

Abstract

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Conservation of Built Vernacular Heritage: A Case Study of Siwa, Egypt

The significance of built Vernacular heritage is manifested in being a pillar in the preservation of the native culture and the vernacular identity besides, it is a touristic, economic resource and a foundation for the local community development. A myriad of the vernacular heritage areas suffer from the backlashes of negligence and deterioration. Taking into consideration that the vernacular architecture, world-wide, is extremely vulnerable, for economic, social and political reasons thus it is related to urban decay and physical degradation, being subjected to the endangerment of not only the essential historical and cultural resources but also the social as well as economic resources. Given the importance of preserving such areas and with regard to the grave hazards to which it is subjected, in addition to the increase in the mainstream tendency towards the investment in the field of tourism, due to its economic revenues, the need to conserve such areas arises. The research tackles the study of Siwa oasis area as a case. However, the vernacular heritage areas there in the oasis suffer from negligence and incoherence of policies hence, the region decays and gradually vanishes. The research aims at studying the reasons which lead to the deterioration of vernacular heritage areas, in addition to studying and listing the factors which lead to achieving the optimal sustainable preservation of these areas. The research targets the elicitation of benefits of the various experiences so as to preserve the built vernacular heritage. Nevertheless, in order to achieve the objectives of the research, the inductive approach is adopted. Literature review is conducted as well as the basic concepts and theories relevant to the topic of conservation and built vernacular heritage. Furthermore, the comparative analytical approach is adopted through the analysis and evaluation of the factors of conserving the built Vernacular heritage in an experiment which targets At-Turaif District in the historical area of Ad-Dir'iyah in Saudi Arabia and Kasr of Ait-Ben-Haddou in Morocco whose circumstances are very similar to the circumstances of Siwa oasis. There is also the project of "Adrere Amellal" in Siwa which is an example for the conservation of the oasis. The research concludes that the dedication to provide the factors which contribute to the conservation of the built vernacular heritage ensures the success of such places. It is also necessary to avoid the errors which occurred during the analysis of the examples. The research, also, recommended the importance of implementing the plans of training the native inhabitants to master the various crafts which are part and parcel of the conservation process besides enabling the inhabitants' participation and activating the role of the civil community institutions in the conservation of vernacular heritage areas, as well as developing and promoting them, whether in the stage of planning implementing the projects of conservation.