovation works



Images showing extent of deterioration prior to restoration (source: author)



4.2.2 Restoration

For a long time after construction, the building was badly used and never repaired until in 1978 when the department of Antiquities embarked on restoring it. The whole of the reconstruction process lasted for ten years as it was completed in 1988 when converted to an ethnographic museum showcasing the life and death of Dervish Pasha himself. Apart from this piece of monument, other notable historic buildings such as the Bedestan have been restored and are now viable examples of re-adaptive use.





Pictures showing current condition of the Dervish Pasha museum with ethnographic objects on display (courtesy: author)

5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Osun State, like North Cyprus has a lot of old and significant buildings dotting its landscape but unlike Cyprus, little or no effort is being made by relevant authorities and agencies in taking professional care of them. Whereas the famous Osun-Osogbo groove is located in this region, yet much needs to be done by the respective governments of this state to take proactive measures in encouraging the sustainability of old and significant heritage buildings. Examples of such notable built heritage that are strongly recommended for urgent consideration first for the sake of preserving their authenticity and also for the fact that it has the potential of generating revenue are residential buildings constructed pre-colonial era and religious buildings especially churches and mosques constructed

in the early part of the colonial era.

To ensure a successful long term sustainable management plan of not only natural resources but also common heritage sites and facilities, the support of local people cannot be over-emphasized. In this regards assessing local people's attitudes, taking into account their needs, and respecting their opinions should become a management priority. For example, traditional laws, myths and taboos have largely proved helpful in the preservation of Osun-Oshogbo Groove which is one of the World Heritage Sites in Nigeria. This does not however suggest that there are no other strict measures of preserving it. Unlike South Africa that has five world heritage sites, Nigeria has only two. Part of the reasons for this could be assumed to be as a result of perhaps less efficient attention from the government.

It is opined that the most successful adaptive "reuse projects are those that best respect and retain the building's heritage and add a contemporary layer that provides value for the future. Sometimes, adaptive reuse is the only way that the building's fabric could be properly cared for, revealed or interpreted, while making better use of the building itself" [5]. The benefits of reusing buildings are enormous, part of which are environmental and economic. Clearly, it could be easily adduced that the restoration cum re-adaptive use of the Devish Pasha Mansion which is now an ethnographic museum was properly done in line with international rules and regulations thus making it a good example for government of developing countries to emulate.

Lastly, it is recommended that State heritage board should be established and in order to achieve optimum effectiveness, a robust legal framework clearly stating a robust and decent scope of work should also be enacted.

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